ExcelFunctions.net

Wrap Text in Excel

By default, if the content of an Excel cell is too long fit in a cell, one of two things will happen. Either the text string will be displayed over the top of the adjacent cells, or, if the adjacent cells contain values, the displayed text will be cut off at the cell boundary.

These two cases are shown below:

A long text string overwrites empty adjacent cells:

	A	B
1	This is a long text string	

A long text string is cut off by non-empty adjacent cells:

	A	B
1	This is a long te	other text

Therefore, you may sometimes want to wrap text in Excel cells, in order to fully display long text strings:

Wrapped text:

	A	B
1	This is a long text string	

This is done by enabling the Excel Wrap Text option.

Enabling the Wrap Text Option

In order to wrap text in one or more cells, first select the cell(s) that you want to wrap, then enable the Wrap Text option for the selected cells using one of the following methods:

Method 1:

Click on the **Wrap Text** option, which is located in the 'Alignment' group of the **Home** tab of the Excel ribbon (see below).
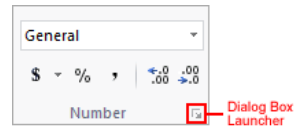

Method 2:

The Wrap Text option can also be accessed via the 'Format Cells' dialog box. This method works in all versions of Excel, including older versions that

do not have the Excel ribbon.

- Open the 'Format Cells' dialog box by either:

    - Clicking on the dialog box launcher in the 'Number' grouping, on the Home tab of the Excel ribbon (see right)

    or

    - Using the mouse to right click on the selected cell(s) and then selecting **F**ormat Cells... from the right-click menu
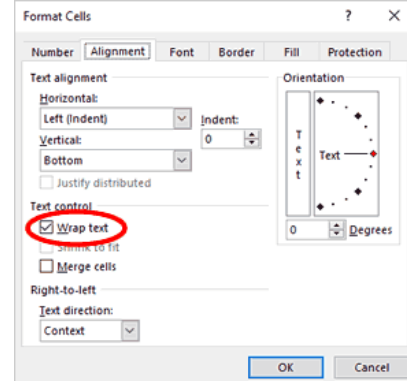
    or

    - Using the keyboard shortcut [Ctrl] + [1] (i.e. press the Ctrl key and while holding this down press 1).

- Within the 'Format Cells' dialog box:

    - Select the **Alignment** tab.

    - Check the box next to the **Wrap text** option;

    - Click **OK** to close the dialog box.

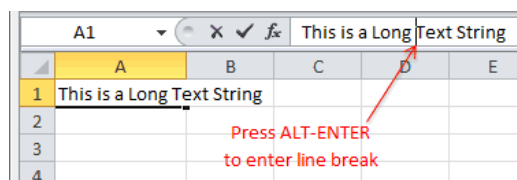*Wrap Text Check Box in 'Format Cells' Dialog Box:*

Forcing Line Breaks at Specific Points

You can also cause the Wrap Text option to be enabled on by forcing a line break at a specific location in an Excel cell.
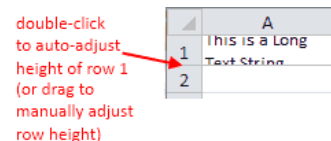
To do this:

- Enter cell edit mode (i.e. either double click on the cell; select the cell and then either press F2; or click in the formula bar);

- Place your curser at the point where you want a line break and press [Alt] + [Enter] (i.e. press the Alt key and while holding this down, press the Enter/Return key).

Resizing Cells with Wrapped Text

If you wrap text in a single Excel cell, depending on your settings, the height of the cell may or may not automatically adjust, to show the whole of the wrapped text.

If the cell height does not automatically adjust, you can force it to do this by double clicking on the row labels at the left hand side of the spreadsheet.

For example, to auto-adjust the height of row 1, double click on the line between rows 1 and 2 of the spreadsheet, in the row label area at the left of the spreadsheet.

Resizing Merged Cells with Wrapped Text

Note that the auto-sizing of cells does not work with merged cells. If you have wrapped text in a merged cell, you will need to resize the cell manually, by dragging the bar between the row labels to the desired height.

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