SUBSTITUTE vs REPLACE in Excel

If you know the text to be replaced, use the SUBSTITUTE function in Excel. If you know the position of the text to be replaced, use the REPLACE function.

1. The SUBSTITUTE function below replaces Pie with Cake.

B1	▾	⋮	✕	✓	ƒx	=SUBSTITUTE(A1,"Pie","Cake")

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	Apple Pie and Cherry Pie	Apple Cake and Cherry Cake				
2						

Discover more

⊕ **Excel**

⊕ **Microsoft Excel**   ⊕ **ActiveX**

⊕ **Excel training workshops**

⊕ **Financial consulting services**
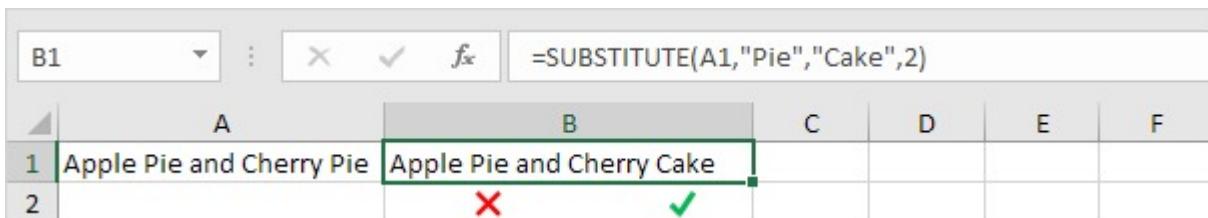
⊕ **Project management templates**

⊕ **Computer monitors**

⊕ **Data entry services**
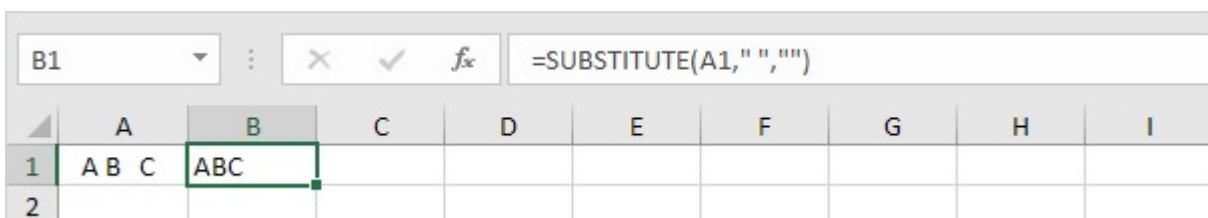
⊕ **Microsoft Excel 2021**

2. The 4th argument (optional) specifies which occurrence you want to replace. The SUBSTITUTE function below only replaces the second occurrence.

B1	▾	⋮	✕	✓	ƒx	=SUBSTITUTE(A1,"Pie","Cake",2)

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	Apple Pie and Cherry Pie	Apple Pie and Cherry Cake				
2		✕ ✓				

3. The SUBSTITUTE function below substitutes spaces with empty strings. In other words, this formula removes all spaces.

B1	▾	⋮	✕	✓	ƒx	=SUBSTITUTE(A1," ","")

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	A B C	ABC							
2									

4. The REPLACE function below starts at position 4 and replaces 2 characters with -P.

| B1				×	✓	fx	=REPLACE(A1,4,2,"-P")				

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	QZX56	QZX-P							
2	LHR21	LHR-P							
3	EBM90	EBM-P							
4	KPN11	KPN-P							
5	WXA45	WXA-P							
6									

5. The REPLACE function below starts at position 1 and replaces 3 characters with an empty string. In other words, this formula removes the first 3 characters.

B1				×	✓	fx	=REPLACE(A1,1,3,"")				
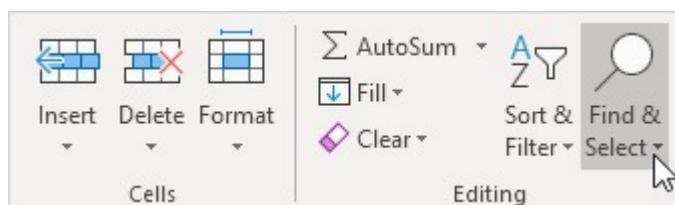
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	QZX56	56							
2	LHR21	21							
3	EBM90	90							
4	KPN11	11							
5	WXA45	45							
6									

You can also use Excel's Find and Replace feature to quickly find specific text and replace it with other text.
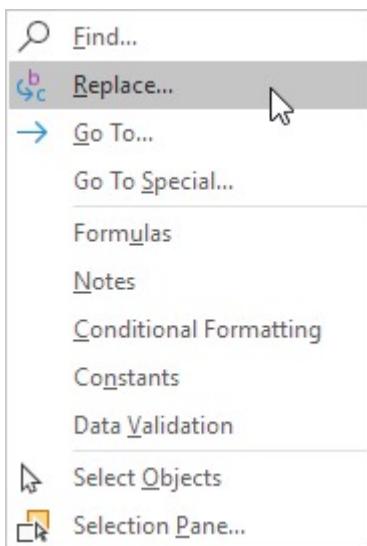
6. For example, select the range A1:A10.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	85-UT								
2	192-TX								
3	6-OH								
4	74-TX								
5	18-UT								
6	23-OH								
7	125-TX								
8	480-OH								
9	91-XR								
10	37-TX ⊕								
11									

7. On the Home tab, in the Editing group, click Find & Select.

| Insert	Delete	Format	Σ AutoSum ▾ ↓ Fill ▾ ◇ Clear ▾	Sort & Filter ▾	Find & Select ▾
	Cells			Editing	
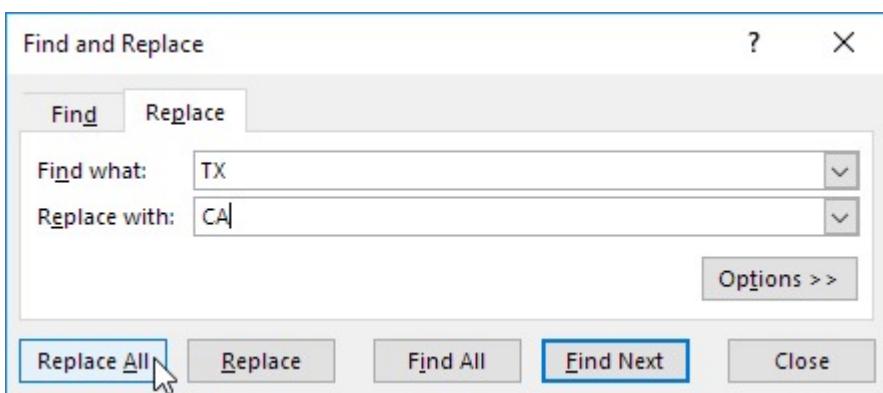
8. Click Replace.

9. Type the text you want to find (TX) and the text you want to replace it with (CA).

10. Click 'Replace All'.

Result: Excel replaces all occurrences of TX with CA.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	85-UT								
2	192-CA	✓							
3	6-OH								
4	74-CA	✓							
5	18-UT								
6	23-OH								
7	125-CA	✓							
8	480-OH								
9	91-XR								
10	37-CA	✓							
11									

Discover more   ⊕ Excel

⊕ Microsoft Excel

⊕ Data entry services

⊕ Virtual assistant services

Search Entire Site	Go

Chapter

- Text Functions

Learn more, it's easy

- Separate Strings

- Count Words

- Text to Columns

- Find

- Search

- Change Case

- Remove Spaces

- Compare Text

- Substitute vs Replace

- Text

- Concatenate

- Substring

⤓ Download Excel File

- substitute-vs-replace.xlsx

Next Chapter

Follow Excel Easy

f X P in

Become an Excel Pro

- 1. Introduction

- 2. Basics

- 3. Functions

- 4. Data Analysis

- 5. VBA