



Excel Quirks and Nuances

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About the speaker:

David H. Ringstrom, CPA, is an author and nationally recognized instructor who teaches scores of webinars each year. His Excel courses are based on over 25 years of consulting and teaching experience. His catchphrase is “Either you work Excel, or it works you.”





Excel Versions

I'll be teaching from the Microsoft 365 version of Excel, and noting any differences or limitations in the legacy versions of Excel.

The Future of Excel

Microsoft 365 (Formerly Office 365)

Subscription-based version of Microsoft Office, which includes Excel. Use the software on multiple devices, new calculation engine, services and more features are rolling out that will dramatically set this version apart from past Excel versions.
www.microsoft365.com

Legacy Versions

Perpetual Licenses

Pay once for the software to use on a single computer. No new features added until you buy a new license. Includes

- Excel 2019
- Excel 2016
- Excel 2013
- Excel 2010
- Excel 2007 and earlier

References to Excel 2013+, Excel 2016+, and so on mean a feature is available in all subsequent versions, including Microsoft 365.

You can play back a recording of this presentation for free by way of your Professionals Excel account.

1 File Home Insert Page Layout

2 Copy

I demonstrate each technique at least twice, first by way of numbered steps in PowerPoint, and then in Excel.

Handouts include PDF of today's presentation along with an example workbook that contains most examples I'll teach from as well as related articles.

Email [ask@davidringstrom.com](mailto:ask@ davidringstrom.com) if you haven't received the handouts.

Excel tip: Data Entry Shortcut

Related Articles Car Payme

AutoRecover Spreadsheets

1 File

2 Open

3 Recent

4 Recover Unsaved Workbooks appears at the bottom of the Recent menu in Excel 2010+. A copy of many, but not all, workbooks that you close without saving are reserved here for 3 or 4 days before being automatically deleted.

5 File

6 Info

7 Automatic back-up copies appear here in Excel 2010+. These can be opened along side the live document, but are deleted when you close the live document.

Manage Workbook

- Today, 9:56 AM (autorecovery)
- Today, 9:51 AM (autorecovery)



Maximize Recent Items Menu

The screenshot shows the Microsoft Excel interface with the following steps highlighted:

- 1** Click the **File** tab in the ribbon.
- 2** Click **Options** in the bottom-left corner of the File menu.
- 3** In the **Excel Options** dialog box, click **Save** in the left-hand list.
- 4** In the **Save** tab, change the **Save AutoRecover information every** setting to **2** minutes. A callout box says: "Change this setting to 2 minutes instead of the default of 10."
- 5** In the **Excel Options** dialog box, click **Advanced** in the left-hand list.
- 6** In the **Advanced** tab, change the **Show this number of Recent Workbooks** setting to **50**. A callout box says: "Change this setting to 50 to maximize the Recent menu."
- 7** Click the **OK** button at the bottom right of the dialog box.



Subtotal Feature

1 Sort your data so you don't end up with meaningless subtotals. Then, click anywhere in the list.

2 Data

3 Subtotal

4 Vendor

5 Cases Sold

6 Click OK.

7 The list is subtotaled and outlined.

Product	Cases Sold	Total Sales
Oranges	7,818	93,816
Apples	1,565	21,910
Kiwi	9,967	99,670
Bananas	9,842	98,420
Mixed Berries	8,993	89,930
Oranges	686	9,604
Apples	8,203	82,030
Kiwi	3,920	58,800
Bananas	8,262	107,406
Mixed Berries	4,251	51,012

Region	City	Vendor	Product	Cases Sold	Total Sales
North GA	Atlanta	Bob's Fruit	Oranges	7,818	93,816
North GA	Atlanta	Bob's Fruit	Apples	1,565	21,910
North GA	Atlanta	Bob's Fruit	Kiwi	9,967	99,670
North GA	Atlanta	Bob's Fruit	Bananas	9,842	98,420
North GA	Atlanta	Bob's Fruit	Mixed Berries	8,993	89,930
Bob's Fruit Total				38,185	403,746
North GA	Clarkesville	Fruit Direct	Oranges	686	9,604
North GA	Clarkesville			8,203	82,030
North GA	Clarkesville			3,920	58,800



Formatting Subtotals

1 Select the range of cells containing the subtotals.

1	2	3	C	D	E	F	G
1	Vendor		Product	Cases Sold	Total Sales		
7	Bob's Fruit Total			38,185	403,746		
13	Fruit Direct Total			25,322	308,852		
19	Fruit R Us Total			27,169	348,912		
25	Fruitj Total			27,487	372,053		
43	Navel Oranges & Kiwi Total			20,180	233,373		
49	Oran			26,111	321,368		
55	Oran			18,030	214,041		
61	Whis			40,550	495,770		
62	Grand Total			267,587	3,279,638		

2 Highlight the cells containing the subtotals (Cases Sold and Total Sales).

Keyboard Shortcut: Use Alt; in lieu of steps 3, 4, 5 and 6 to select visible cells.

3 Click the **Home** tab.

4 Click the **Find & Select** button.

5 Click the **Go To Special...** button.

6 Double-click to skip the OK button.

7 Select **Visible cells only**.

Apply formatting in usual fashion.

8 The final result shows the subtotals formatted.

1	2	3	D	E	F
1	Product		Cases Sold	Total Sales	
2	Oranges		7,818	93,816	
3	Apples		1,565	21,910	
4	Kiwi		9,967	99,670	
5	Bananas		9,842	98,420	
6	Mixed Berries		8,993	89,930	
7			38,185	403,746	
8	Oranges		686	9,604	
9	Apples		8,203	82,030	
10	Kiwi		3,920	58,800	
11	Bananas		8,262	107,406	
12	Mixed Berries		4,251	51,012	
56	Oranges		9,983	149,745	
57	Apples		8,319	108,147	
58	Kiwi		6,850	68,500	
59	Bananas		7,994	87,934	
60	Mixed Berries		7,404	81,444	
61			40,550	495,770	
62			267,587	3,279,638	

Fruit Sales



Filtering Keyboard Shortcut

1 Right-click the Quick Access Toolbar.

2 Click **More Commands...**

3 The Quick Access Toolbar section of the Excel Options dialog box appears.

4 Choose commands from: **Commands Not in the Ribbon**

5 Select **AutoFilter**

6 Click **Add >>**

7 Click **OK**

8 Select a cell that contains the value you want to filter for.

9 Click the AutoFilter icon.

10 The data is filtered by selected cell's value by just one click.

	B	C	D
1	City	Vendor	Product
3	Atlanta	Fruit R Us	Apples
8	Atlanta	Bob's Fruit	Apples
13	Atlanta	Fruitju	Apples
18	Atlanta	Orange U Glad	Apples
	Blue Ridge	Mountain	Apples
			Apples
			Apples
			Apples
			Apples



Add Clear Filter to Quick Access Toolbar

1 Data

2 Right-click on Clear.

3 Add to Quick Access Toolbar

4 Tap Alt to view the keyboard shortcuts.

5 Optional: To remove the icon, right-click on the icon.

6 Remove from Quick Access Toolbar

The Clear command displays all rows again but keeps the filtering arrows in place. The keyboard shortcut helps you quickly reset a list that you now wish to filter in a different fashion.

	A	B	C	D
1	Region	City	Vendor	Product
2	North GA	Atlanta	Fruit R Us	Oranges
3	North GA	Atlanta	Fruit R Us	Apples
4	North GA	Atlanta	Fruit R Us	Kiwi
5	North GA	Atlanta	Fruit R Us	Bananas
6	North GA	Atlanta	Fruit R Us	Mixed Berries
7	North GA	Atlanta	Bob's Fruit	Oranges
8	North GA			
9	North GA			
10	North GA			
11	North GA			
12	North GA			
13	North GA			



Table Feature

1 Select any cell within the list and then press Ctrl-T and press Enter, otherwise do steps 2 through 4.

2 Insert

3

4 OK

5 Design

6 Header Row, Total Row, Banded Rows

7

8 Sum

Keyboard shortcut: Press Ctrl-Shift-T anywhere within the table to display the total row in lieu of steps 5 and 6.

Keyboard shortcut: Press Alt-Down in the total row to display the function list in lieu of step 7.

Region	City	Vendor	Cases Sold	Total Sales
North GA	Atlanta	Fruit R Us	6168	61680
North GA	Atlanta	Fruit R Us	6079	85106
North GA	Atlanta	Fruit R Us	6058	66638
South GA	Valdosta	Oranges 'n Onions	6,165	80,14
South GA	Valdosta	Oranges 'n Onions	Mixed Berries	8,35
Total				3,279,63



Table Feature Total Row

1 Column headings and filter arrows move up to worksheet frame when the first row of a table is no longer visible.

2 Table Design

3 Total Row

4 The last column of a table is either summed or counted when you enable the Total Row feature.

5 Click the arrow in any cell within the total row to add more formulas.

6 Sum

7 The total row values include visible cells only.

Region	City	Vendor	Product	Cases Sold	Total Sales
46	South GA	Brunswick	Navel Oranges & Mo Mixed Berries	5,668	68,016
47	South GA			10	52,400
48	South GA	Valdosta		28	61,464
49	South GA	Valdosta		52	11,682
50	South GA	Valdosta		55	80,145
51	South GA	Valdosta	Oranges 'n Onions	835	8,350
52					
53					
54					
--					

Cases Sold	Total Sales	G
51	835	8,350
52		3,279,638
53	None	
54	Average	
55	Count	
56	Count Num	
57	Max	
58	Min	
59	Sum	
60	StdDev	
61	Var	
	More Functions...	

Product	Cases Sold	Total Sales
1	Apples	6,079
3	Apples	1,565
8	Apples	7,704
13	Apples	2,605
18	Apples	17,953
52		246,132
53		
54		
55		
56		
57		

Features that Table Disables

1 Click any cell in the first row of a table.

2 NUANCE: The Delete command is disabled. You can delete any other row of a table.

3 NUANCE: Custom Views is disabled whenever a workbook contains a table.

4 Design

5 Convert to Range

6 Yes

Convert tables back to normal ranges to enable disabled features.

Do you want to convert the table to a normal range?

Region	City	Vendor	Product	Cases Sold
North GA	Atlanta	Fruit R Us	Oranges	6168
North GA	Atlanta	Fruit R Us	Apples	6079
North GA	Atlanta	Fruit R Us	Kiwi	6058



Watch Window

1 Formulas

2 Watch Window

3 Add Watch...

4 Select cell(s) you wish to monitor.

5 Add

6 The Watch Window enables you to monitor changes in cells across various worksheets in real-time. Double-click any value to jump to a given worksheet cell.

Watch Window

Book	Sheet	Name	Cell	Value	Formula
12 Month Income Statement.xlsb	Summary		N16	535,549	=SUM(B16:M16)
12 Month Income Statement.xlsb	January		B16	50,490	=B8-B15
12 Month Income Statement.xlsb	February		B16	120,257	=B8-B15
12 Month Income Statement.xlsb	March		B16	2,043	=B8-B15

Summary January February March **Quarter1** April ...

Watch Window

Summary January February March **Quarter1** April ...



Inquire Add-In (Enterprise Versions)

1 File Home Insert Draw Page Layout

Good evening

New blank workbook

Recent

Options

2

Excel Options

General Formulas Data Proofing Save Language Accessibility Advanced Customization Trust Center

Add-ins

View and manage Microsoft Office Add-ins

Analysis ToolPak

Microsoft Data Streamer for Excel

Microsoft Power Map for Excel

Analysis ToolPak

Microsoft Office

No compatibility information

COM Add-ins

Go...

3

COM Add-ins

Add-ins available:

☒ Inquire

☐ Microsoft Data Streamer for Excel

☐ Microsoft Power Map for Excel

☐ Microsoft Power Pivot for Excel

4

5 Click Go.

6

7 OK

8

Inquire typically requires an enterprise or business license for Office (as opposed to a Home & Office or personal license).

If available in your version of Excel, Inquire reveals a suite of auditing tools.



Inquire Menu (Enterprise Versions)

AutoSave ☐ Off

File Home Insert Page Layout Formulas Data Review View Help **Inquire**

Workbook Analysis Report

Workbook Relationship Diagram

Worksheet Relationship

Cell Relationship

Compare Files Compare

Clean Excess Cell Formatting

Workbook Passwords

Help

Miscellaneous

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I										
1	Summary																		
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workbook Analysis: Creates an exhaustive report with just about every detail possible about a workbook • Workbook Relationship: Flowchart showing how workbook is linked to other workbooks (if any). • Worksheet Relationship: Flowchart showing how worksheets within workbook relate to each other. • Cell Relationship: Flow chart showing how cells are linked to other cells in the workbook. • Compare Files: Enables you to compare two differences between two Excel workbooks. • Clean Excess Formatting: Removes extraneous formatting that reduce risk of data corruption. • Workbook Passwords: A password manager for storing spreadsheet passwords. 										Sept								
3																			
4																			
5																			
6																			
7										12									
8	Gross Profit	89,058	158,925	40,711	60,801	12,575	100,260	55,300	85,826	11									
9	Operating Expenses																		
10	Wages	34,750	34,750	34,750	34,750	34,750	34,750	34,750	34,750										
11	Rent	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500										
12	Utilities	278	478	478	478	478	478	478	478										



Locating Circular References

The image illustrates how to locate and manage circular references in Excel. It is divided into two main sections: the Excel interface and the Excel Options dialog box.

Excel Interface (Left):

- Formulas Tab:** The 'Formulas' tab is selected in the ribbon, indicated by a red circle with the number 1.
- Function Library:** The 'Function Library' group shows a formula in cell A3: `=SUM(A1:A3)`. Cell A1 contains 100, and cell A2 contains 200. Cell A3 displays the result 30000, indicating a circular reference.
- What You Want to Do:** The 'What You Want to Do' group shows the 'Circular References' button, which is circled in red with the number 3. A red circle with the number 2 is also present near the 'Error Checking' button.
- Excel Message:** A yellow callout box with the number 4 states: "Excel tells you where the circular references are within a workbook." This refers to the status bar at the bottom right, which shows "N" (indicating no circular references) and "Circular References" (indicating circular references are present).

Excel Options Dialog Box (Right):

- Formulas Tab:** The 'Formulas' tab is selected in the dialog box.
- Calculation options:** The 'Workbook Calculation' section shows 'Automatic' selected. The 'Enable iterative calculation' checkbox is circled in red with the number 1.
- Working with formulas:** The 'R1C1 reference style' checkbox is unchecked, 'Formula AutoComplete' is checked, and 'Use table names in formulas' is checked.
- Error Checking:** The 'Enable background error checking' checkbox is checked.

Callout Box: A red callout box with the number 2 states: "This Circular References command is only available when Enable iterative calculations is turned off."



N Function

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	Interest	5.25%		Previous:	\$1,932.71	
2	Term	360				
3	Principal	350,000				
4	Payment	\$1,932.71				
5	$=-\text{PMT}(\text{Interest}/12, \text{Term}, \text{Principal}) + \text{N}("-\text{PMT}(\text{B1}/12, \text{B2}, \text{B3})")$					
6	$=-\text{PMT}(\text{Interest}/12, \text{Term}, \text{Principal}) + \text{N}("-\text{PMT}(\text{B1}/12, \text{B2}, \text{B3})")$					
8						
9						
10						
11						

The N function allows you to store notes in the formula bar. Any text contained within the N function evaluates to zero, so one use is to preserve the previous version of a formula.

value

$$"- \text{PMT}(\text{B1}/12, \text{B2}, \text{B3})"$$

 the value you want to convert to a note

N function



Allow Editing Directly in Cells

The image shows the Excel interface with the following steps highlighted:

- File** tab is selected in the ribbon.
- Options** is selected in the left sidebar.
- Advanced** is selected in the Excel Options dialog box.
- Allow editing directly in cells** checkbox is unchecked in the Editing options section. A callout states: "By default this checkbox is turned on. Clear the checkbox to enable hidden functionality."
- OK** button is clicked.
- Double-click on a cell containing a formula (e.g., B4) to display the precedent cells. A callout states: "Double-click a cell that contains a formula to display the precedent cells on the current worksheet."
- Double-click on a cell to edit notes (f/k/a comments). A callout states: "Double-click on a cell to edit notes (f/k/a comments)."

The spreadsheet data shown is as follows:

	A	B	C
1	Interest	5.25%	
2	Term	48	
3	Principal	20,000.00	
4	Payment	\$462.85	



Use F2 to Toggle Enter/Edit Modes

1 Click once to select the chart.

2 Chart Design

3 Select Data

4 NUANCE: Press F2 to toggle to Edit mode (instead of Point or Enter modes) if you want to use your arrow keys when editing cell references in a field like this. In Point or Enter modes, using the arrow keys adds additional cell references into the field.

Chart data range: = 'Apples vs. Oranges'!\$A\$1:\$F\$3

Legend Entries (Series)

Series	Horizontal (Category) Axis Labels
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Apples	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> January
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Oranges	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> February
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> March
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> April
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> May

Hidden and Empty Cells

Apples vs. Oranges

Edit

Accessibility: Investigate



The Undocumented DATEDIF function

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
1	Days		Months		Years			Unit Options					
2	1/1/2024		1/1/2024		1/1/2024			"Y" - number of complete years					
3	2/28/2024		12/31/2024		12/31/2029			"M" - number of complete months					
4	59		12		6			"D" - number of days					
5								"MD" - number of days ignoring months/years*					
6	=DATEDIF(A2,A3,"D")+1							"YM" - number of months ignoring days/years					
7		=DATEDIF(C2,C3,"M")+1						"YD" - number of years ignoring months/days					
8				=DATEDIF(E2,E3,"Y")+1									
9								* See help documentation for potential miscalculation results when using "MD".					
10													
11													
12													
13													
14													
15													
16													
17													
18													
19													
20													
21													
22													

=DATEDIF(A2,A3,"D")+1

start_date
A2
Starting date

end_date
A3
Ending date

unit
"D"
Y - Years
M - Months
D - Days

DATEDIF does not include the first unit, so add 1 to include the first day, month, or year.



Creating a Lock Cell Shortcut

1 Home

2 Format

3 Right-click on Lock Cell.

4 Add to Quick Access Toolbar

5 A shaded background indicates a cell is locked. Click the icon to toggle the locked status on or off. Press Alt to reveal a keyboard shortcut.

6 An unshaded background indicates unlocked cells.

7 Optional: Right-click.

8 Remove from Quick Access Toolbar

Amortization Table.xlsx • Saved

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	Interest	5.25%					

Amortization Table

	A	B	C
1	Interest	5.25%	

Amortization Table

	A	B	C
1	Inter		
2	Term		



Full Screen View

1 Auto-hide Ribbon
Hide the Ribbon. Click at the top of the application to show it.

2 Office 365 and earlier: Choose Auto-hide Ribbon. This hides the ribbon, and the worksheet enlarges to take up your entire computer screen.

3 Office 365 and earlier: Choose Show Tabs and Commands to undo Full Screen mode.

4 Show Tabs and Commands
Show Ribbon tabs and commands all the time.

5 Show Ribbon

6 Full-screen mode

7 Excel hides the ribbon, and the worksheet enlarges to take up your entire computer screen.

8 Click on the title bar to temporarily display the menu.

9 Show Ribbon

10 Full-screen mode

11 Always show Ribbon

Income Statement Data:

	Subcontracted Labor Income	600	2,
8 Total Income	24,948	24,	
9 Cost of Goods Sold			



Toggle Full Screen Shortcut

1 If you don't see the Quick Access Toolbar right-click on File and choose Show Quick Access Toolbar.

2 Touch/Mouse Mode
More Commands...
Show Below the Ribbon

3 The Quick Access Toolbar section of the Excel Options dialog box appears.

4 Customize the Quick Access Toolbar.
Choose commands from: (1)
Commands Not in the Ribbon

5 from XML Data Import (Legacy)
Full Screen [Toggle Full Screen Vi...
Group Box [Group Box (Form Co...
Hide Ribbon

6 Add >>
<< Remove

7 OK

8 Click the icon or tap the Alt key and use the keyboard shortcut to hide Excel's menu and formula bar so you can see more rows of the worksheet.

9 Tap the Escape key to exit Full Screen View.

	A	B	C
1	Region	City	Vendor
2	North GA	Atlanta	Fruit R Us
3			
4			
5			
6	North GA	Atlanta	Fruit R Us
7	North GA	Atlanta	Bob's Fruit
8	North GA	Atlanta	Bob's Fruit



Close All Shortcut

1 Right-click on the Quick Access Toolbar icon.

2 Click **More Commands...**

3 The Quick Access Toolbar section of the Excel Options dialog box appears.

4 Select **Commands Not in the Ribbon** from the list.

5 Select **Close All** from the list of commands.

6 Click **Add >>**

7 Click **OK**

8 Optional: Tap Alt key to reveal keyboard shortcut.

9 Optional: To remove the icon, right-click on the icon.

10 Click **Remove from Quick Access Toolbar**



Text to Speech Command

1 If you don't see the Quick Access Toolbar right-click on File and choose Show Quick Access Toolbar.

2 More Commands...

3 The Quick Access Toolbar section of the Excel Options dialog box appears.

4 Commands Not in the Ribbon

5 Speak Cells

6 Stop Speaking [Speak Cells - ...]

7 OK

8 Select a range of cells containing numbers and/or words.

9 Click Stop Speaking Cells if needed.

10 Excel reads words or numbers.

Excel Says:

- One hundred dollars
- January Thirty-First, TwentyTwenty-Four
- Excel reads words or numbers.



50 Excel Keyboard Shortcuts Template

The screenshot shows the Microsoft Excel 'New' screen. The 'File' tab is selected in the ribbon, and the 'New' button is highlighted in the left sidebar. A search bar at the bottom of the sidebar contains the word 'Shortcuts'. A callout box points to the search bar with the text: 'Type the word Shortcuts in the search field and then press Enter.' The search results show a template titled '50 time-saving Excel short...'. A callout box points to this template with the text: 'Double-click to open the template.' The template preview shows a document titled '50 time-saving keyboard shortcuts in Excel for Windows'.

1 File

2 New

Home

Insert

Draw

Page Layout

Formulas

Data

Review

View

Help

AutoSave Off

Book1 - Excel

New

← Back

Shortcuts

Blank workbook

Income Statement

Office

Shortcuts

3 Type the word Shortcuts in the search field and then press Enter.

4 Double-click to open the template.

50 time-saving Excel short...

Thank you for attending!



I'm happy to hear from you. In particular let me know if you did not receive the handouts for this presentation.

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Is there something you were hoping to learn today but didn't?
Please let me know. You can ask me anything about Excel.

