The Insert Tab

Next, let's explore the Insert tab. The commands here are used for inserting a variety of different objects into your spreadsheets including charts, illustrations, hyperlinks, and symbols.
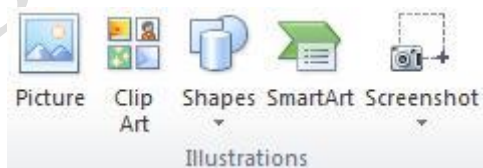
Tables Commands

The Tables group lets you add a PivotTable or an ordinary table. **PivotTables** are used to compare trends in data. They work by allowing you to literally change which axis is used to display a group of data (i.e. "pivot" the data). PivotTables are beyond the scope of this manual.

It might seem strange to see a **Table** command in Excel, since each worksheet is already essentially a giant table. However, this command creates a table based on data that has already been entered into a worksheet. The advantage of doing this is that you can more easily view and work with a large group of data rather than formatting everything by hand.
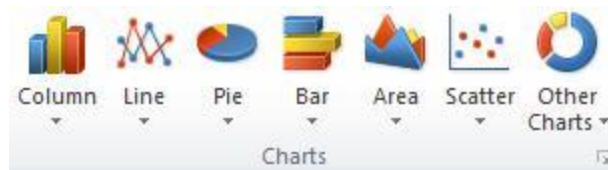
Illustrations Commands

The Illustrations group lets you add a variety of different items to your worksheet. You can add a picture or image from your computer, a stock image from the **Clip Art** gallery, or a variety of different shapes (circles, rectangles, banners, starburst, etc.). **SmartArt** lets you create professional-looking items like flow charts, process diagrams, and hierarchy trees with just a few clicks. Finally, the **Screenshot** command lets you capture all or part of any window visible on your desktop.
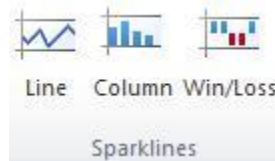
Charts Commands

The Charts group lets you insert a variety of different charts based on the data in a worksheet. Click a chart type to select a format and then specify the source data.

The option button opens the **Insert Chart** dialog box, which offers full access to all chart types.

Sparklines Commands

Sparklines are a new addition to Excel 2010. They are essentially small charts or graphs that fit into a single cell and show trends in your data. Choose between a line, column, or win/loss chart style.

Filter Commands

This group contains a single command to use the new **Slicer** feature, which is used when using PivotTables or data from an external source. Slicers offer a much faster method of sorting and filtering data than the commands in the Home tab.

Links Commands

The Links group contains the Hyperlink command. A hyperlink lets you send an e-mail, visit a Web page, open another document, or open a location within the current document.

Text Commands

Excel lets you add many different text features to enhance your worksheet, particularly if you are going to print and distribute your work. You can add free-floating text boxes, headers & footers, WordArt, a signature line (where someone can physically sign a printed page), or some other object (such as other Microsoft Office files, archives, images, etc.).

Symbol Commands

Excel is capable of working with complex formulae in order to describe various mathematical functions or make sense of data. With the Symbol group, you can insert a variety of formulae or insert a specialized symbol, such as Greek letters and characters from other alphabets.