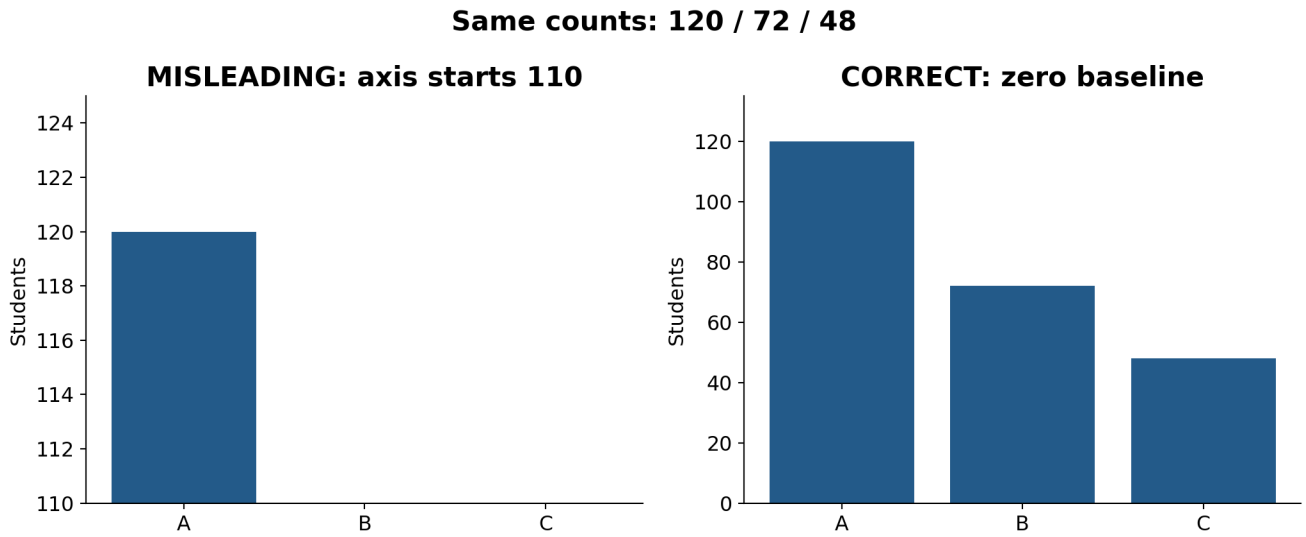
Five Misleading Charts — Before and After

Notes for SHS • Data Science • Topic 82 • All research examples are fictional

Correcting a misleading chart means preserving its source numbers.

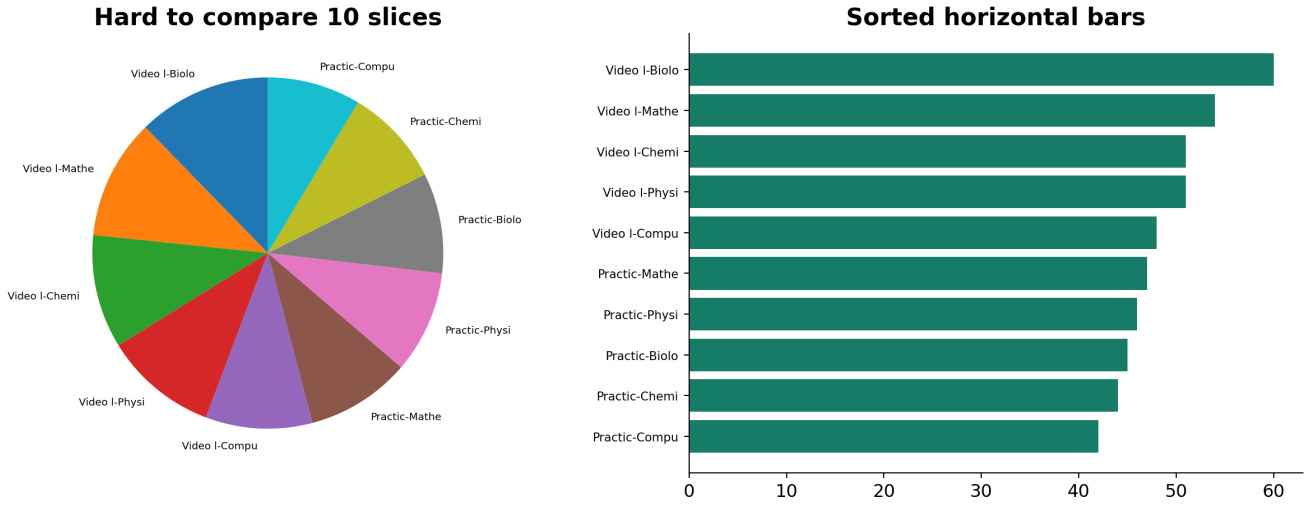
All five original-and-improved comparisons retain the same underlying fictional values. The improved chart changes encoding or context, not the data.

Example 1 — Truncated bar axis



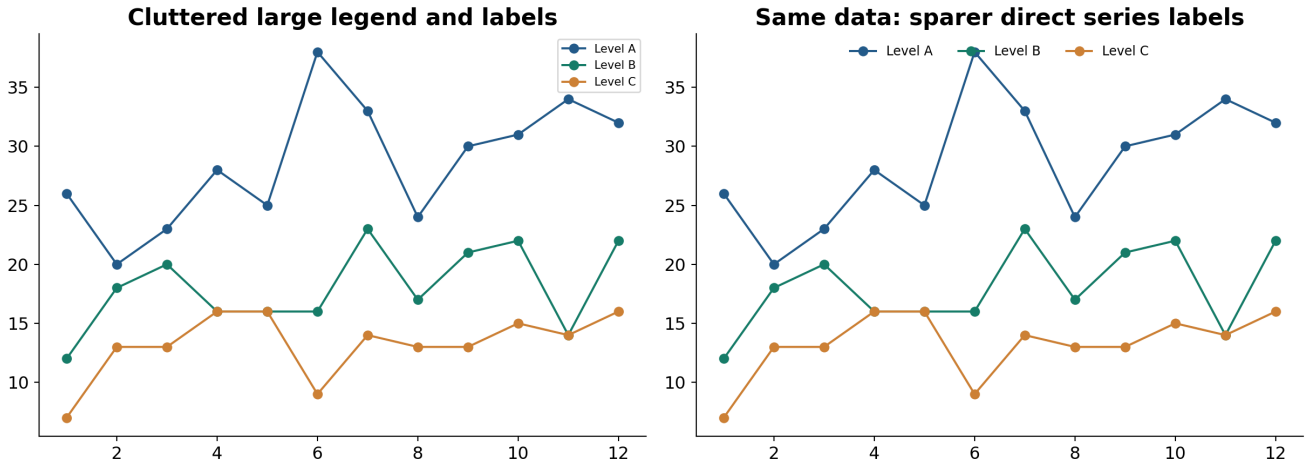
Use a quantitative zero baseline for conventional bar lengths.

Example 2 — Too many pie slices



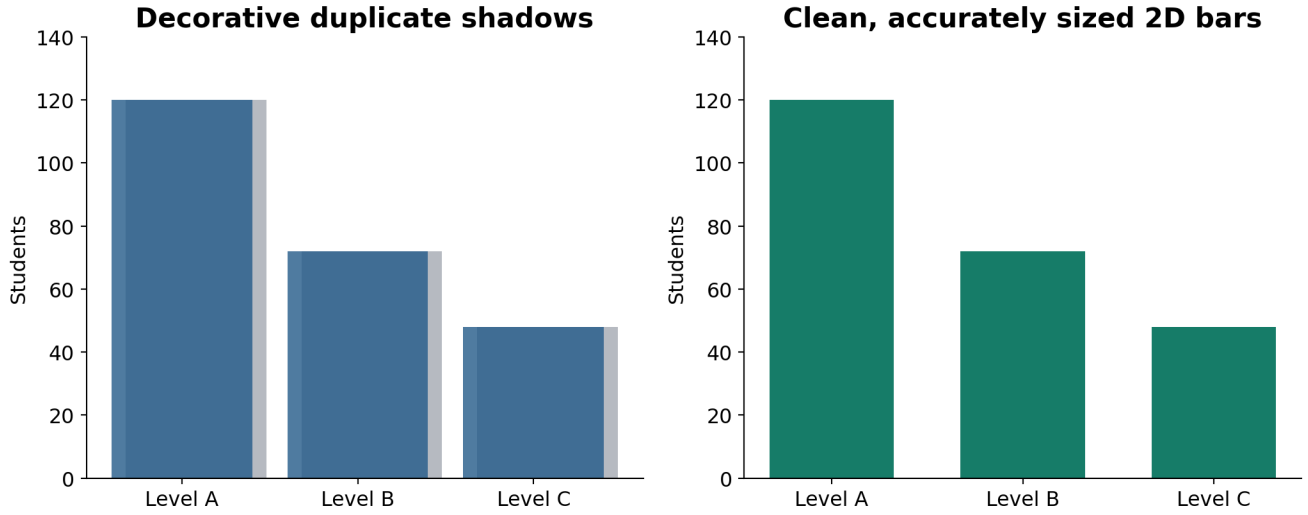
Compare small sector counts more precisely with sorted bars.

Example 3 — Cluttered multi-series lines



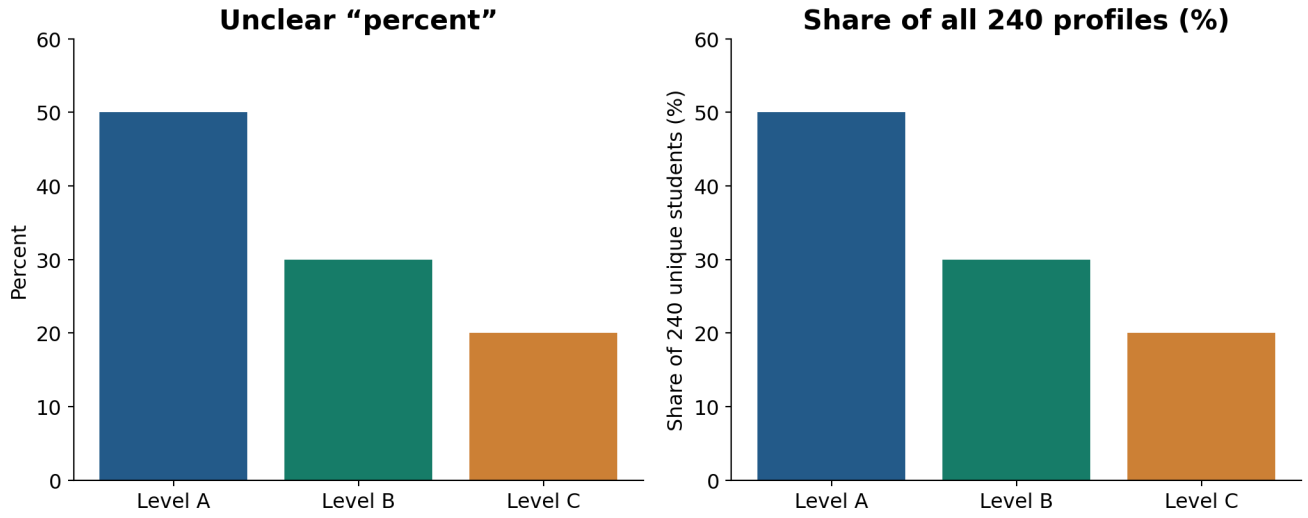
Reduce clutter; use direct labels or small multiples when necessary.

Example 4 — Misleading shadowed columns



Remove perspective and decorative duplicate shadows.

Example 5 — Unlabelled percent denominators



Name the complete population and units for every percentage.