

Quick Tips

for

Entering Formulas in Excel

Getting Started

This *Quick Tip* focuses primarily on entering formulas into your spreadsheet. To begin, you will need to open Excel which can be found under the Start Menu – Microsoft Office – Microsoft Excel.

Entering a formula using the AutoSum function

- To enter data, click on any cell in which you'd like to insert the data.
- Enter the numbers or text you desire.
- To edit the data, click on the cell. Then, go up and edit the information in the Formula bar (beneath the toolbars.)
- To format the data in a cell, click on the cell. Go to Format – Cell – and select the appropriate format. For example, if you are including prices of some product, you may want the data to have a currency format. You can also use the toolbar options to format the font.
- The auto fill feature in Excel makes it easy to enter certain types of information that has a consistent pattern. For example, if you are entering the days of the week, type Monday in one cell, Tuesday in the cell just below it. Now move your mouse to the bottom corner of the cell until you see a crosshair. Click and drag your mouse down the column. You will see that the rest of the cells are filled with the days of the week.

Entering formulas

- Click on the cell for which you want the formula results to appear.
- Click in the formula bar. Type =. Then, enter the formula using the order of operations. For example: the formula =G10-G9 will take the contents in G9 and subtract them from G10.
- You can also use words in your formula, such as SUM and AVERAGE. To calculate the sum of a column of numbers, you could enter =SUM(A1:A9) This will add all the contents in cells A1 - A9. Or, =AVERAGE(A2:A4,A7) will average the numbers in A2 – A4 and A7.
- You can also use the Insert Function button to the left of the Formula Bar. After clicking Insert Function, a dialogue box will pop up. Select the desired function. If you do not see the function you need, click on the drop down box next to “Or select a category:” After selecting the category, take your mouse and click and drag around the area(s) that you'd like to include in the function.

Conditional Formatting

You may want to change the formatting of a cell depending on the cell contents. For example, when the result is negative, you can format the cell so that the number is red and bold.

- Select the appropriate cell. Click Format, Conditional Formatting.
- A dialogue box will appear with options for what you want to do. Select **Cell Value Is**, then **Less than**, then **type the number desired** (0). Now click on **Format**. Select the desired formats for that cell. (Red and Bold.) Click **OK**.