

Learning Manual Data Entry: Adding Rows to Tables in Power BI

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RECOMMENDED CITATION

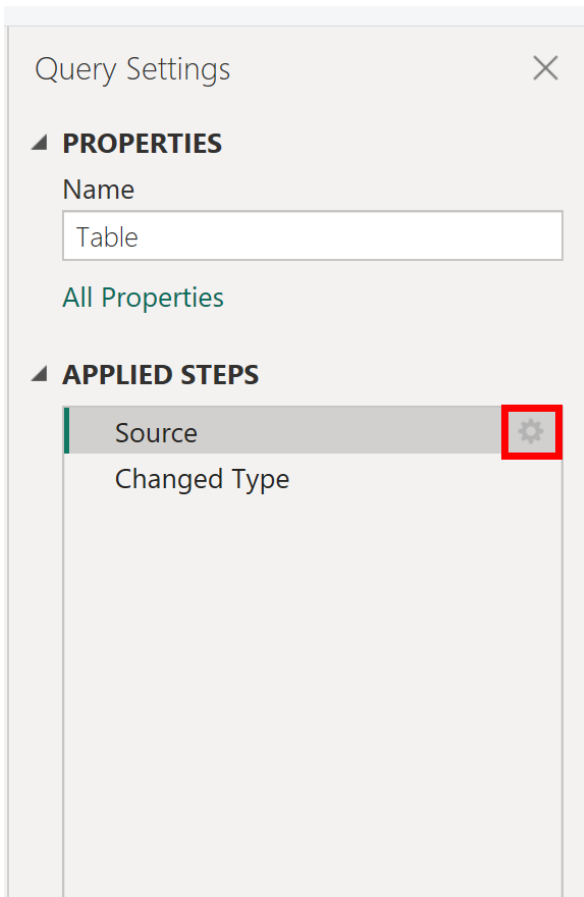
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Understanding Manual Data Management in Power BI

The capacity for manual data input is an indispensable feature for crucial tasks such as rapid dashboard prototyping, handling small lookup tables, or managing highly static datasets within a [Power BI](#) environment. While Power BI is fundamentally architected to connect seamlessly with vast external data sources--including enterprise databases, cloud services, and extensive file systems--it also provides the essential utility to create tables directly within the application. However, a common point of confusion for new users arises because, once a manual table is established, the standard visualization interface does not offer an immediate, visible "Add Row" button.

Fortunately, the process for extending a manually created table is remarkably straightforward, provided the user knows where to locate and modify the underlying data definition. This modification takes place within the powerful **Power Query Editor**. The most efficient and globally recommended approach for inserting new data rows into a static table involves revisiting the initial data input configuration. Specifically, users must click the **Gear icon** (settings) located immediately adjacent to the **Source** step, found within the [Applied Steps](#) pane of the Power Query interface.

This targeted approach guarantees that the fundamental structure of the data--the static table generated via the **Enter Data** function--is updated at its origin point, before any subsequent data transformation or cleaning steps are applied. Attempting to circumvent the modification of the **Source** step would necessitate inefficient workarounds, such as appending entirely new tables, which complicates the data pipeline unnecessarily for simple row additions. This detailed guide will walk you through the entire lifecycle, from initial table creation to the successful and efficient insertion of new data rows.

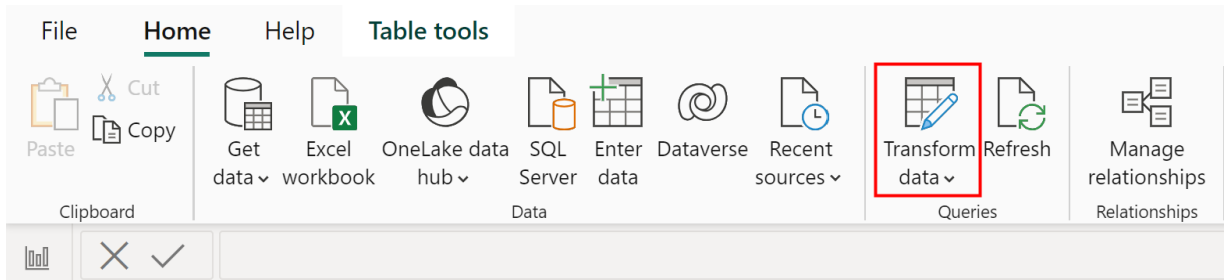


The remainder of this article provides a structured, practical, and step-by-step walkthrough, demonstrating precisely how to execute this modification efficiently in a typical data preparation scenario.

Gaining Access to the Power Query Editor

Before any data structure can be created or modified, we must first activate the core data manipulation environment within [Power BI Desktop](#): the [Power Query Editor](#). This editor serves as the essential gateway for all data transformation and cleaning operations, providing the necessary tools and interface for manually inputting and shaping data.

To initiate the process, begin by opening Power BI Desktop and directing your attention to the primary application ribbon. Navigate to the **Home** tab, which houses the fundamental tools for data connectivity and preparation. Within the **Home** tab, locate and click the **Transform data** icon. Executing this action immediately launches the [Power Query Editor](#) in a dedicated, separate window, temporarily shifting focus away from the report canvas to concentrate exclusively on data preparation tasks.

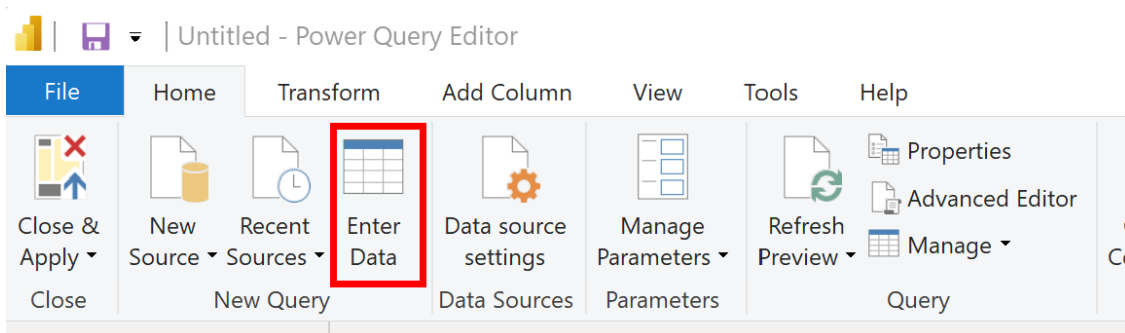


Once the [Power Query Editor](#) is successfully launched and active, we are fully prepared to create our foundational table. The editor window provides a comprehensive overview, displaying all currently loaded queries, a list of applied transformation steps, and a live data preview, ensuring users maintain precise control over every stage of the data modeling workflow.

Establishing the Baseline Static Data Table

Our immediate objective is to define and establish the initial, static table that we will subsequently modify. This is accomplished using the robust, built-in **Enter Data** function, which facilitates the direct entry of small datasets and functions much like a streamlined spreadsheet interface directly within [Power BI](#).

While remaining within the Power Query Editor window, ensure you are positioned on the **Home** tab. Locate the **New Query** group on the ribbon. Within this group, select the [Enter Data](#) icon. Clicking this opens a specialized dialog box designed specifically for manual data entry, enabling users to clearly define column headers and populate the initial set of data rows.



For illustrative purposes, we will input hypothetical data concerning professional basketball players, including essential performance metrics. It is absolutely critical at this stage to confirm that the column headers are accurately named and that the initial dataset is correct, as this defined structure will dictate the format requirements for all subsequent rows. In our example, we will input records for several players, defining columns such as **Player Name**, **Team Affiliation**, and **Points**

Per Game (PPG).

Create Table

	Team	Points	Assists	+
1	Celtics	14	10	
2	Mavs	22	14	
3	Lakers	19	5	
4	Spurs	14	9	
5	Kings	20	3	
6	Nets	28	7	
7	Warriors	15	2	
+				

OK Cancel

After successfully entering the required data into the input grid, click **OK**. [Power BI](#) processes this manual data, generating a new query within the Power Query Editor. This new query, typically labeled "Table1" by default, now contains the dataset. Importantly, the entirety of this initial data entry action is captured and recorded in the [Applied Steps](#) panel under the name **Source**. This **Source** step contains the underlying [M code](#) definition of our static table.

The screenshot shows the Power Query Editor window titled "Untitled - Power Query Editor". The ribbon includes tabs for File, Home, Transform, Add Column, View, Tools, and Help. The Home tab is active, showing options like Close & Apply, New Source, Recent Sources, Enter Data, Data source settings, Manage Parameters, Refresh Preview, Properties, Advanced Editor, Manage, Choose Columns, Remove Columns, Keep Rows, and Remove Rows. The Queries pane on the left shows a single query named "Table". The main preview pane displays a table with the following data:

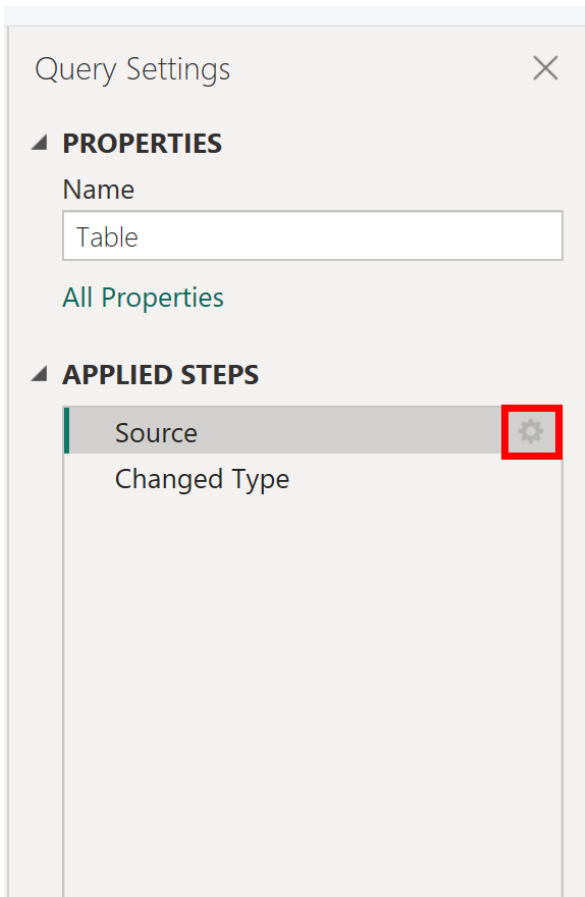
	Team	Points	Assists
1	Celtics	14	10
2	Mavs	22	14
3	Lakers	19	5
4	Spurs	14	9
5	Kings	20	3
6	Nets	28	7
7	Warriors	15	2

The Core Technique: Revisiting the Source Step Definition

Once the table is established and its data is visible in the Power Query Editor preview pane, the inevitable operational challenge arises: how do we efficiently integrate additional data? Unlike tables sourced from external files, where updating the original source file automatically triggers a refresh, a manually entered table requires a specific procedure--we must modify the foundational [M code](#) definition that was generated during the initial [Enter Data](#) process. This crucial definition is contained entirely within the **Source** step.

To successfully append a new row, we must reopen the original data entry interface. This is achieved by interacting directly with the settings of the **Source** step, which is prominently displayed in the [Applied Steps](#) pane located on the right-hand side of the Power Query Editor window. The **Source** step is always the first, foundational step in the query, representing the raw, unmodified data input before any transformations begin.

Carefully locate the **Applied Steps** list and identify the item labeled **Source**. Directly adjacent to this step name, you will notice a small **Gear icon** (which universally signifies settings). This gear icon is the key mechanism that allows you to reopen the original **Create Table** dialog box. Clicking this icon enables the user to edit the structured data table upon which the entire query is built.



It is critically important to understand that modifying the **Source** step ensures that the newly added data is recognized as an intrinsic part of the original static table. Consequently, any subsequent transformation steps that have been applied (such as reformatting data types, applying filters, or calculating custom columns) will automatically incorporate this new row seamlessly, thereby preserving data integrity and significantly simplifying the management of the data pipeline.

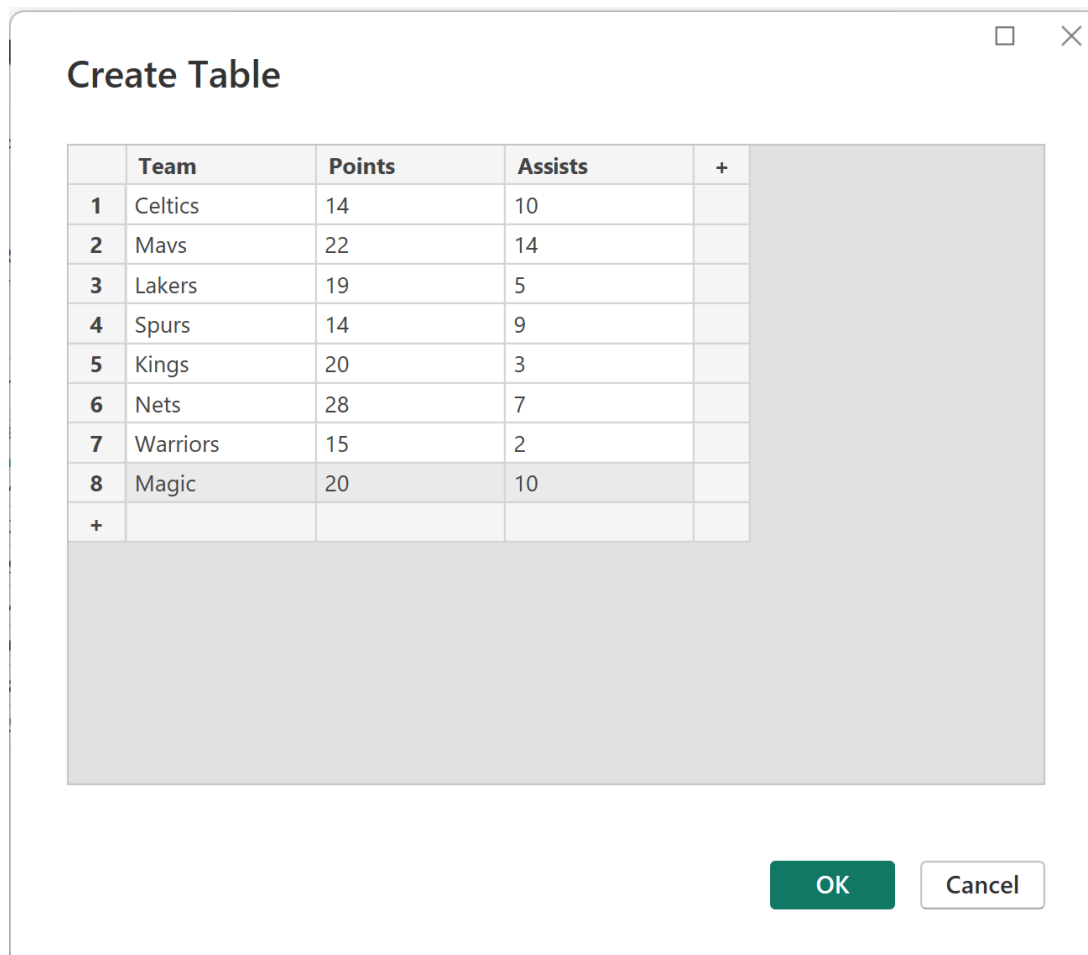
Implementing and Finalizing the Data Insertion

Once you have clicked the **Gear icon** adjacent to the **Source** step, the **Create Table** dialog box--the identical interface used for the initial data entry--will instantly reappear, pre-populated with all the existing data. This is the designated area where we introduce the new data row or rows required for the updated dataset.

To add a new record, navigate simply to the first available empty row within the grid structure. It is essential to ensure that the new data entered aligns perfectly with the data types and structure of the corresponding columns (for example, text data must be placed under text columns, and accurate numerical values under numerical columns). Continuing with our basketball example, let us assume we need to add a player from the "Magic" team. We input the player's name, their team

affiliation, and their corresponding PPG value into the next chronological row.

The addition is instantaneous within the dialog box, allowing for immediate confirmation that the data is correctly structured before you commit to the change.



	Team	Points	Assists	+
1	Celtics	14	10	
2	Mavs	22	14	
3	Lakers	19	5	
4	Spurs	14	9	
5	Kings	20	3	
6	Nets	28	7	
7	Warriors	15	2	
8	Magic	20	10	
+				

Once all required new data rows have been successfully entered into the input grid, click **OK** to finalize the modifications. The Power Query Editor will close the input dialog and immediately update the query's fundamental definition. Because this modification was executed directly on the **Source** step, the entire query preview will refresh instantly, displaying the newly added row integrated seamlessly into the dataset, as if it had been there from the beginning.

	A ^B _C Team	A ^B _C Points	A ^B _C Assists
1	Celtics	14	10
2	Mavs	22	14
3	Lakers	19	5
4	Spurs	14	9
5	Kings	20	3
6	Nets	28	7
7	Warriors	15	2
8	Magic	20	10

This efficient mechanism permits users to add any necessary number of new rows to the manually created table definition. If multiple records are required, they should all be added simultaneously within the reopened **Create Table** dialog box before clicking **OK**. After the changes are verified in the Power Query Editor, the final step is to click **Close & Apply** on the **Home** tab. This action loads the updated dataset into the [Power BI Data Model](#), making the new row immediately available for use in all subsequent visualizations, calculations, and reports.

Conclusion and Next Steps for Mastery

Manually updating and manipulating static data tables in [Power BI](#) is a frequent operational necessity for rapid prototyping and effective management of small, fixed reference lists. By recognizing that the definitive key to editing these tables resides in accessing the settings of the **Source** step through the ubiquitous **Gear icon** in the [Applied Steps](#) pane, users can maintain and update their data with maximum efficiency, entirely avoiding recourse to complex or convoluted data manipulation techniques. This precise method ensures that the [Power BI Data Model](#) remains clean, optimized, and an accurate reflection of the intended dataset.

To further elevate your proficiency in data preparation and complex transformation within Power BI, it is highly recommended to explore advanced topics related to the [M language](#) (Power Query Formula Language) and deeper Power Query functionality. Mastering these specialized areas will grant you significantly greater control over sophisticated data integration and cleanup challenges.

Additional Resources

The following resources provide detailed tutorials explaining how to perform other common and essential data tasks in Power BI:

[How to Add Index Column to Table in Power BI](#)