

**XLOOKUP is generally better than VLOOKUP** — here's a full comparison to help you understand **why**:

### 1. Basic Difference:

Feature	VLOOKUP	XLOOKUP
Lookup Type	Only vertical	Both vertical and horizontal
Approx/Exact	Requires 4th argument for exact	Exact match by default
Search Order	Always left to right	Can search in any direction

### 2. Syntax Comparison:

**VLOOKUP Syntax:**

`=VLOOKUP(lookup_value, table_array, col_index_num, [range_lookup])`

**XLOOKUP Syntax:**

`=XLOOKUP(lookup_value, lookup_array, return_array, [if_not_found], [match_mode], [search_mode])`

### 3. Example:

 **Example Table (A2:C6)**

A(Product)	B(Category)	C(Price)
Apple	Fruit	30
Banana	Fruit	20
Carrot	Vegetable	25
Potato	Vegetable	15
Mango	Fruit	50

**Goal:** Find the price of a product (e.g. "Carrot")

### Using VLOOKUP:

`=VLOOKUP("Carrot", A2:C6, 3, FALSE)`

Issues:

- Column index 3 must be correct (easy to break if you insert/delete columns).
- Only works if Product is the first column (left to right limitation).
- You must remember FALSE for exact match.

### Using XLOOKUP:

`=XLOOKUP("Carrot", A2:A6, C2:C6, "Not Found")`

Benefits:

- Clearly says: lookup "Carrot" in Product column, return value from Price column.
- Safe from column structure changes.
- Handles "Not Found" with a custom message.
- Easier to read and debug.

### Bonus: Reverse Lookup (Impossible with VLOOKUP):

**Get product name if you know the price is 25:**

`=XLOOKUP(25, C2:C6, A2:A6, "Not Found")`

Works perfectly — XLOOKUP can search right to left or bottom to top, which VLOOKUP can't.

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#### 4. Summary Table:

Feature	VLOOKUP	XLOOKUP
Column Flexibility	✗ Needs index number	☑ Use exact column reference
Direction (Right to Left)	✗ Not supported	☑ Supported
Handle Not Found	✗ Needs IFERROR	☑ Built-in parameter
Safer to Edit Table	✗ Breaks if columns change	☑ Stable
Return Multiple Columns	✗ Needs multiple formulas	☑ Easy with spill ranges

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#### ✗ When to use VLOOKUP?

- Only if you're using **older Excel versions** (before 2019 or Excel 365).
- If you're working on **shared files** where others may not have XLOOKUP.

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#### ☑ When to use XLOOKUP?

- If you're using **Excel 365 or Excel 2019+**.
- You want more **flexibility**, safety, and cleaner formulas.



