

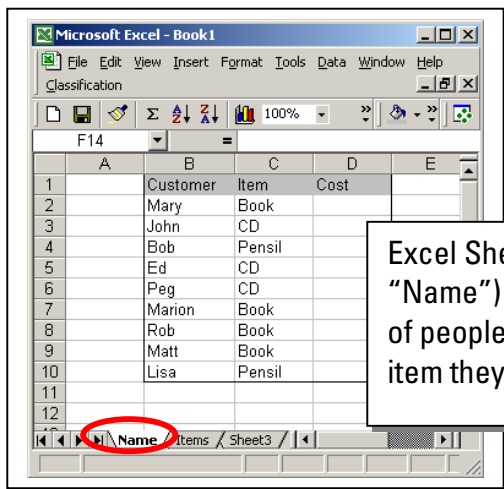
What is a VLookup in Excel, how does that work?

This tip will introduce a very handy function from Excel. I used to spend hours and hours re-writing in Macros this function because I didn't know it was already there. We are reaching a more advance area in Excel, and I hope you will appreciate it.

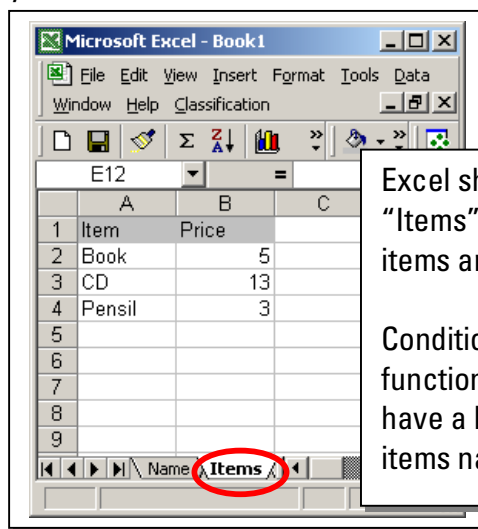
Here is the example that I choose:

1. I have an excel sheet with a list of name and item they bought.
2. I have another excel sheet with the price of each item.
3. I want to know the total spent by all these people.
4. My reference column to match against should be the 1st column of the table.

I know I have only 9 names and 3 items, I could have done it by hand... That's just for the example. This VLookup become handy when you have lists of hundreds of names of items or whatever you want to merge.



Excel Sheet (named "Name") with the list of people and what item they bought.

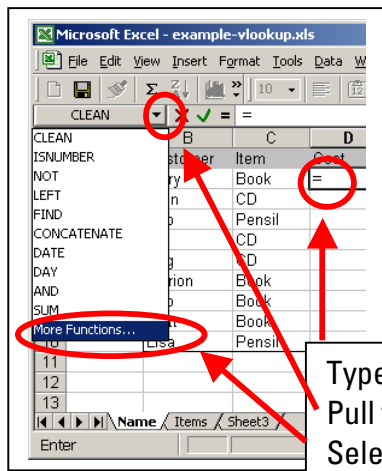


Excel sheet (named "Items") with my list of items and their price.

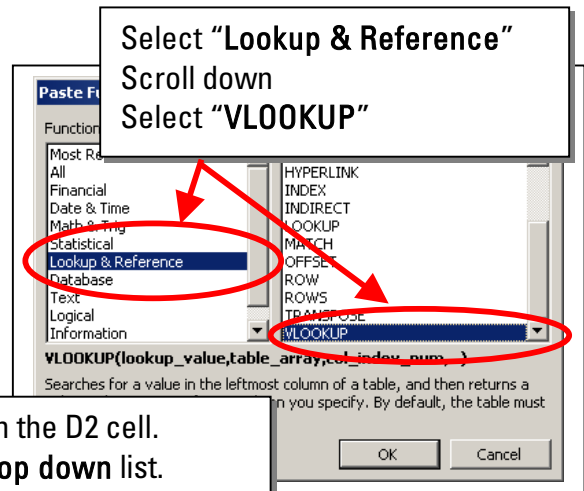
Condition to make this function relevant is to have a list with unique items name !!!

How to create call the function VLookup?

You need to call a function in an excel cell. To do that, the value of the cell needs to start with "=" then the help function interface will show up on the top left corner. We will start on the cell D2 that is the first cell in the cost column. We will then drag and copy this formula for the other cells.



Type "=" in the D2 cell.
Pull the drop down list.
Select "More Functions..."



Select "Lookup & Reference"
Scroll down
Select "VLOOKUP"

Click on the cell that will be your lookup value. It will have to match the index value from the other table. Here it is cell C2 (our "Book")

You can move this help window, just grab it and drop it.

| Customer | Item | Cost |
|----------|--------|------|
| Mary | Book | 5 |
| John | CD | 13 |
| Bob | Pencil | 3 |
| Ed | CD | 13 |
| Peg | CD | 13 |
| Marion | Book | 5 |
| Rob | Book | 5 |
| Matt | Book | 5 |
| Lisa | Pencil | 3 |

VLOOKUP

Lookup_value: C2 = "Book"

Table_array: = num

Col_index_num: = num

Range_lookup: = logit

Searches for a value in the leftmost column of a table, and then returns a value from a column you specify. By default, the table must be sorted in ascending order.

Select the second line: "Table array". Click on the sheet that contain your reference numbers. Select the table in which you will read the values you want to find. In our case, click on the A column and then drag over B column to select A and B.

Microsoft Excel - example-vlookup.xls

Items

| Item | Price |
|--------|-------|
| Book | 5 |
| CD | 13 |
| Pencil | 3 |

VLOOKUP

Lookup_value: C2 = "Book"

Table_array: Items!A:B = {...}

Col_index_num: = number

Sample values, so you can verify your steps

Then click on the 3rd line: "Column_Index_num" Put "2" to return the value from the second column (here column B). It will return the price associated for the items selected.

Add "False" because we don't want approximated matches.

Click "OK"

| Customer | Item | Cost |
|----------|--------|------|
| Mary | Book | 5 |
| John | CD | 13 |
| Bob | Pencil | 3 |
| Ed | CD | 13 |
| Peg | CD | 13 |
| Marion | Book | 5 |
| Rob | Book | 5 |
| Matt | Book | 5 |
| Lisa | Pencil | 3 |

Once you validated your Vlookup, the value is displayed on the D2 cell. Then you just need to click and drag the bottom right corner of that cell up to the end of your column. This will apply the same formula to the other rows.

Here it is!

You even have the SUM in the excel frame

Microsoft Excel - example-vlookup.xls

Sum=65

| Customer | Item | Cost |
|----------|--------|------|
| Mary | Book | 5 |
| John | CD | 13 |
| Bob | Pencil | 3 |
| Ed | CD | 13 |
| Peg | CD | 13 |
| Marion | Book | 5 |
| Rob | Book | 5 |
| Matt | Book | 5 |
| Lisa | Pencil | 3 |