

Data sheets should be clear and self-explanatory

(The table below has problems – it is provided as an example of what NOT to create)

Table of test results

	control	Elevated temperature
Condition 1		
Condition 2		

Issues with the above table:

- The title is “Table of test results”...what sort of “results”?
- What are conditions 1 and 2?
- What is meant by “control”?
- What is meant by “elevated temperature”?
- The author let MS Word format the table (the columns are too wide)

The following tables are pretty darn good....they are provided as examples of what an appropriate table is:

Table 2 - Amount of pitting in the aluminum samples (pits per cm²)

Environment	Room temperature (~70°F)	300°F
Tap water		
Nitric acid		

Table 4 - fracture data for aluminum alloy specimens

Aluminum Alloy	Original length (inch)	Length at fracture (inch)	Force at fracture (lb)
6061-T6			
2024-T351			

Things to notice:

- The table’s titles (aka captions) are informative
- The tables themselves are informative – they communicate what the experiments will involve at least in a general sense.
- Units are included
- The **author took “ownership”** of the tables not letting MS Word make decisions:
 - Superscripts were used (**cm²** rather than **cm^2**) CTRL-SHIFT-+
 - The widths of the columns are appropriate (**not excessively wide**)