

MICROSOFT POWER BI MANUAL FOR DESKTOP

Calculated Fields with DAX



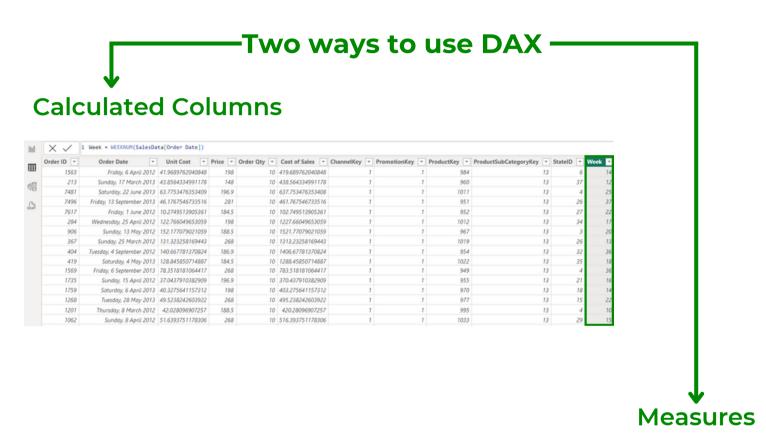


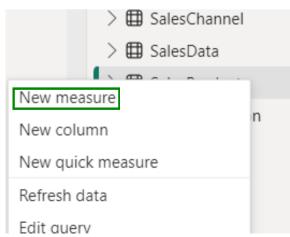
What is DAX?

Data Analysis Expressions (commonly known as **DAX**) is the formula language that drives the Power BI front-end.

With DAX, you can:

- Go beyond the capabilities of traditional spreadsheet formulas, with powerful and flexible functions built specifically to work with relational data models
- Add calculated columns (for filtering) and measures (for aggregation) to enhance data models





Order_Quantity = SUM(SalesData[Order Qty])

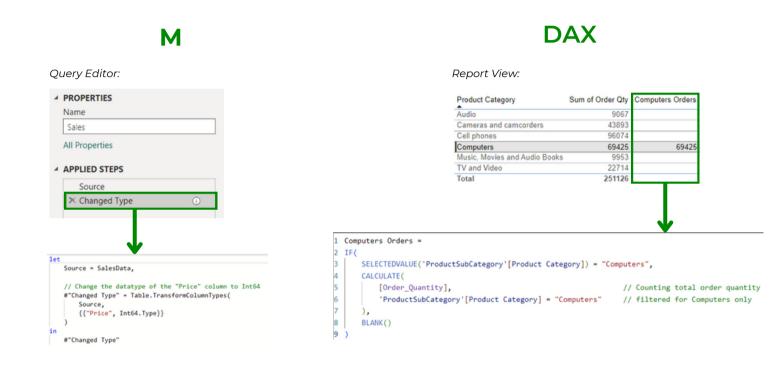
Total Profit = SUMX(SalesData, SalesData[Cost of Sales] - SalesData[Price])



M vs. DAX

M and **DAX** are two distinct functional languages used within Power BI Desktop:

- M is used in the Power Query editor, and is designed specifically for extracting, transforming and loading data
- DAX is used in the Power BI front-end, and is designed specifically for analyzing relational data models



Calculated Columns

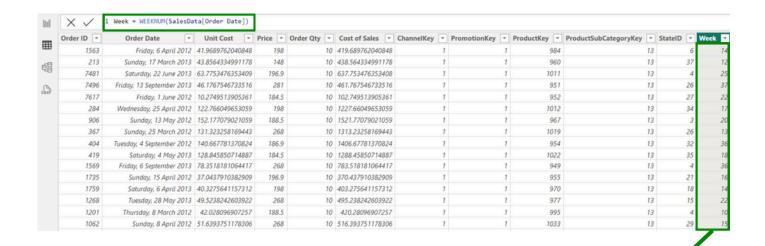
Calculated columns allow you to add new, formula-based columns to tables in a model

- Calculated columns refer to entire tables or columns (no A1-style cell references)
- Calculated columns generate values for each row, which are visible within tables in the Data view
- Calculated columns understand row context; they're great for defining properties based on information in each row, but generally useless for aggregation (sum, count, etc.)

Tip: Calculated columns are typically used for **filtering** & **grouping** data, rather than creating aggregate numerical values



Example: Calculated Columns



In this case we've added a **calculated column** named **Week**, which calculates the week number from the [Order date]

- Since calculated columns understand **row context**, a new value is calculated in each row based on the value in the [Order Date] column
- This is a **valid use** of calculated columns; it creates a new row "property" that we can use to filter or segment any related data within the mode

DAX Measures

Measures are DAX formulas used to generate new calculated values

- Like calculated columns, measures reference **entire tables** or **columns** (no A1-style cell references)
- Unlike calculated columns, measures aren't visible within tables; they can only be "seen" within a visualization like a chart or matrix (similar to a calculated field in a PivotTable)
- Measures evaluate based on filter context, which means they recalculate when the fields or filters around them change

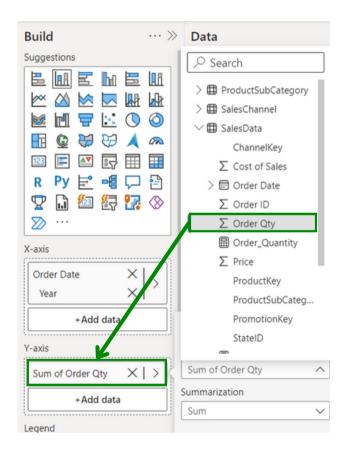
Tip: Use measures to create **numerical**, **calculated values** that can be analyzed in the "**values**" field of a report visual



Implicit vs. Explicit Measures

Implicit measures are created when you drag raw numerical fields into a report visual and manually select an aggregation mode (Sum, Average, Min, Max, Count, etc.)

Explicit measures are created when you actually write a DAX formula and define a new measure that can be used within the model



Example of an Implicit Measure

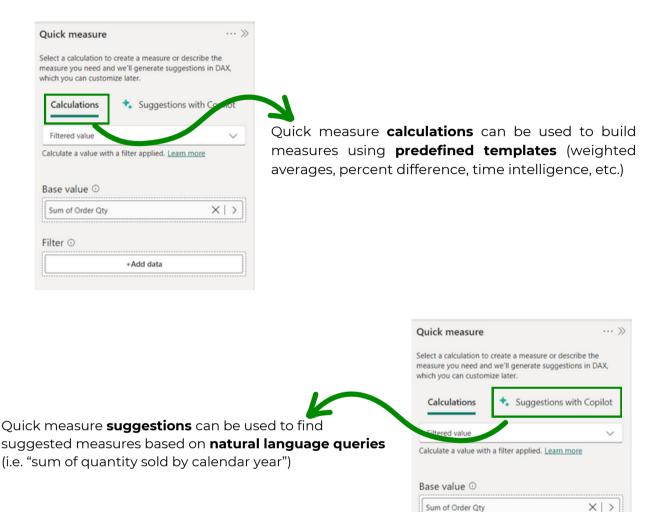
Implicit measures are only accessible within the **specific visualization** in which they were created, and cannot be referenced elsewhere

Explicit measures can be used **anywhere in the report**, and referenced by other DAX calculations to create "measure trees"



Quick Measures

Quick measures automatically create formulas based on pre-built templates or natural language prompts



Tip: Quick measures can be a great learning tool for beginners or for building more complex formulas but use them with caution; **mastering DAX requires a deep understanding of the underlying theory!**

Filter ①

+Add data



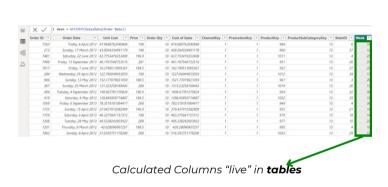
Calculated Columns vs. Measures

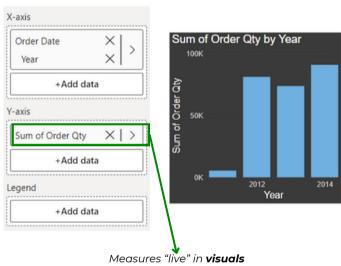
Calculated Columns

- Values are calculated based on information from each row of a table (row context)
- Appends static values to each row in a table and stores them in the model (which increases file size)
- Recalculate on data source refresh or when changes are made to component columns
- Primarily used for **filtering** data in reports

Measures

- Values are calculated based on information from any filters in the report (filter context)
- Does not create new data in the tables themselves (doesn't increase file size)
- Recalculate in response to any change to filters within the report
- Primarily used for aggregating values in report visuals

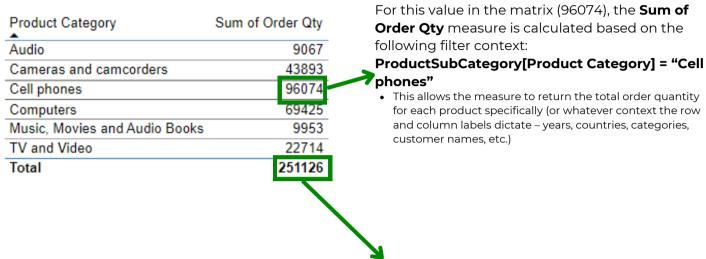






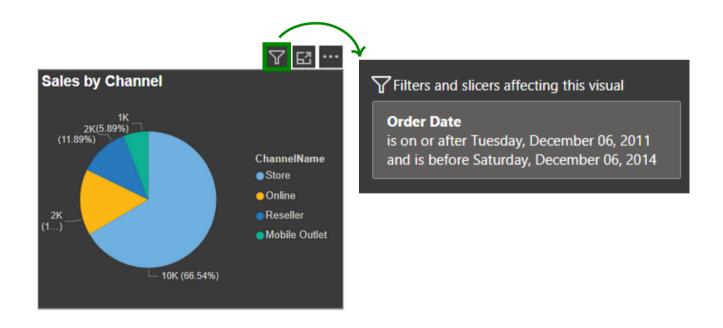
Filter Context

Measures are evaluated based on **filter context**, which means that they recalculate whenever the fields or filters around them change



This total (251126) does **NOT** calculate by summing the values above; it evaluates as an independent measure with **no filter context** applied

• **IMPORTANT**: Every measure value in a report evaluates **independently** (like an island) and calculates based on its own filter context



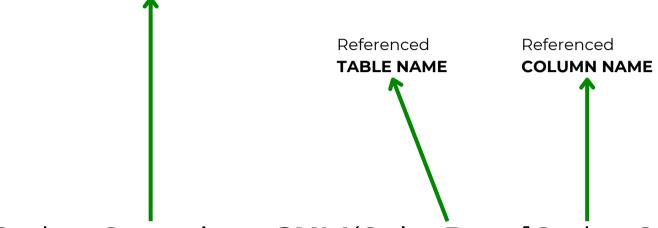
Tip: Clicking the **filter icon** will show you the filters currently applied to a selected visua



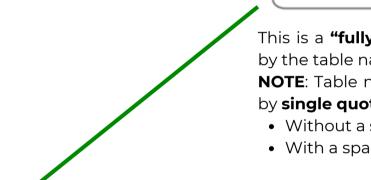
DAX Syntax

MEASURE NAME

Measures are always surrounded by brackets (i.e. [Total Quantity]) when referenced in formulas, so spaces are OK



Order_Quantity = **SUM**(SalesData[Order Qty])



This is a **"fully qualified"** column, since it's preceded by the table name.

NOTE: Table names with spaces must be surrounded by **single quotes**:

- Without a space: **SalesData**[Order Qty]
- With a space: 'Sales Data' [Order Qty]

FUNCTION NAME

- · Calculated columns don't always use functions, but measures do:
- In a **Calculated Column**, =SalesData[Order Qty] returns the value from the quantity column in each row (since it evaluates one row at a time)
- In a **Measure**, =SalesData[Order Qty] will return an **error** since Power BI doesn't know how to translate that as a single value – you need some sort of aggregation

Tip: Column references use fully qualified names (i.e. **'Table'[Column]**) **Measure** references just use the measure name (i.e. **[Measure]**) and can be called by typing an open square bracket " ["



DAX Operators

Arithmetic Operator	Meaning	Example
+	Addition	2 + 7
-	Subtraction	5 – 3
*	Multiplication	2 * 6
1	Division	4/2
۸	Exponent	2 ^ 5

Comparison Operator	Meaning	Example
=	Equal to	[City]="Boston"
>	Greater than	[Quantity]>10
<	Less than	[Quantity]<10
>=	Greater than or equal to	[Unit Price]>=2.5
<=	Less than or equal to	[Unit Price]<=2.5
<>	Not equal to	[Country]<>"Mexico"

Pay attention to these!

Text/Logical Operator	/	Meaning	Example
&		Concatenates two values to produce one text string	[City] & " " & [State]
&&		Create an AND condition between two logical expressions	([State]="MA") && ([Quantity]>10)
(double pipe)		Create an OR condition between two logical expressions	([State]="MA") ([State]="CT")
IN	Crea	tes a logical OR condition based on a given list (using curly brackets)	'Store Lookup' [State] IN { "MA", "CT", "NY" }



Common Function Categories

Math & Stats

Functions

Functions used for aggregation or iterative, row-level calculations

Common Examples:

- SUM
- AVERAGE
- MAX/MIN
- DIVIDE
- COUNT/COUNTA
- COUNTROWS
- DISTINCTCOUNT

Iterator Functions:

- SUMX
- AVERAGEX ?
- MAXX/MINX
- RANKX
- COUNTX

Logical

Functions

Functions that use conditional expressions (IF/THEN statements)

Common Examples:

- IF
- IFERROR
- AND
- OR
- NOT
- SWITCH
- TRUE
- FALSE



Common Function Categories

Text Functions

Functions used to manipulate **text strings** or **value formats** **Filter** Functions

Functions used to manipulate table and filter contexts

Common Examples:

- CONCATENATE
- COMBINEVALUES
- FORMAT
- LEFT/MID/RIGHT
- UPPER/LOWER
- LEN
- SEARCH/FIND
- REPLACE
- SUBSTITUTE
- TRIM

Common Examples:

- CALCULATE
- FILTER
- ALL
- ALLEXCEPT
- ALLSELECTED
- KEEPFILTERS
- REMOVEFILTERS
- SELECTEDVALUE



Common Function Categories

Table **Functions** Date & Time **Functions**

Functions that create or manipulate tables and output tables vs. scalar values

Functions used to manipulate date & time values or handle time intelligence calculations

Common Examples:

- SUMMARIZE
- ADDCOLUMNS
- GENERATESERIES
- DISTINCT
- VALUES
- UNION
- INTERSECT
- TOPN

Relationship

Functions



Functions used to

manage & modify table relationships

Common Examples:

- RELATED
- RELATEDTABLE
- CROSSFILTER
- USERELATIONSHIP

Common Examples:

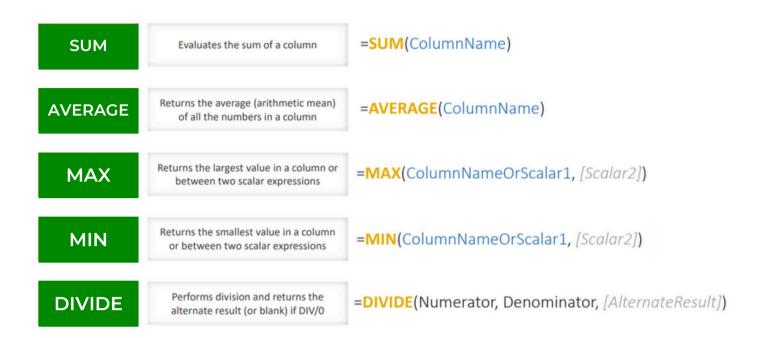
- DATE
- DATEDIFF
- YEARFRAC
- YEAR/MONTH
- DAY/HOUR
- TODAY/NOW
- WFFKDAY
- WEEKNUM
- NETWORKDAYS

Time Intelligence:

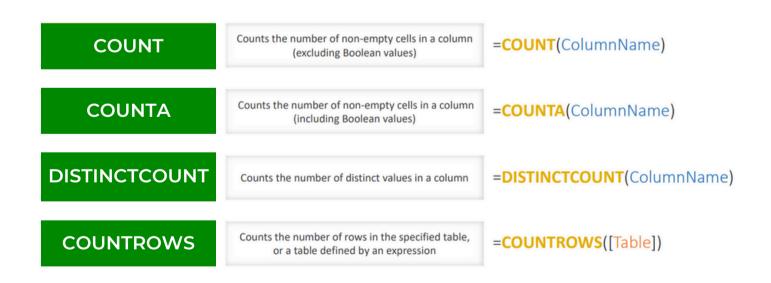
- DATESYTD
- DATESMTD
- DATEADD
- DATESBETWEEN



Basic Math & Stats Functions

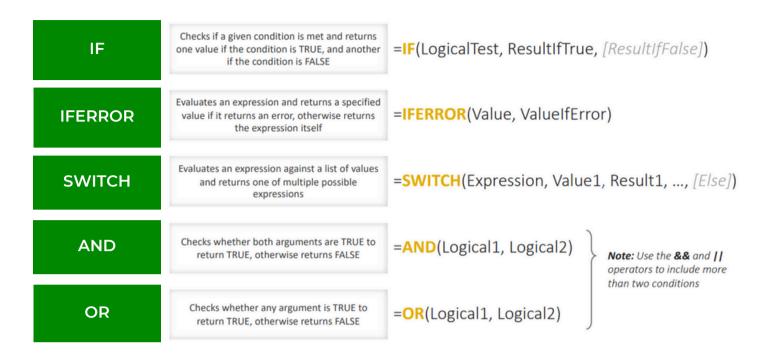


Counting Functions





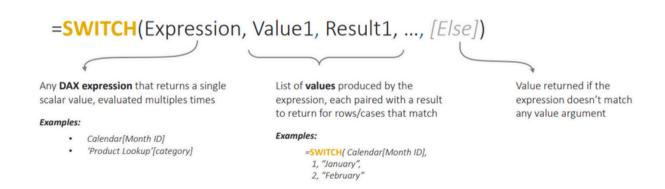
Basic Logical Functions



Switch

SWITCH

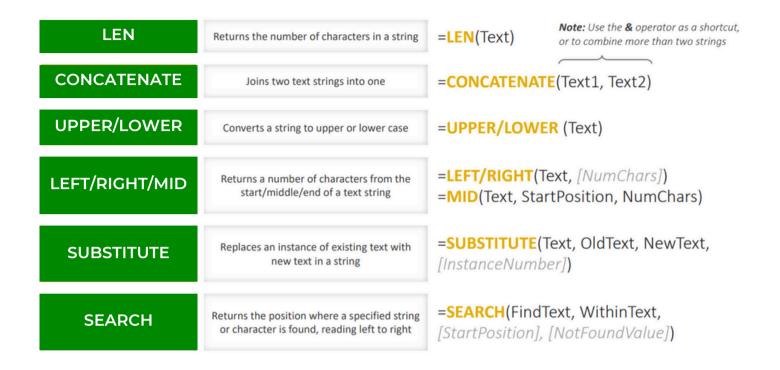
Evaluates an expression against a list of values and returns one of multiple possible expressions



Tip: SWITCH(TRUE) is a common DAX pattern to replace multiple nested IF statements



Text Functions



Basic Date & Time Functions

TODAY/NOW	Returns the current date or exact time	=TODAY/NOW()
DAY/MONTH/YEAR	Returns the day of the month (1-31), month of the year (1-12), or year of a given date	=DAY/MONTH/YEAR(Date)
HOUR/MINUTE/ SECOND	Returns the hour (0-23), minute (0-59), or second (0-59) of a given datetime value	=HOUR/MINUTE/SECOND(Datetime)
WEEKDAY/ WEEKNUM	Returns a weekday number from 1 (Sunday) to 7 (Saturday), or the week # of the year	=WEEKDAY/WEEKNUM(Date, [ReturnType])
EOMONTH	Returns the date of the last day of the month, +/- a specified number of months	= EOMONTH (StartDate, Months)
DATEDIFF	Returns the difference between two dates, based on a given interval (day, hour, year, etc.)	=DATEDIFF(Date1, Date2, Interval)



Related

RELATED

Returns related values in each row of a table based on relationships with other tables

=**RELATED**(ColumnName) The column from a related table containing the values you want to retrieve Examples:

'Product Lookup' [Product Name]

'Territory Lookup' [Country]

IMPORTANT:

RELATED works like a **VLOOKUP** function in Excel – it uses the relationship between tables (defined by primary and foreign keys) to pull values from one table into a new column of another. Since this function requires row context, it can only be used as a calculated column or as part of an iterator function that cycles through all rows in a table (FILTER, SUMX, MAXX, etc.)

Tip: Instead of using RELATED to create extra columns (which increases file size), nest it within measures like FILTER or SUMX

Calculate

CALCULATE

Evaluates an expression in a context that is modified by filters



- Examples:
 - [Total Orders] SUM('Returns Data'[Return Quantity])

A Boolean (True/False) expression or a table expression that defines a filter

Note: these require fixed values or aggregation functions that return a scalar value (you cannot create filters based on measures)

Examples:

- 'Territory Lookup'[Country] = "USA"
- Calendar[Year] <> MAX(Calendar[Year])

Tip: Think of CALCULATE as a filter modifier; it allows you to overrule existing report filters and "force" new filter context



ALL

ALL

Returns all rows in a table, or all values in a column, ignoring any filters that have been applied



The **table** or **column** that you want to clear filters on

Examples:

- Transactions
- Products[Category]

Additional columns that you want to clear filters on (optional)

- · Cannot specify columns if your first parameter is a table
- · All columns must include the table name and come from the same table

Examples:

- 'Customer Lookup'[City], 'Customer Lookup'[Country]
- Products[Product Name]

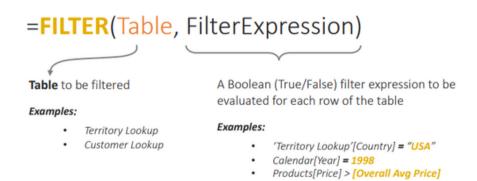
Tip: Instead of adding filter context, **the ALL function removes it**. This is often used in **"% of Total"** calculations, when the denominator needs to remain fixed regardless of filter context



Filter

FILTER

Returns a table that represents a subset of another table or expression



IMPORTANT:

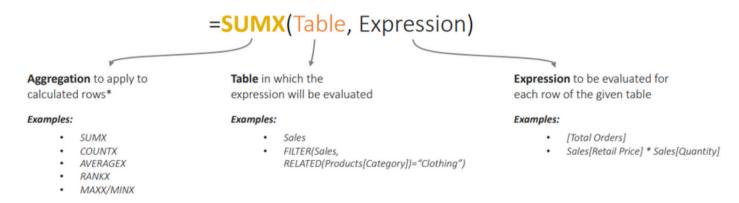
FILTER is used to add new filter context, and can handle **more complex filter expressions** than CALCULATE (by referencing measures, for example) Since FILTER returns an entire table, it's often **nested within other functions**, like CALCULATE or SUMX

Tip: Since FILTER **iterates through each row in a table**, it can be slow and computationally expensive; only use FILTER if a simple CALCULATE function won't get the job done!



Iterator Functions

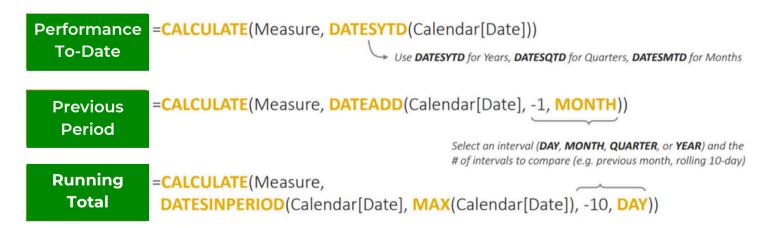
Iterator (or **"X"**) **functions** allow you to loop through the same expression on each row of a table, then apply some sort of aggregation to the results (SUM, MAX, etc.)



Tip: Imagine that iterator functions **add a temporary new column** to a table, calculate a value in each row based on the given expression, then aggregate the values within that temporary column (similar to **SUMPRODUCT** in Excel)

Time Intelligence 📑

Time Intelligence patterns are used to calculate common date-based comparison



Tip: To calculate a **moving average**, use the running total calculation above and **divide by the number of intervals**



DAX Best Practices



Know when to use calculated columns vs. measures

• Use calculated columns for filtering, and measures for aggregating values



Use explicit measures, even for simple calculations

• Explicit measures can be referenced anywhere, and nested within other measures



Use fully-qualified column references in measures

• This makes your DAX more readable, and differentiates column references from measure references



Move column calculations "upstream" when possible

Adding calculated columns at the source or in Power Query improves report speed and efficiency



Minimize the use of "expensive" iterator functions

• Use iterators with caution, especially if you are working with large tables or complex models