

VLOOKUP Function

The **VLOOKUP function** works by searching down the leftmost column of your data and then reads across the row to find the value in the column you specify.

If you think of the process as similar to that which you would adopt when searching for a phone number in a directory, you won't go far wrong.

In fact, let's use the phone directory scenario to illustrate the VLOOKUP function in action.

Below is a list of names and their corresponding phone numbers. We would like to be able to type in a name and have the phone number automatically returned.

Type the data below into a new Excel worksheet:

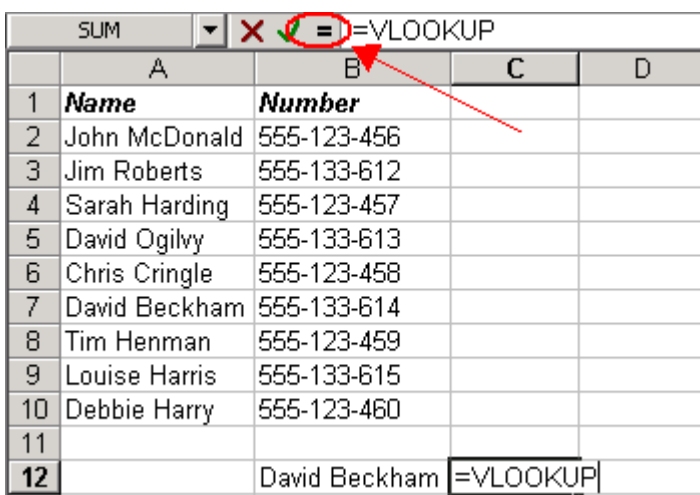
	A	B
1	Name	Number
2	John McDonald	555-123-456
3	Jim Roberts	555-133-612
4	Sarah Harding	555-123-457
5	David Ogilvy	555-133-613
6	Chris Cringle	555-123-458
7	David Beckham	555-133-614
8	Tim Henman	555-123-459
9	Louise Harris	555-133-615
10	Debbie Harry	555-123-460

For this particular example you are going to use two cells, one for inputting the name of the person whose number you want, and the second cell will be where you enter the VLOOKUP function which will return the phone number.

Click in cell B12 and type "David Beckham". (without the quotes)

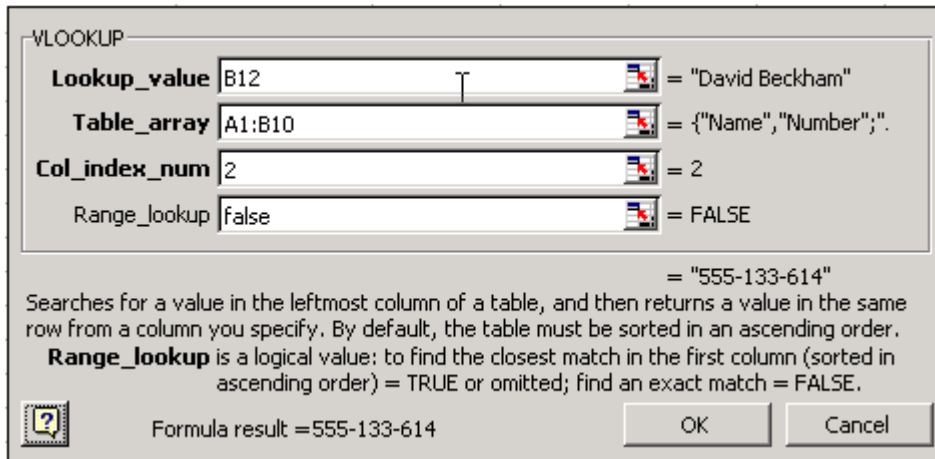
Click in cell C12 and type "=VLOOKUP"

On the formula bar click on the = sign.



	A	B	C	D
1	Name	Number		
2	John McDonald	555-123-456		
3	Jim Roberts	555-133-612		
4	Sarah Harding	555-123-457		
5	David Ogilvy	555-133-613		
6	Chris Cringle	555-123-458		
7	David Beckham	555-133-614		
8	Tim Henman	555-123-459		
9	Louise Harris	555-133-615		
10	Debbie Harry	555-123-460		
11				
12		David Beckham	=VLOOKUP	

As soon as you have clicked on the "=" sign the following dialog box appears.



If the dialog box has covered the data just left click near the top of the box and drag it out of the way so you can once again see the data.

The cursor will be flashing in the **Lookup_value** box.

Now, because you are going to use cell **B12** as the data entry box for the name of the person whose number you are looking up you will enter B12. This can be typed in or alternatively you can use your mouse and click on cell B12.

Click in the **Table_array** box and then select the range of cells from A1 to B10.

Click in the **Col_index_num** box and type the number 2.

Click in the **Range_lookup** box and type in "False". In this example we wish to find an exact match for the value we specified in the **Lookup_value** box. Had we been looking for the closest match then we could have used "True" instead.

Click on the "OK" button.

The phone number 555-133-614 is returned. You can verify that this is correct by looking in cell B7.

Plain English Zone

In plain English this is what the Excel VLOOKUP function says:

Look down the Leftmost column within the data I have specified until you find the name "David Beckham".

Now you've located "David Beckham", move along the row until you get to the second column and return the value that is in that cell.

Task:

Try writing a VLOOKUP function to find at least two other phone numbers from your table.

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- Save this resource to a school network or VLE
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