

Basic Training Module

Graphic Presentation of Numeric Data

An excellent graph displays information clearly, logically and meaningfully. Most of the graphs in this course will be line graphs or scatter plots. Often it is appropriate to connect the points in a graph, but it may be better to "fit" a line through the central tendency of the data points.

In all cases an excellent graph:

- is drawn with a ruler on graph paper (or constructed by software one knows how to use)
- has a descriptive title
- is neat and easy to read
- has each axis labelled with a title and units
- has units along each axis that are consistent for that axis

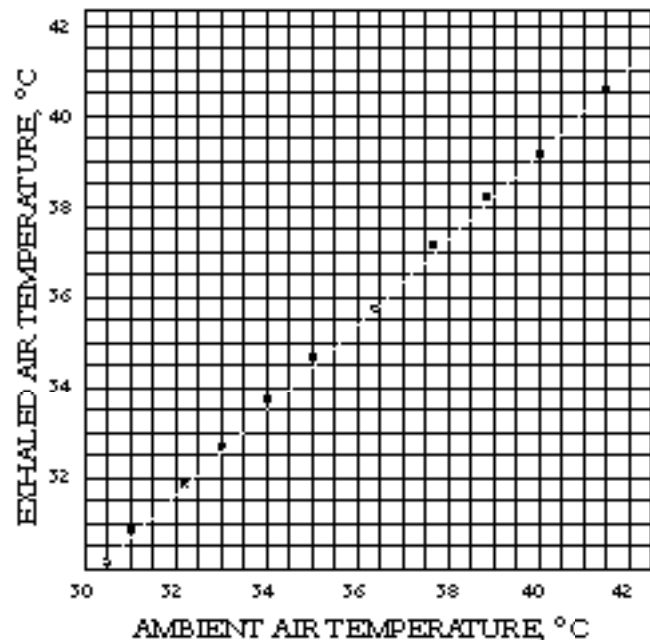
Samples

Temperature of the exhaled air of the desert iguana (*Dipsosaurus dorsalis*)

Ambient air temperature	Exhaled air temperature
30.5°	30.2°
31.0°	30.7°
32.2°	31.8°
33.0°	32.6°
34.0°	33.7°
35.0°	34.0°
36.3°	35.7°
37.6°	37.1°
38.8°	38.2°
40.0°	39.1°
41.5°	40.5°

Note that the data are presented in pairs, showing how changes in the outside air temperature affect the temperature of the lizards' exhalations.

Temperature of the exhaled air of the desert iguana (*Dipsosaurus dorsalis*). (From Murrish and Schmidt-Nielsen, 1970)



Drug Use in the U. S., 1985

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Type of Drug	Drug Users (millions)
Heroin	1.4
Marijuana	61.9
Cocaine	22.2
Halucinogens	12.9
Alcohol	148.4
Stimulants	17.6
Tranquilizers	14.8

Note that the numeric data is in a single column, with the left column simply labelling the data.

