



AI Outside vs. Inside Excel

The AI model may be similar, but the environment and tools available to it can change what it can do with your workbook.

Capability	AI Outside Excel	AI Inside Excel
Create a new workbook from scratch	✓ Excellent	~ Good
Clean or transform large amounts of data	✓ Excellent	~ Depends on the task
Combine many Excel files	✓ Excellent	× Poor fit
Write Excel formulas	✓ Yes	✓ Yes
Use Excel's calculation engine	× No with openpyxl	✓ Yes
Dynamic arrays and spill ranges	~ Can write formulas, but can't calculate spill behavior	✓ Native Excel support
Modify a complex existing workbook	~ Can be risky with unsupported objects	✓ Usually better
Work with PivotTables	~ Limited with openpyxl	✓ Strong native support
Work with slicers and Excel objects	~ Limited or library-dependent	✓ Native API support
Use the current selection / active cell	× No	✓ Yes
Immediately see workbook changes	× Usually requires opening or downloading the result	✓ Yes
Use Python and other external libraries	✓ Excellent	× Generally no
Work without Excel installed	✓ Yes	× Requires an Excel environment