Read a table or graph without losing units

Extract the right series, align units and use sum-and-ratio shortcuts across data sets

Data Interpretation Workflow

01 Inspect Axes, Legend and Units

- Read the title, unit note (₹ lakh, ₹ crore, %) and legend before touching any number.
- Check whether a row or column 'Total' is printed so you do not sum the same list twice.
- In grouped bars or dual lines, verify marker shapes and bar shading for each category.

02 Extract Only Target Cells

- Copy only the requested years or branches into a mini scratch list to prevent row slips.
- For compound conditions like (Electric + Petrol) − Diesel, evaluate each seller row by row.
- Write the unit alongside each sum: 80 + 120 + 100 = 300 units.

03 Use Equal-Count Mean Shortcuts

- When two groups have the same count n, Difference of Means = (Difference of Totals) ÷ n.
- If group counts differ, calculate each mean separately before subtracting.
- Totals 240 and 300 over three groups give means 80 and 100; their difference is 20.

04 Reduce Ratios and Fractions Cleanly

- Ratio of averages of two 3-branch groups equals the ratio of their sums: 1650 : 1800 = 11 : 12.
- A connecting line does not supply exact values at unmarked intermediate points.
- Part-to-whole example: 50 out of 50 + 150 gives 50/200 = 1/4.

REMEMBER Fast data interpretation comes from clean extraction and postponing division until sums or ratios cancel.

Sources & practice · OpenStax — Measures of centre · PET practice paper · 25-october-shift-1 · Q22 · PET practice paper · 25-october-shift-2 · Q58 · PET practice paper · 30-october-shift-1 · Q31

mindmapsforupsc.com/mindmaps/pet-table-graph-workflow/?lang=en