Microsoft Excel 2013: VLOOKUP Function

The VLOOKUP function - searches for a value in the first column of a vertical table and if it finds it, it returns the matching value in the column specified by the user.

Syntax:  =VLOOKUP(lookup value, table array, column index, range lookup)

Lookup value – What value are you searching for?
  •  Must be in first column of table array

Table array – Which table of data should the function search through?
  •  It must have at least two columns of data
  •  The values in the first column can be text, numbers, or logical values
  •  Uppercase and lowercase text are equivalent

Column Index – Which column contains the data you want to return?

Range lookup – Do you want an approximate or exact match?
  •  “False” = exact match
  •  “True” = approximate match
    –  True is the default, unless otherwise specified
    –  If TRUE, data MUST be organized in ascending order or results may be inaccurate

=VLOOKUP(E2,A:B,2,False) will result in the following behavior:

  •  The value in E2 will be searched for in the first column of table A:B
  •  When E2 has been found, it will return the corresponding value located in the second column of table A:B
    o  In this example, the second column will be column B
  •  Only an exact match will trigger this behavior
    o  If no exact match is found, the message “#N/A” will be returned instead
Common VLOOKUP Errors:

- If the column index is less than 1, the function will return #VALUE!
- If the column index is 1, the function will simply return the lookup value (provided that the lookup value is present)
- If the column index is greater than the number of columns, function returns #REF!
- If you choose an exact match (FALSE) in the range lookup and no exact match is found, the function return #N/A
- The data type of the lookup value is not the same as the first column of the table array, the function return #N/A