HOW TO USE IT

Construction Project Tracker

List your phases, tasks and milestones with a start date and a number of work days, and the workbook works out every finish date and draws the Gantt chart. Plan on about 30 minutes for your first schedule.

IN THE DOWNLOAD

Excel_ConstructionProjectTracker_SAMPLE.xlsx (a finished schedule to learn from) and Excel_ConstructionProjectTracker_BLANK.xlsx (start every project from this one)

WORKS IN

Excel 2021 or newer, including Microsoft 365, on Mac or Windows. Not Google Sheets or Numbers.

TABS

Setup, Schedule

ONE FILE PER PROJECT

Save a copy of the BLANK for each job you schedule

Before you start

The SAMPLE file is a finished schedule: Northline Construction running a retail shell job called Harbor Plaza, from notice to proceed on 11/2/26 to owner handoff on 4/23/27. It has 7 phases and 25 tasks and milestones, and it's 44% complete. Click around in it and change a Start or a Status to see the bars move. When you're ready to schedule your own job, **open the BLANK file and save a copy** named for the project. The BLANK has the same formulas and lists, with every schedule row empty and ready.

> CAREFUL
>
> Don't clear the sample with the Delete key. Selecting the sample rows and pressing Delete wipes the Code and Finish formulas along with your tasks, so no bars draw and nothing says why. Start from the BLANK instead.

A few things hold true on both tabs:

- **Blue text is yours to type.** Black and gray text calculates. If a cell isn't blue, leave it alone.
- ◯ **starts a phase,** ◆ **is a task,** ★ **is a milestone.** You pick them from the dropdown in the Type column. Every row below a ◯ belongs to that phase until the next ◯.
- **Codes number themselves.** 01 is the first phase, 01.01 its first row. Insert a row and everything below renumbers.
- **Dates follow your computer's region.** In the US you type 3/1/27 for March 1. In the UK or Australia you type 1/3/27. The schedule shows dates back to you the same way.

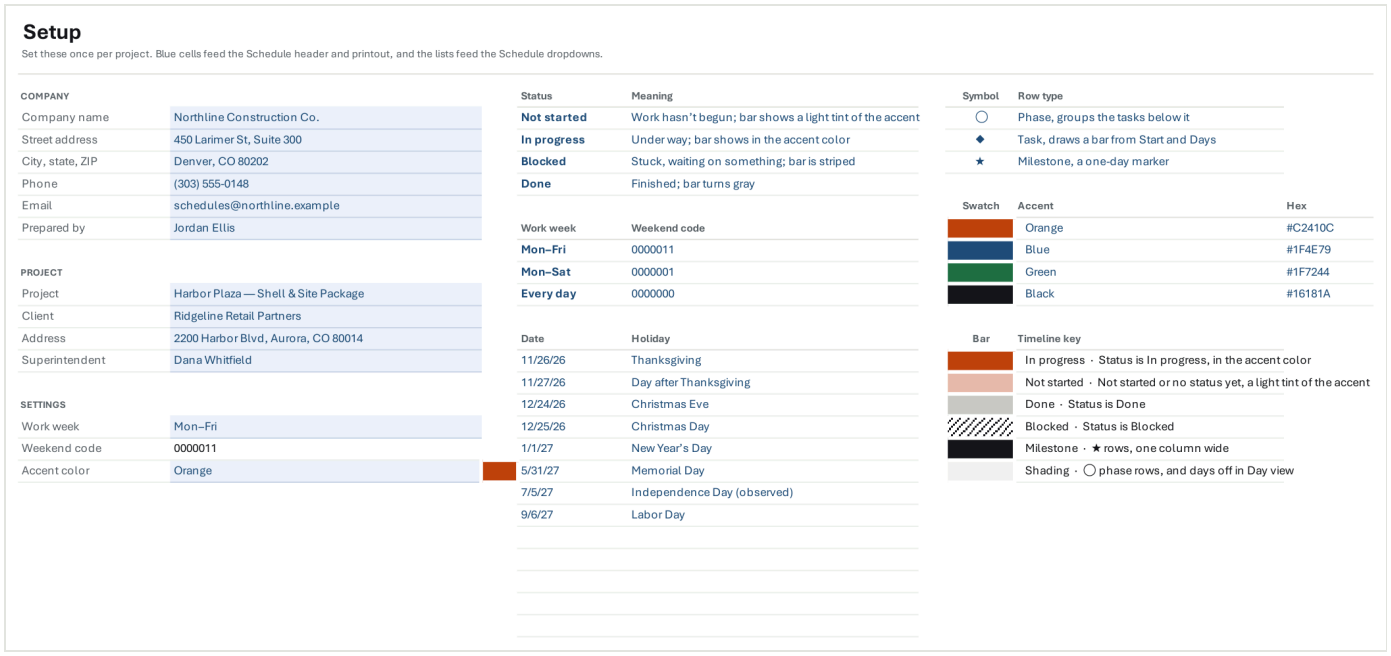
What's in the workbook

Tab	What it's for	Do you type here?
Setup	Your company and project details, the work week, holidays and accent color. Fill it in once per project.	Yes, the blue boxes and the Holidays list
Schedule	The task list on the left and the Gantt chart on the right, with % complete and the finish date across the top.	Yes, this is where the work happens

STEP 1

Fill in Setup (5 minutes)

Setup comes first because every Finish date counts work days using its work week and holidays.



Setup

Set these once per project. Blue cells feed the Schedule header and printout, and the lists feed the Schedule dropdowns.

COMPANY	
Company name	Northline Construction Co.
Street address	450 Larimer St, Suite 300
City, state, ZIP	Denver, CO 80202
Phone	(303) 555-0148
Email	schedules@northline.example
Prepared by	Jordan Ellis

PROJECT	
Project	Harbor Plaza — Shell & Site Package
Client	Ridgeline Retail Partners
Address	2200 Harbor Blvd, Aurora, CO 80014
Superintendent	Dana Whitfield

SETTINGS	
Work week	Mon–Fri
Weekend code	0000011
Accent color	Orange

Status	Meaning
Not started	Work hasn't begun; bar shows a light tint of the accent
In progress	Under way; bar shows in the accent color
Blocked	Stuck, waiting on something; bar is striped
Done	Finished; bar turns gray

Work week	Weekend code
Mon–Fri	0000011
Mon–Sat	0000001
Every day	0000000

Date	Holiday
11/26/26	Thanksgiving
11/27/26	Day after Thanksgiving
12/24/26	Christmas Eve
12/25/26	Christmas Day
1/1/27	New Year's Day
5/31/27	Memorial Day
7/5/27	Independence Day (observed)
9/6/27	Labor Day

Symbol	Row type
○	Phase, groups the tasks below it
◆	Task, draws a bar from Start and Days
★	Milestone, a one-day marker

Swatch	Accent	Hex
	Orange	#C2410C
	Blue	#1F4E79
	Green	#1F7244
	Black	#16181A

Bar	Timeline key
	In progress · Status is In progress, in the accent color
	Not started · Not started or no status yet, a light tint of the accent
	Done · Status is Done
	Blocked · Status is Blocked
	Milestone · ★ rows, one column wide
	Shading · ○ phase rows, and days off in Day view

Setup in the sample. Company and project on the left, the lists behind the dropdowns in the middle, the timeline key on the right.

Cell	What to type
C7 to C12	Company name, street address, city/state/ZIP, phone, email and who prepared the schedule. The name and phone print top right on the Schedule.
C15 to C18	Project, client, job site address and superintendent. The first three print under the Schedule title.
C21	Work week, from the dropdown: `Mon–Fri`, `Mon–Sat` or `Every day`.
C23	Accent color: Orange, Blue, Green or Black. It colors the bars, the rule across the top and the % complete.

C22 (Weekend code) fills itself in from the work week. Leave it alone.

The work week decides what counts as a day. On Mon–Fri, Saturdays and Sundays are skipped when Finish is worked out. Switch to Mon–Sat and Saturdays count as work days: a 4-day task starting Saturday 3/6/27 finishes Wednesday 3/10/27 instead of Thursday 3/11/27.

Holidays (E18 down to row 37). The sample ships with 8 US holidays from Thanksgiving 2026 to Labor Day 2027. Replace them with the days your crews actually take off. Type over the dates and names, and add more in the empty rows below. Past row 37, click the last cell of the list and press **Tab** to get another row. Every date on this list is skipped when Finish is counted and shaded in Day view.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
>
> The holiday dates are tied to specific years. If your job runs into 2028, add that year's holidays too, or Finish will count right through them.

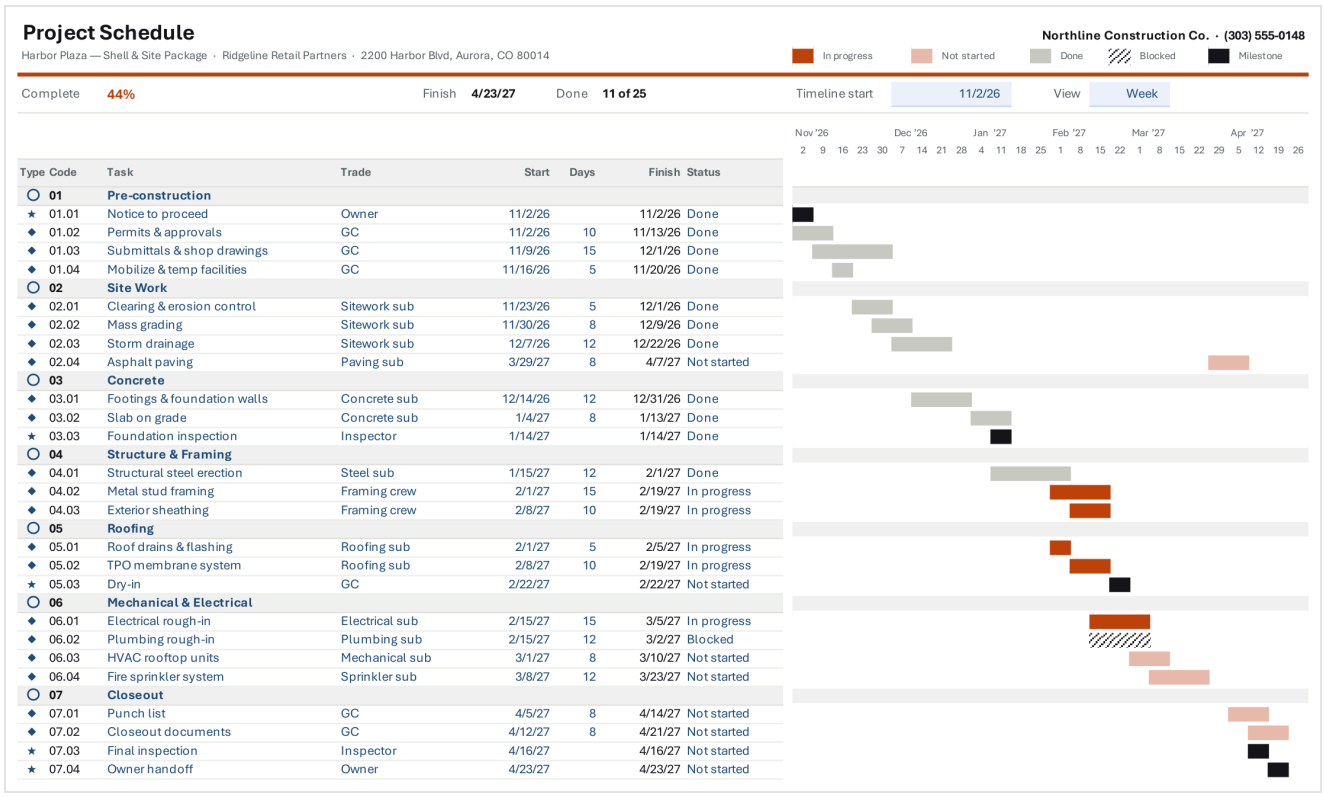
The timeline key (H17 to I23) shows what each bar color means. There's nothing to type there.

Column L, outside the printed page, lists every Monday of the job for the Timeline start dropdown. It updates by itself.

STEP 2

Build the schedule (20 to 40 minutes)

Open the **Schedule** tab. The table starts at row 13, and the BLANK has 488 empty rows ready down to row 500, with every formula in place. Work across each row from left to right.



Project Schedule

Harbor Plaza — Shell & Site Package · Ridgeline Retail Partners · 2200 Harbor Blvd, Aurora, CO 80014

Northline Construction Co. · (303) 555-0148

In progress · Not started · Done · Blocked · Milestone

Complete 44% · Finish 4/23/27 · Done 11 of 25 · Timeline start 11/2/26 · View Week

Type	Code	Task	Trade	Start	Days	Finish	Status
○	01	**Pre-construction**					
★	01.01	Notice to proceed	Owner	11/2/26		11/2/26	Done
◆	01.02	Permits & approvals	GC	11/2/26	10	11/13/26	Done
◆	01.03	Submittals & shop drawings	GC	11/9/26	15	12/1/26	Done
◆	01.04	Mobilize & temp facilities	GC	11/16/26	5	11/20/26	Done
○	02	**Site Work**					
◆	02.01	Clearing & erosion control	Sitework sub	11/23/26	5	12/1/26	Done
◆	02.02	Mass grading	Sitework sub	11/30/26	8	12/9/26	Done
◆	02.03	Storm drainage	Sitework sub	12/7/26	12	12/22/26	Done
◆	02.04	Asphalt paving	Paving sub	3/29/27	8	4/7/27	Not started
○	03	**Concrete**					
◆	03.01	Footings & foundation walls	Concrete sub	12/14/26	12	12/31/26	Done
◆	03.02	Slab on grade	Concrete sub	1/4/27	8	1/13/27	Done
★	03.03	Foundation inspection	Inspector	1/14/27		1/14/27	Done
○	04	**Structure & Framing**					
◆	04.01	Structural steel erection	Steel sub	1/15/27	12	2/1/27	Done
◆	04.02	Metal stud framing	Framing crew	2/1/27	15	2/19/27	In progress
◆	04.03	Exterior sheathing	Framing crew	2/8/27	10	2/19/27	In progress
○	05	**Roofing**					
◆	05.01	Roof drains & flashing	Roofing sub	2/1/27	5	2/5/27	In progress
◆	05.02	TPO membrane system	Roofing sub	2/8/27	10	2/19/27	In progress
★	05.03	Dry-in	GC	2/22/27		2/22/27	Not started
○	06	**Mechanical & Electrical**					
◆	06.01	Electrical rough-in	Electrical sub	2/15/27	15	3/5/27	In progress
◆	06.02	Plumbing rough-in	Plumbing sub	2/15/27	12	3/2/27	Blocked
◆	06.03	HVAC rooftop units	Mechanical sub	3/1/27	8	3/10/27	Not started
◆	06.04	Fire sprinkler system	Sprinkler sub	3/8/27	12	3/23/27	Not started
○	07	**Closeout**					
◆	07.01	Punch list	GC	4/5/27	8	4/14/27	Not started
◆	07.02	Closeout documents	GC	4/12/27	8	4/21/27	Not started
★	07.03	Final inspection	Inspector	4/16/27		4/16/27	Not started
★	07.04	Owner handoff	Owner	4/23/27		4/23/27	Not started

The sample schedule. Phases are shaded, each task draws a bar from its Start to its Finish, and the bar color follows the Status.

Column	What to do
Type (B)	Pick ○ to start a phase (Site Work, Concrete), ◆ for a task or ★ for a milestone (inspection, dry-in, handoff).
Task (D)	What the work is. On a ○ row this is the phase name, and that's all a phase row needs.
Trade (E)	Who does it: a sub, your crew, the owner, the inspector. Free text.
Start (F)	The first day of the task. Excel only takes a date here ("Type a date.").
Days (G)	How many work days it takes, as a whole number: 10. Leave it empty on a ★ milestone.
Status (I)	Not started, In progress, Blocked or Done, from the dropdown.

Code (C) and Finish (H) fill themselves in.

How Finish is worked out

Finish counts **work days only**. It skips the days off in your work week and every date on the Holidays list. A 1-day task finishes on its Start date. On the sample, Clearing & erosion control (row 19) starts Monday 11/23/26 with 5 days and finishes Tuesday 12/1/26, because the weekend and both Thanksgiving holidays in between don't count.

A **Start on a weekend or holiday** counts from the next work day. Type Saturday as the Start of a 5-day task and it finishes on the same day it would from Monday. The Start you typed stays as you typed it.

A **milestone** has no length. Its Finish is its Start, and it draws as a single black block.

Here's a small job typed into the BLANK. Codes, Finish dates and the numbers across the top filled in by themselves:

Complete **33%** Finish **3/12/27** Done **2 of 5**

Type	Code	Task	Trade	Start	Days	Finish	Status
○	**01**	**Demolition**					
★	01.01	Start of work	Owner	3/1/27		3/1/27	Done
◆	01.02	Tear-out	Demo crew	3/1/27	3	3/3/27	Done
◆	01.03	Plumbing rough-in	Plumber	3/4/27	2	3/5/27	In progress
○	**02**	**Cabinets & finishes**					
◆	02.01	Cabinets & counters	Installer	3/6/27	4	3/11/27	Not started
★	02.02	Final walkthrough	Owner	3/12/27		3/12/27	Not started

Two phases, three tasks and two milestones typed into the BLANK. Cabinets start on a Saturday, so the 4 days run Monday to Thursday.

The numbers across the top (row 7)

- **Complete** (D7) is % complete, weighted by days. It adds up the Days on ◆ tasks marked Done and divides by the Days on all ◆ tasks. On the sample that's 87 of 198 task days, so it shows 44%. Milestones don't count because they have no days.
- **Finish** (F7) is the latest Finish in the table, your projected completion date. The sample shows 4/23/27.
- **Done** (H7) counts the ◆ tasks and ★ milestones marked Done out of all of them. The sample shows `11 of 25`. Phase rows aren't counted.

STEP 3

Read the timeline and move the window

What the bars mean

Bar	What it means
Accent color (orange on the sample)	The task is In progress.
Light tint of the accent	Not started, or no Status picked yet.
Gray	Done.
Black stripes	Blocked: stuck waiting on something.
Solid black block	A ★ milestone.
Light gray band across the row	A ◯ phase row. In Day view, also the weekends and holidays.

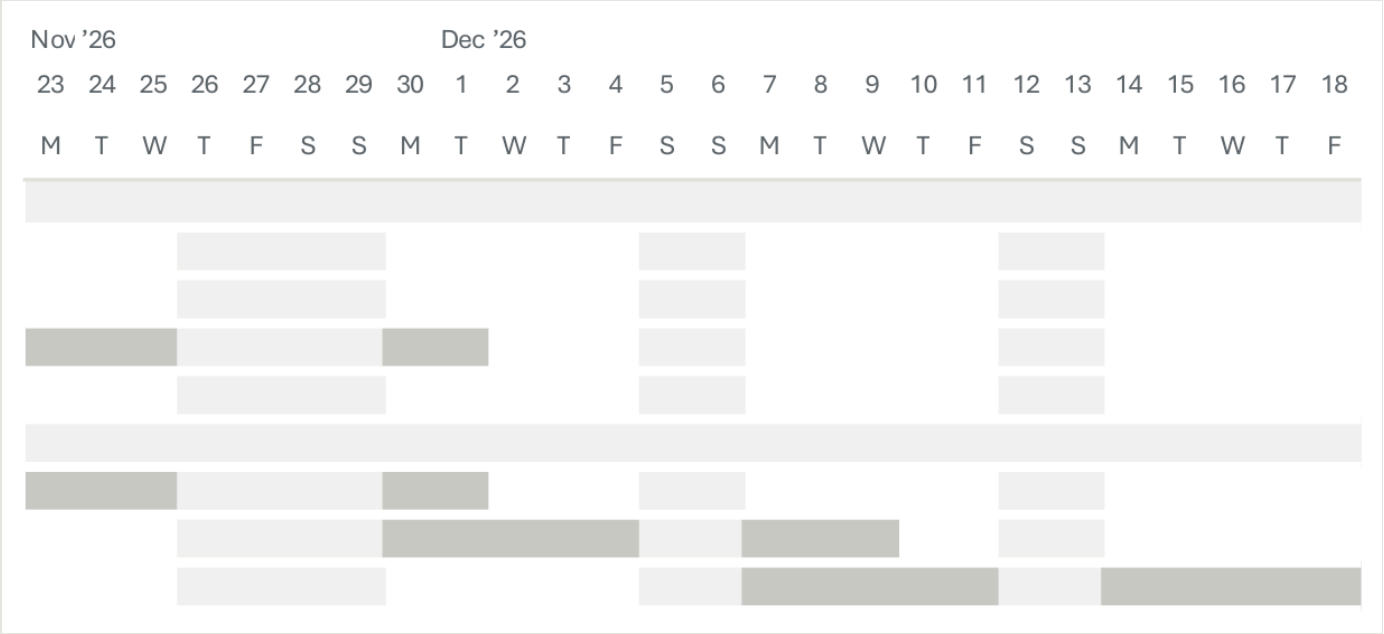
The chart has 26 columns, and row 11 shows the date each one starts on. A bar fills every column its dates touch, so in Week view a 2-day task fills a whole week column.

Timeline start and View (P7 and Z7)

View (Z7) is `Week` or `Day`. In Week view each column is one week, so the chart covers 26 weeks, about 6 months. In Day view each column is one day, row 12 shows the weekday letters, and the chart covers 26 days.

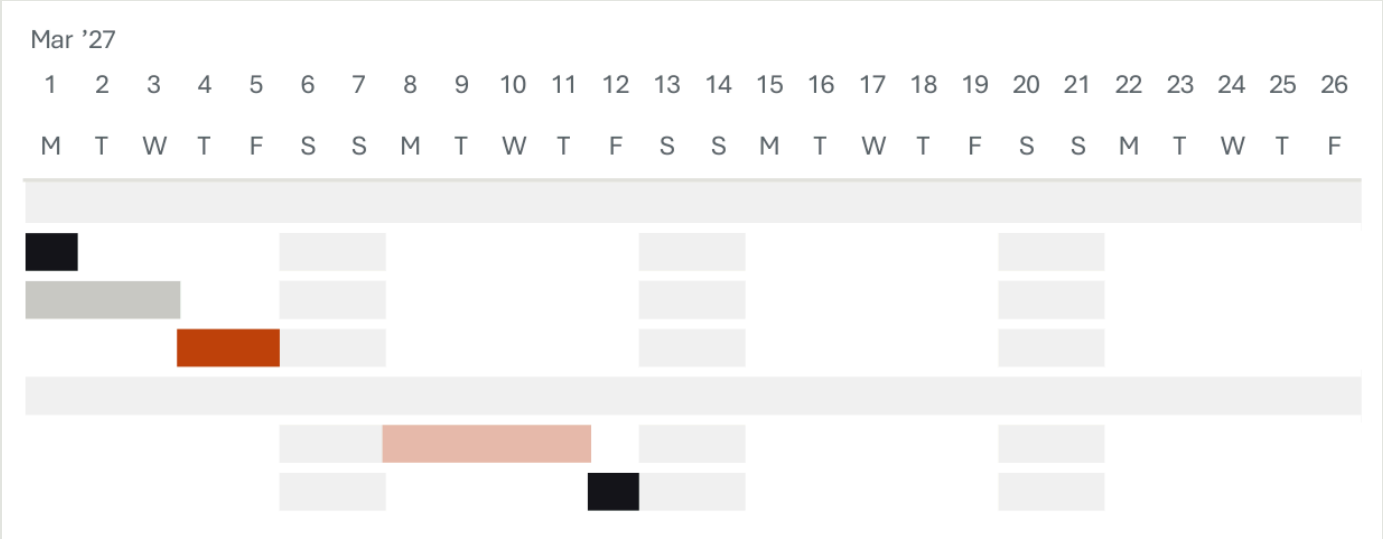
Timeline start (P7) is the date of the first column. Click the box and pick a week from the dropdown, which lists every Monday of your project. You can also type any date. Leave it empty, or click it and press Delete, and the chart starts on the Monday of your first task.

Day view is where you check the detail. Pick the week you care about in Timeline start, switch View to Day, and the bars break on days off the same way Finish counts them:



The sample in Day view from 11/23/26. Thanksgiving and the day after are shaded, and the site work bars skip them.

On the small BLANK job, the cabinets bar begins Monday, after the shaded weekend:



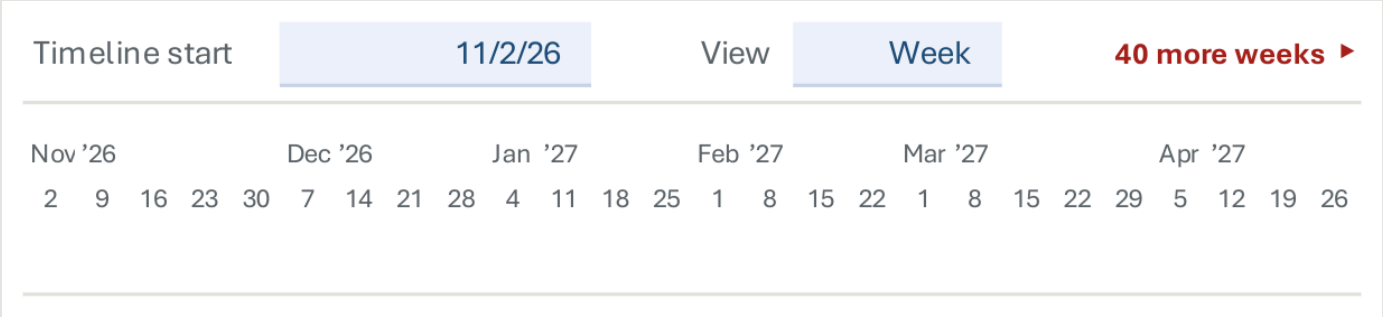
The BLANK job in Day view. The weekends are shaded and the 4-day cabinets bar runs Monday 3/8 to Thursday 3/11.

When the job doesn't fit

If any part of the schedule falls outside the 26 columns, red text appears top right of the chart (AJ7) saying how much is off it:

- **40 more weeks ▸** means the schedule runs 40 week columns past the right edge.
- **◂ 9 weeks earlier** means it starts before the first column.
- **◂ 21 days · 126 days ▸** means both, in Day view.

The note is empty when everything fits, and it prints with the chart.



A milestone added in February 2028. The chart still starts at 11/2/26, and the note counts the 40 weeks past the right edge.

STEP 4

Keep it current (5 minutes a week)

The schedule only knows what you tell it. Nothing in the workbook looks at today's date, so there's no "late" flag and no line for today. A bar stays the tint color until you change its Status, even after its Finish has passed.

Once a week, go down the Status column:

1. Mark finished tasks `Done`. The bar turns gray and Complete goes up.
2. Mark tasks that have started `In progress`.
3. Mark anything waiting on an inspection or a delivery `Blocked`, so it stands out striped.
4. Look for tint bars whose Finish is already behind you. Those are your late tasks.

When a task slips, change its Days (or its Start), then retype the Start of each task after it. Nothing moves on its own: every Start is the date you typed, so tasks don't push each other along. Check F7 afterwards to see where the finish date landed.

> TIP
>
> Before a big update, save a copy with the date in its name ("Harbor Plaza 2027-02-01.xlsx"), so you can compare later where the job stood.

STEP 5

Print the schedule

Choose **File › Print** on the Schedule tab. It's set up for Letter landscape, one page wide, and it prints the header, the table and the chart together. Printing stops at the last row with a Type, so the empty ready-made rows never print as blank pages. The sample prints on one page. A longer schedule runs onto more pages, with the month, date and column headings repeated at the top of each one and "Page x of y" in the footer.

The printout shows whatever the chart shows, so set **Timeline start** and **View** first.

Jobs longer than 26 weeks print in parts. Print once, then pick a later week in Timeline start (the week after the last column) and print again. The red note in AJ7 tells you when something is still off the chart.

Adding, moving and removing rows

At the end of the schedule: type in the next empty row. It's already formatted and full of formulas. Pick a Type first, then fill in the rest.

In the middle of a phase: right-click a row, choose **Insert › Table Rows Above** and fill in the new row. Everything below renumbers, and the bars stay on their rows.

A new phase: add a row the same way and pick ◯. Every row below it, down to the next ◯, now belongs to the new phase.

Past the last ready-made row (row 500): select the cells of row 500 from Type across to Status (B500 to I500). Press **Cmd+C** (Mac) or **Ctrl+C** (Windows), select as many rows below it as you need, and press **Cmd+V** or **Ctrl+V**. The table grows to take them in, with every formula and dropdown. Then do the same for the timeline: copy K500 to AJ500 and paste it on the same new rows, so the bars show there too. The new rows are copies of row 500, so if it already has a task in it, type over the copies. For just one more row, you can also click the Status cell on row 500 and press **Tab**. Don't type in the rows under the table: Excel pulls them in but skips the fonts and date formats.

> **CAREFUL**
> Copy the table cells (B to I) on their own. If you click the row number on the left and copy the whole sheet row, or copy the table and the timeline in one go, the table stays at row 500 and the formulas land outside it.

Removing a row: right-click it and choose **Delete › Table Rows**. The codes close up and the KPIs update.

Moving a row: insert a row where you want it, copy the blue cells across from the old row, then delete the old row.

> **CAREFUL**
> Don't sort the schedule table. Phases and codes are built from row order, so sorting by Start drops every phase to the bottom and every task becomes 00.something. The bars stay right, but the schedule stops making sense. If you sort by accident, undo right away with **Cmd+Z** (Mac) or **Ctrl+Z** (Windows).

Cells that calculate (don't type over them)

These cells hold formulas. Typing over one or pressing Delete on it breaks that cell, and sometimes everything that depends on it.

Tab	Formula cells
Setup	Weekend code (C22) and the Timeline weeks list (column L)
Schedule	The company line (AJ2) and project line (B3), Complete, Finish and Done (D7, F7, H7), the off-chart note (AJ7), the month, date and weekday rows over the chart (rows 10 to 12), and the Code and Finish columns of the table

The bars themselves are empty cells colored by the workbook. Don't type in the chart area.

If you break one, undo right away. If it's too late for that, copy the same column's cell from an empty row lower in the table and paste it over the broken one. Every row in the table carries the same formulas, so a Finish from row 480 works on row 20.

Red cells and what they mean

○	**06**	**Mechanical & Electrical**					
◆	06.01	Electrical rough-in	Electrical sub	2/15/27	TBD	2/15/27	In progress
◆	06.02	Plumbing rough-in	Plumbing sub	2/15/27	12	3/2/27	Blocked
◆	06.03	HVAC rooftop units	Mechanical sub	3/1/2027	8	3/10/27	Not started
◆	06.04	Fire sprinkler system	Sprinkler sub	3/8/27	12	3/23/27	Approved
○	**07**	**Closeout**					

Four problems pasted into the sample: TBD in Days, a stray space after the ◆, a Start that's text, and a Status that isn't on the list.

A red cell is the workbook telling you a value isn't one it can use. Fix the cell and the red goes away.

What you see	What happened	Fix
TBD **in Days**	Text where a number belongs. The task is counted as 1 day.	Type the number of days, or leave it empty until you know.
3/1/2027 **in Start**	A date that came in as text, usually pasted from another program. The row gets a Finish but **no bar**.	Click the cell and type the date again.
Red ◆ in Type	Something other than ○, ◆ or ★, often a pasted "◆ " with a space after it. The row still draws, but it's left out of Complete and the Done count.	Pick the symbol from the dropdown.
Approved **in Status**	A status that isn't one of the four. The bar draws as Not started and the task never counts as Done.	Pick a Status from the dropdown.
40 more weeks ▸ **top right**	Part of the schedule is off the chart.	Move Timeline start, or print in parts (Step 5).

When you type, Excel blocks most of these with a message ("Type the number of work days, for example 10."). Pasting skips those checks, which is why the red cells are there.

Troubleshooting

A task shows a one-day bar. Its Days cell is empty, so it's counted as 1 day, and it adds nothing to Complete. Type the work days in column G.

A task has a Finish but no bar. Its Start is text (it'll be red), or the task falls outside the 26 columns. Retype the Start, or check the red note in AJ7 and move Timeline start.

No bars at all, and Code and Finish are empty. The formulas were cleared, usually by selecting rows and pressing Delete. Copy Code and Finish from an empty row lower down, or start again from the BLANK.

A Finish date looks a day or two late. Check Setup. A holiday in the list, or Mon–Fri when your crew works Saturdays, both push Finish out. Also check the Start: a weekend Start counts from Monday.

Complete hasn't moved after I marked a milestone Done. That's expected. Complete is weighted by task days, and milestones have none. The Done count (H7) does go up.

The codes look scrambled, or every task is 00.something. The table was probably sorted, or tasks sit above the first ◯. Undo the sort, or add a ◯ phase row at the top.

The schedule prints extra blank pages or cuts off rows. Someone set a print area in Page Layout, which replaces the automatic one. Open **Formulas › Name Manager**, select Print_Area for the Schedule, and paste the formula from the help note in cell AL29 into Refers to.

Codes or Finish dates show #NAME?. Your Excel is older than the template needs. It works in Excel 2021 or newer and in Microsoft 365, on Mac or Windows. Excel 2019 and older don't have the functions it uses.

Cheat sheet

I want to...	Do this
Start a new schedule	Open the BLANK and Save As a new name
Add a task at the end	Type in the next empty row, starting with Type
Add a task mid-schedule	Right-click a row › Insert › Table Rows Above
Count Saturdays as work days	Setup C21, pick Mon–Sat
Use my own holidays	Type over Setup E18:F25 and add more below
See one week day by day	Pick the week in Timeline start (P7), then set View (Z7) to Day
Show a task slipped	Change its Days, then retype the Start of the tasks after it
Find late tasks	Look for tint bars whose Finish has passed, then update their Status
Print a job longer than 26 weeks	Print, pick a later week in Timeline start, print again
Change the color	Setup C23