

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**
 - In this example, the second column will be column B
- Only an **exact match** will trigger this behavior
 - 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