ExcelFunctions.net

Inputting Excel Functions

The most obvious way of inputting an Excel Function is to simply type the function directly into an Excel cell, with its arguments enclosed in brackets.

However, if you are a beginner, or are writing a complex formula, you may find it easier to use the Function Arguments dialog box, which helps you to input functions and formulas more easily.
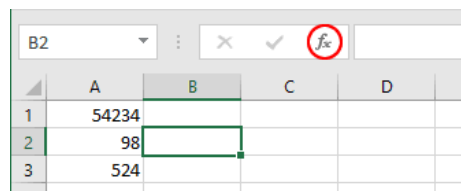
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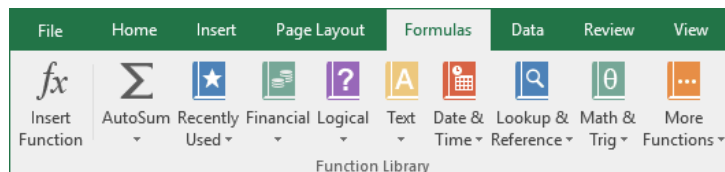### Using the Function Arguments Dialog Box

The 'Function Arguments' dialog box automatically pops up when you select an Excel function using one of the following methods:

- **Method 1:** Select the Insert Function button (denoted by the f_x symbol) from the left side of the formula bar (see right), and then select a function name from the 'Insert Function' dialog box.

or

- **Method 2:** Select a function from one of the lists in the 'Function Library' group, on the **Formulas** tab of the Excel ribbon (see below).

When you select a function using one of the methods above, Excel automatically displays the 'Function Arguments' dialog box to assist you in inputting your selected function. This dialog box (shown below) tells you what the function does, and what arguments the function requires.

The image on the right shows the dialog box for the Excel If function. In this example, the cursor is currently positioned in the entry field for the first function argument, **Logical_test**, and so the text in the middle of the dialog box provides a description of

this argument.

As you move the cursor to the other entry fields, the text in the middle of the dialog box describes the data/information that should be input for the selected argument.
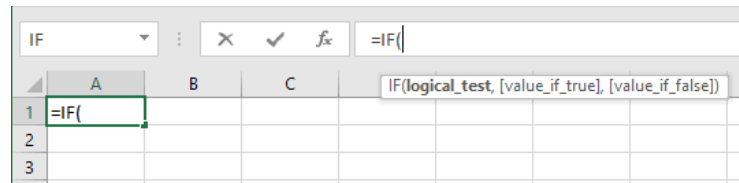
If, as a part of your argument, you wish to specify a range in the current Excel spreadsheet, or in another open spreadsheet, this can be done by simply using the mouse to select the required range. Any cells or ranges that you select with the mouse are automatically inserted into the current argument field.

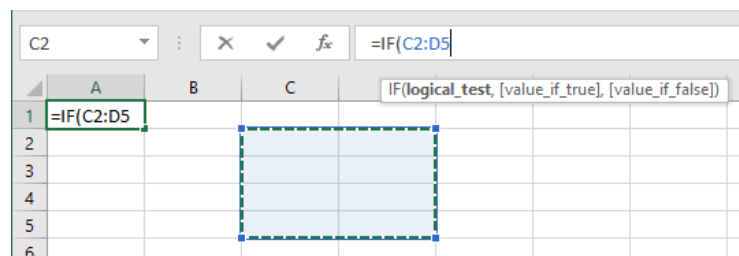Click here to go to a video tutorial of Inputting Excel Functions

Typing Functions Directly Into a Cell

As you become more used to inputting Excel functions and formulas, you might find it quicker to insert functions by typing them directly into a cell or into the formula bar.

In this case, Excel still provides you with useful prompts, as shown in the example below. In this example, the user has started to type the Excel If function directly into the formula bar. It can be seen that, once the user has typed in the function name and the opening bracket, Excel displays a mini prompt, which shows the syntax of the function, and indicates the arguments that should be inserted.

You can also use the mouse to select ranges that you want to form a part of any Excel function or formula. To do this, ensure your cursor is in the position (within the formula) where a cell reference or range of cells is required and then simply use the mouse to select the required range. Excel will then automatically insert a reference to the selected range into your function, as shown in the image below.

The above range selection method can be used to select cells in any Worksheet of any Workbook that is currently open. This is particularly useful if you are selecting a range in a separate workbook, as the reference needs to include the workbook name, the worksheet name, and the cell range, which can be cumbersome to type, and prone to typing errors.

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