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**Books**  
**in one!**

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**Greg Harvey, PhD**

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# Excel<sup>®</sup>

ALL-IN-ONE

by Paul McFedries and Greg Harvey, PhD

for  
**dummies**<sup>®</sup>  
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## **Excel® All-in-One For Dummies®**

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# Excel® All-in-One For Dummies®

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## Table of Contents

[Cover](#)

[Title Page](#)

[Copyright](#)

[Introduction](#)

[About This Book](#)

[Foolish Assumptions](#)

[Conventions Used in This Book](#)

[Icons Used in This Book](#)

[Beyond the Book](#)

[Where to Go from Here](#)

[Book 1: Excel Basics](#)

[Chapter 1: Excel: The 50-Cent Tour](#)

[A Bird's-Eye View of Excel](#)

[Checking Out Excel's Start Screen](#)

[Getting Comfy with the Excel User Interface](#)

[Getting Help](#)

[Launching and Quitting Excel](#)

## **Chapter 2: Customizing Excel**

[Tailoring the Quick Access Toolbar to Your Tastes](#)

[Exercising Your Options](#)

[Using Office Add-ins](#)

[Using Excel's Own Add-ins](#)

## **Book 2: Worksheet Design**

### **Chapter 1: Building Worksheets**

[Creating Fresh Workbooks](#)

[Getting to Know Excel's Data Types](#)

[Data Entry 101](#)

[Linking to Other Documents](#)

[Saving the Data](#)

[Document Recovery to the Rescue](#)

### **Chapter 2: Formatting Worksheets**

[Selecting Cells and Ranges](#)

[Adjusting Columns and Rows](#)

[Formatting Tables from the Ribbon](#)

[Formatting Tables with the Quick Analysis Tool](#)

[Formatting Cells from the Ribbon](#)

[Formatting Cell Ranges with the Mini-Toolbar](#)

[Using the Format Cells Dialog Box](#)

[Hiring Out the Format Painter](#)

[Easier Formatting with Cell Styles](#)

[Analyzing Data with Conditional Formatting](#)

### **Chapter 3: Editing and Proofing Worksheets**

[Opening a Workbook](#)

[Editing a Cell](#)

[A Worksheet with a View](#)

[Copying and Moving Stuff Around](#)

[Finding and Replacing Worksheet Data](#)

[Getting It Right: Spell Checking Your Worksheets](#)

[Looking Up and Translating Stuff](#)

[Marking Invalid Data](#)

## **Chapter 4: Managing Worksheets**

[Reorganizing the Worksheet](#)

[Reorganizing the Workbook](#)

[Working with Multiple Workbooks](#)

[Consolidating Worksheets](#)

## **Chapter 5: Printing Worksheets**

[Printing from the Backstage View](#)

[Quick Printing the Worksheet](#)

[Working with the Page Setup Options](#)

[Headers and Footers](#)

[Solving Page Break Problems](#)

[Printing the Formulas in a Report](#)

## **Book 3: Formulas and Functions**

### **Chapter 1: Building Basic Formulas**

[Getting Started with Formulas](#)

[Augmenting Formulas with Worksheet Functions](#)

[Copying Formulas](#)

[Adding Array Formulas](#)

[Naming Cells and Ranges](#)

[Adding Linking Formulas](#)

[Controlling Formula Recalculation](#)

[Circular References](#)

### **Chapter 2: Logical Functions and Error Trapping**

[Understanding Error Values](#)

[Using Logical Functions](#)

[Error-Trapping Formulas](#)

[Whiting-Out Errors with Conditional Formatting](#)

[Checking It Twice: Auditing Your Formulas](#)

[Removing Errors from the Printout](#)



## **Chapter 3: Date and Time Formulas**

[Understanding Dates and Times](#)

[Using Date Functions](#)

[Using Time Functions](#)

## **Chapter 4: Finagling Financial Formulas**

[Some Financial Function Basics Before You Begin](#)

[The PV, NPV, and FV Functions](#)

[The PMT Function](#)

[Depreciation Functions](#)

[Excel's Advanced Financial Functions](#)

## **Chapter 5: Math and Statistical Formulas**

[Math & Trig Functions](#)

[Statistical Functions](#)

## **Chapter 6: Lookup, Information, and Text Formulas**

[Looking Up Stuff with the Lookup Functions](#)

[Getting Cell Reference Info with the Reference Functions](#)

[Interrogating Excel](#)

[Working with Text Functions and Formulas](#)

## **Book 4: Worksheet Collaboration and Review**

### **Chapter 1: Protecting Workbooks and Worksheet Data**

[Password-Protecting the Workbook](#)

[Setting Up Worksheet Data Protection](#)

[Protecting the Workbook Structure](#)

### **Chapter 2: Preparing a Workbook for Distribution**

[Getting Your Workbook Ready for Review](#)

[Annotating Workbooks](#)

### **Chapter 3: Sharing Workbooks and Worksheet Data**

[Sharing Your Workbooks Online](#)

[Sharing Your Workbooks via Email](#)

[Sharing Excel Data with Office Programs](#)

[Making Shared Workbooks Accessible](#)

[Exporting Workbooks to Other Usable File Formats](#)

[Collaborating Conversationally with Comments](#)

## **Book 5: Charts and Graphics**

### **Chapter 1: Charting Worksheet Data**

[Worksheet Charting 101](#)

[Adding Sparkline Graphics to a Worksheet](#)

[Adding Infographics to a Worksheet](#)

[Printing Charts](#)

### **Chapter 2: Adding Graphic Objects**

[Going Graphical: The Basics of Working with Graphic Objects](#)

[Inserting Different Types of Graphics](#)

[Making Changes to Graphics](#)

[Drawing Graphics](#)

[Adding Screenshots of the Windows Desktop](#)

[Using Themes](#)

## **Book 6: Data Management**

### **Chapter 1: Building and Maintaining Tables**

[Table Basics](#)

[Sorting Table Data](#)

[Subtotaling Table Data](#)

### **Chapter 2: Filtering and Querying a Table**

[Filtering Data](#)

[Using the Database Functions](#)

[Querying External Data](#)

## **Book 7: Data Analysis**

### **Chapter 1: Performing What-If Analysis**

[Using Data Tables](#)

[Exploring Different Scenarios](#)

[Hide and Goal Seeking](#)

[Using Solver](#)

## **Chapter 2: Performing Large-Scale Data Analysis**

[Creating PivotTables](#)

[Formatting a PivotTable](#)

[Sorting and Filtering the PivotTable Data](#)

[Modifying the PivotTable](#)

[Creating PivotCharts](#)

[Using the Power Pivot Add-in](#)

[Using the 3D Maps Feature](#)

[Creating Forecast Worksheets](#)

## **Book 8: Macros and VBA**

### **Chapter 1: Recording and Running Macros**

[Macro Basics](#)

[Assigning Macros to the Ribbon and the Quick Access Toolbar](#)

[Macro Security](#)

### **Chapter 2: VBA Programming**

[Using the Visual Basic Editor](#)

[Creating Custom Excel Functions](#)

## **Index**

## **About the Authors**

## **Connect with Dummies**

## **End User License Agreement**

# List of Tables

## **Book 1 Chapter 1**

[TABLE 1-1 Keystrokes for Moving the Cell Pointer](#)

## **Book 1 Chapter 2**

[TABLE 2-1 Advanced Excel Options](#)

## **Book 2 Chapter 1**

[TABLE 1-1 Common Ways to Enter Dates and Times](#)

[TABLE 1-2 Keys Used in Completing Data Entry](#)

[TABLE 1-3 Keystrokes for Moving Within a Selection](#)

## **Book 2 Chapter 2**

[TABLE 2-1 The Formatting Command Buttons in the Home Tab's Font, Alignment, and ...](#)

## **Book 2 Chapter 3**

[TABLE 3-1 The Paste Special Dialog Box Options](#)

## **Book 2 Chapter 4**

[TABLE 4-1 Outline Buttons](#)

## **Book 3 Chapter 1**

[TABLE 1-1 The Different Types of Operators in Excel](#)

[TABLE 1-2 Natural Order of Operator Precedence in Formulas](#)

[TABLE 1-3 The Calculation Options in Excel](#)

## **Book 3 Chapter 2**

[TABLE 2-1 Error Values in Excel](#)

## **Book 3 Chapter 4**

[TABLE 4-1 Excel's Advanced Financial Functions](#)

## **Book 3 Chapter 6**

[TABLE 6-1 The CELL Functions \*info\\_type\* Arguments](#)

[TABLE 6-2 Text Values Returned by the "format" \*info\\_type\*](#)

## **Book 5 Chapter 1**

[TABLE 1-1 Parts of a Typical Chart](#)

[TABLE 1-2 Format Tab Options](#)

## **Book 6 Chapter 1**

[TABLE 1-1 Techniques for Navigating the Data Form](#)

## **Book 6 Chapter 2**

[TABLE 2-1 The Comparative Operators in the Selection Criteria](#)

[TABLE 2-2 The Database Functions in Excel](#)

## Book 7 Chapter 1

[TABLE 1-1 Solver Option Settings](#)

# List of Illustrations

## Book 1 Chapter 1

[FIGURE 1-1: The Excel Start screen with the Home tab selected that appears imme...](#)

[FIGURE 1-2: The Excel program window as it appears after first opening a blank ...](#)

[FIGURE 1-3: The Excel Backstage view displaying the Info screen with permission...](#)

[FIGURE 1-4: Excel's Ribbon consists of a series of tabs containing command butt...](#)

[FIGURE 1-5: When you select a Ribbon tab by pressing Alt and the KeyTip letter ...](#)

[FIGURE 1-6: The Excel Status bar.](#)

[FIGURE 1-7: The Excel Help task pane.](#)

[FIGURE 1-8: Launching Excel from the Windows Start screen.](#)

## Book 1 Chapter 2

[FIGURE 2-1: Click Customize Quick Access Toolbar to see a few useful commands t...](#)

[FIGURE 2-2: Use the buttons on the Quick Access Toolbar tab of the Excel Option...](#)

[FIGURE 2-3: The General tab's options enable you to change many global Excel se...](#)

[FIGURE 2-4: The Formulas tab's options enable you to change how Excel works wit...](#)

[FIGURE 2-5: The Proofing tab's options enable you to change AutoCorrect and spe...](#)

[FIGURE 2-6: The Save tab's options enable you to change the automatic save and ...](#)

[FIGURE 2-7: The Editing and Cut, Copy, and Paste options on the Advanced tab co...](#)

[FIGURE 2-8: The display options in the center of the Advanced tab control what'...](#)

[FIGURE 2-9: The Advanced tab options control calculation, general, and 1-2-3 co...](#)

[FIGURE 2-10: The Customize Ribbon tab options enable you to control which tabs ...](#)

[FIGURE 2-11: Inserting the Excel Mini Calendar and Date Picker add-in into an E...](#)

[FIGURE 2-12: Activating built-in Excel Add-ins in the Add-Ins dialog box.](#)

## **Book 2 Chapter 1**

[FIGURE 1-1: The New screen is home to a fistful of templates you can use to get...](#)

[FIGURE 1-2: Searching for finance-related templates.](#)

[FIGURE 1-3: When you click a template thumbnail, Excel displays more details ab...](#)

[FIGURE 1-4: The downloaded template now appears in the New screen.](#)

[FIGURE 1-5: Click the alert indicator to open the menu attached to the Number S...](#)

[FIGURE 1-6: One way to complete a cell entry is to click the Enter button in th...](#)

[FIGURE 1-7: A Windows touchscreen after displaying and undocking the standard T...](#)

[FIGURE 1-8: You can add your own automated replacements to the AutoCorrect tab.](#)

[FIGURE 1-9: Dragging the Fill handle to fill in a series with the twelve months...](#)

[FIGURE 1-10: The series of monthly column headings with the AutoFill Options dr...](#)

[FIGURE 1-11: Some series created with AutoFill by using custom increments.](#)

[FIGURE 1-12: Creating a custom list of cities for AutoFill.](#)

[FIGURE 1-13: New data table containing full names that need to be split up in s...](#)

[FIGURE 1-14: Creating a custom drop-down list in the Data Validation dialog box...](#)

[FIGURE 1-15: Selecting a city from the custom drop-down list.](#)

[FIGURE 1-16: Getting an error message after trying to input a city that's not o...](#)

[FIGURE 1-17: Click the lower half of the Link button to see a list of recent do...](#)

[FIGURE 1-18: Use the Insert Hyperlink dialog box to insert a link in a workshee...](#)

[FIGURE 1-19: The Excel title bar comes with a Save icon.](#)

[FIGURE 1-20: Use the Save As screen to specify where you want to save a new wor...](#)

[FIGURE 1-21: Specifying the folder and filename prior to saving the new workboo...](#)

## **Book 2 Chapter 2**

[FIGURE 2-1: Worksheet with a nonadjacent cell selection made up of several diff...](#)

[FIGURE 2-2: Selecting the cells in the first column of the table with AutoSelec...](#)

[FIGURE 2-3: Selecting all the remaining columns of the table with AutoSelect. \(...\)](#)

[FIGURE 2-4: Selecting a cell range with the Go To dialog box.](#)

[FIGURE 2-5: Selecting a format for the new table in the Table Styles gallery.](#)

[FIGURE 2-6: Indicating the range of the table in the Create Table dialog box af...](#)

[FIGURE 2-7: After you select an initial table format, the Table Design tab appe...](#)

[FIGURE 2-8: Previewing the selected data formatted as a table with the Quick An...](#)

[FIGURE 2-9: Right-click your cell selection to display its shortcut menu along ...](#)

[FIGURE 2-10: Options for customizing the formatting assigned by the Currency nu...](#)

[FIGURE 2-11: You can create your own number format using the Custom category in...](#)

[FIGURE 2-12: Worksheet with long text entries that spill over into blank cells ...](#)

[FIGURE 2-13: Worksheet after wrapping long text entries in their cells, increas...](#)

[FIGURE 2-14: Worksheet after rotating a table's column headings up 90 degrees. ...](#)

[FIGURE 2-15: You can assign new fonts, font sizes, attributes, and colors on th...](#)

[FIGURE 2-16: The border options available on the Home tab's Borders button's dr...](#)

[FIGURE 2-17: The border options available on the Border tab of the Format Cells...](#)

[FIGURE 2-18: Using the options on the Fill tab to select a new fill color, grad...](#)

[FIGURE 2-19: Selecting a new gradient for your cell selection in the Fill Effec...](#)

[FIGURE 2-20: You can apply multiple styles to a cell selection using the Cell S...](#)

[FIGURE 2-21: The initial Data Bars gradient fill applied to some worksheet data...](#)

[FIGURE 2-22: You can use the Quick Analysis tool's Formatting option to apply c...](#)

[FIGURE 2-23: Define a new conditional formatting rule using the options in the ...](#)

## **Book 2 Chapter 3**

[FIGURE 3-1: Use the Open screen to find and open a workbook for editing.](#)

[FIGURE 3-2: Select a location to see its folders.](#)

[FIGURE 3-3: You can use the Open dialog box to select the workbook file you wan...](#)

[FIGURE 3-4: When you select Delete Cells, Excel asks how you want the remaining...](#)

[FIGURE 3-5: Worksheet after deleting the cell with the duplicate entry. \(Sample...](#)

[FIGURE 3-6: Inserting three blank cells for missing entries in two columns of a...](#)

[FIGURE 3-7: The worksheet table after entering the missing entries in the newly...](#)

[FIGURE 3-8: The Income Analysis worksheet after zooming out to a 50% magnificat...](#)

[FIGURE 3-9: Worksheet at 232% magnification after zooming in on the cell range ...](#)

[FIGURE 3-10: The income worksheet after freezing column A and rows 1:2 in the w...](#)



[FIGURE 3-11: The income worksheet after zooming in on the cell range J20:L25 af...](#)

[FIGURE 3-12: The custom views you create appear in the Custom Views dialog box.](#)

[FIGURE 3-13: The Paste Option button's palette with the option buttons that com...](#)

[FIGURE 3-14: The paste options in the Paste Special dialog box give you control...](#)

[FIGURE 3-15: Transposing a copy of the production schedule table so that dates ...](#)

[FIGURE 3-16: Finding a value in a worksheet by using the options on the Find ta...](#)

[FIGURE 3-17: Updating dates in a worksheet using the Find and Replace feature.](#)

[FIGURE 3-18: Spell checking a worksheet with the Spelling dialog box.](#)

[FIGURE 3-19: Using Data Validation to mark entries below a specified threshold ...](#)

## **Book 2 Chapter 4**

[FIGURE 4-1: The Regional Income worksheet with the window divided into two hori...](#)

[FIGURE 4-2: The Regional Income worksheet with the window divided into two vert...](#)

[FIGURE 4-3: Splitting the worksheet window into four panes: two horizontal and ...](#)

[FIGURE 4-4: Automatic outline applied to the CG Music sales data with three lev...](#)

[FIGURE 4-5: The outline after applying automatic styles with the Settings dialo...](#)

[FIGURE 4-6: Collapsed worksheet outline showing first- and secondary-level summ...](#)

[FIGURE 4-7: Totally collapsed worksheet outline showing only the first-level su...](#)

[FIGURE 4-8: Worksheet outline expanded to show only details for Download sales ...](#)

[FIGURE 4-9: Manually adjusting the level 1 rows in the worksheet outline. \(Samp...](#)

[FIGURE 4-10: Collapsing the adjusted worksheet outline to the first level summa...](#)

[FIGURE 4-11: Use Excel's View Side by Side command to compare data stored on tw...](#)

[FIGURE 4-12: The Workbook Statistics command tells you a few vital statistics f...](#)

[FIGURE 4-13: Using the Consolidate dialog box to total sales data for three yea...](#)

[FIGURE 4-14: The Consolidated worksheet after having Excel total sales from the...](#)

## **Book 2 Chapter 5**

[FIGURE 5-1: You can use the Print screen in the Backstage view to customize you...](#)

[FIGURE 5-2: Viewing a worksheet in Page Layout view. \(Sample workbook: Income A...](#)

[FIGURE 5-3: Page 1 of a ten-page report in Print Preview. \(Sample workbook: Inc...](#)

[FIGURE 5-4: Page 1 of a ten-page report after selecting the Zoom to Page button...](#)

[FIGURE 5-5: You can adjust your report margins from the Margins tab in the Page...](#)

[FIGURE 5-6: Drag a marker to adjust its margin in the Page Preview window when ...](#)

[FIGURE 5-7: A landscape mode report in Page Layout view. \(Sample workbook: Inco...](#)

[FIGURE 5-8: Specify the rows and columns to use as print titles on the Sheet ta...](#)

[FIGURE 5-9: Page 2 of a sample report in Print Preview with defined print title...](#)

[FIGURE 5-10: Clicking inside the header \(or footer\) displays the Header & Foote...](#)

[FIGURE 5-11: The first page of a report in Page Layout view shows you how the h...](#)

[FIGURE 5-12: A worksheet in Page Layout view showing the custom footer. \(Sample...](#)

[FIGURE 5-13: Preview page breaks in a report in Page Break Preview. \(Sample wor...](#)

[FIGURE 5-14: Page 1 of the report in the Print Preview window after adjusting t...](#)

## **Book 3 Chapter 1**

[FIGURE 1-1: The formula result appears in the cell, while the formula itself ap...](#)

[FIGURE 1-2: You can use cell addresses as formula operands.](#)

[FIGURE 1-3: Using AutoSum to create a SUM formula that totals a column of numbe...](#)

[FIGURE 1-4: Using the AutoSum feature to create a SUM formula that totals a row...](#)

[FIGURE 1-5: Adding a row of totals with the Quick Analysis tool's Sum button. \(...\)](#)

[FIGURE 1-6: Use the Insert Function dialog box to, you know, insert a function.](#)

[FIGURE 1-7: Use the Function Arguments dialog box to specify the arguments for ...](#)

[FIGURE 1-8: Type the function name followed by the left parenthesis to see a Sc...](#)

[FIGURE 1-9: The Function Arguments dialog box shows the function syntax.](#)

[FIGURE 1-10: An original formula copied with the Fill handle across the last ro...](#)

[FIGURE 1-11: An original formula copied with the Fill handle down the last colu...](#)

[FIGURE 1-12: Copying the formula in cell B9 across produces #DIV/0! errors in t...](#)

[FIGURE 1-13: Using an absolute cell reference in the divisor gets rid of the er...](#)

[FIGURE 1-14: A worksheet with two different sizes of arrays.](#)

[FIGURE 1-15: The goal: to calculate each employee's hourly wages for the first ...](#)

[FIGURE 1-16: An array formula makes short work of hourly wage calculation. \(Sam...](#)

[FIGURE 1-17: You can define a name using the Formula bar's Name box. \(Sample wo...](#)

[FIGURE 1-18: You can use the New Name dialog box to define a new name.](#)

[FIGURE 1-19: In the Use in Formula list, click the name you want to paste into ...](#)

[FIGURE 1-20: Creating names from the row and column headings in a worksheet dat...](#)

[FIGURE 1-21: The Name Manager lists all names defined in the workbook.](#)

[FIGURE 1-22: Income statement with a resolvable circular reference.](#)

## **Book 3 Chapter 2**

[FIGURE 2-1: Using the IF function to determine whether to charge tax on an item...](#)

[FIGURE 2-2: Using the IFS function to test multiple conditions in a single form...](#)

[FIGURE 2-3: Using the SWITCH function to match days of the week against a serie...](#)

[FIGURE 2-4: Blank 2023 Production Schedule spreadsheet that's full of #DIV/0! e...](#)

[FIGURE 2-5: 2023 Production Schedule spreadsheet after trapping all the #DIV/0!...](#)

[FIGURE 2-6: Clicking the Trace Precedents command button shows the direct prece...](#)

[FIGURE 2-7: Clicking the Trace Precedents command button again shows the indire...](#)

[FIGURE 2-8: Clicking the Trace Precedents command button a third time shows a p...](#)

[FIGURE 2-9: Double-clicking the dotted tracer arrow opens the Go To dialog box ...](#)

[FIGURE 2-10: Clicking the Trace Dependents command button shows all the depende...](#)

[FIGURE 2-11: Flagging an error value in a worksheet in the Error Checking dialo...](#)

[FIGURE 2-12: Using the Trace Error option to show the precedents and dependents...](#)

[FIGURE 2-13: Calculating each part of a formula in the Evaluate Formula dialog ...](#)

## **Book 3 Chapter 3**

[FIGURE 3-1: Using the DATE function to combine separate date information into a...](#)

[FIGURE 3-2: Using the NETWORKDAYS function to find the number of workdays betwe...](#)

## **Book 3 Chapter 4**

[FIGURE 4-1: Using the PV function to calculate the present value of various inv...](#)

[FIGURE 4-2: Using the NPV function to calculate the net present value of an inv...](#)

[FIGURE 4-3: Loan Payments table using the PMT function to calculate various loa...](#)

[FIGURE 4-4: A Depreciation table showing 10-year depreciation of an asset using...](#)

## **Book 3 Chapter 5**

[FIGURE 5-1: Rounding off the value of pi with the ROUND, ROUNDUP, and ROUNDDOWN...](#)

[FIGURE 5-2: Using SUMIF to total sales by items sold. \(Sample workbook: Chris C...](#)

[FIGURE 5-3: Using SUMIFS to total sales by location as well as the items sold. ...](#)

[FIGURE 5-4: Home sales worksheet using common statistical functions. \(Sample wo...](#)

[FIGURE 5-5: A version of the home sales worksheet with various counting formula...](#)

[FIGURE 5-6: Selecting a statistical analysis tool added by the Analysis ToolPak...](#)

## **Book 3 Chapter 6**

[FIGURE 6-1: The XLOOKUP formula in cell F4 returns sales based on the country e...](#)

[FIGURE 6-2: The XLOOKUP formula in cell F4 returns the country based on the sal...](#)

[FIGURE 6-3: A formula with nested XLOOKUP functions to return the number of uni...](#)

[FIGURE 6-4: Using the VLOOKUP function to return the amount of the tip to add f...](#)

[FIGURE 6-5: Using the HLOOKUP function to return the price of a bakery item fro...](#)

[FIGURE 6-6: Doing a two-way lookup in the Production Schedule table. \(Sample wo...](#)

[FIGURE 6-7: Using the TRANSPOSE function to change the orientation of a simple ...](#)

[FIGURE 6-8: Using the PROPER function to convert names in all uppercase letters...](#)

[FIGURE 6-9: Worksheet after replacing names in all uppercase letters with prope...](#)

[FIGURE 6-10: Using the TEXTJOIN function to create a CSV file for export where ...](#)

[FIGURE 6-11: Worksheet after concatenating the first and last names in column C...](#)

## **Book 4 Chapter 1**

[FIGURE 1-1: Setting a password to open and modify the workbook in the General O...](#)

[FIGURE 1-2: Entering the password required to open a protected workbook file.](#)

[FIGURE 1-3: Use the Protect Sheet dialog box to select your worksheet protectio...](#)

[FIGURE 1-4: Designating the range to be unlocked by a password in a protected w...](#)

[FIGURE 1-5: Assigning the range title, address, and password in the New Range d...](#)

[FIGURE 1-6: Setting the permissions for each user in the Permissions dialog box...](#)

[FIGURE 1-7: Getting ready to protect the sheet in the Allow Users to Edit Range...](#)

[FIGURE 1-8: Using the Tab key to move from unlocked cell to unlocked cell in a ...](#)

[FIGURE 1-9: Protecting a workbook in the Protect Structure and Windows dialog b...](#)

## **Book 4 Chapter 2**

[FIGURE 2-1: Checking a workbook's properties in its Info screen in the Excel Ba...](#)

[FIGURE 2-2: Filling out the signing information in the Signature Setup dialog b...](#)

[FIGURE 2-3: Filling in the signature in the Sign dialog box.](#)

[FIGURE 2-4: The workbook after adding the digital signature line graphic with t...](#)

[FIGURE 2-5: Adding notes to various cells of a worksheet. \(Sample workbook: Inc...](#)

[FIGURE 2-6: Adding inked notes to a worksheet with my finger on a Windows table...](#)

## **Book 4 Chapter 3**

[FIGURE 3-1: Use the Send Link dialog box to invite coworkers or clients to shar...](#)

[FIGURE 3-2: Use the Link Settings dialog box to customize the link you're shari...](#)

[FIGURE 3-3: When you click Copy Link, Excel copies the link address to the Clip...](#)

[FIGURE 3-4: Dragging the cell range A1:B23 from the Historical Sales worksheet ...](#)

[FIGURE 3-5: Word memo after copying the worksheet data.](#)

[FIGURE 3-6: With the copy-and-paste method, use the Paste Special dialog box to...](#)

[FIGURE 3-7: Editing the embedded worksheet sales data from within the Word memo...](#)

[FIGURE 3-8: To link data, select the Paste Link option in Word's Paste Special ...](#)

[FIGURE 3-9: A linked chart pasted into the Word memo.](#)

[FIGURE 3-10: Editing an embedded Excel chart in a PowerPoint slide.](#)

[FIGURE 3-11: Use the Alt Text pane to compose your alternative text for a visua...](#)

[FIGURE 3-12: If the Accessibility Checker discovers one or more ways you can ma...](#)

[FIGURE 3-13: Use this dialog box to type and post your comment.](#)

[FIGURE 3-14: Use this dialog box to type and post a comment reply.](#)

## **Book 5 Chapter 1**

[FIGURE 1-1: A typical clustered column chart containing a variety of standard c...](#)

[FIGURE 1-2: Insert Chart dialog box with the Recommended Charts tab selected. \(...](#)

[FIGURE 1-3: Open the Insert Chart dialog box and then use the All Charts tab to...](#)

[FIGURE 1-4: Previewing the embedded chart to insert from the Quick Analysis too...](#)

[FIGURE 1-5: Clustered column chart created on its own chart sheet. \(Sample work...](#)

[FIGURE 1-6: Clustered column chart on its own chart sheet after selecting a new...](#)

[FIGURE 1-7: The clustered column chart after switching the columns and rows. \(S...](#)

[FIGURE 1-8: Using the Select Data Source dialog box to remove the empty Genre l...](#)

[FIGURE 1-9: Repositioning the chart legend in the example clustered column usin...](#)

[FIGURE 1-10: Clustered column chart on its own Chart sheet with data table and ...](#)

[FIGURE 1-11: Formatting the Chart Title with the options in the Format Chart Ti...](#)

[FIGURE 1-12: Formatting the Vertical \(Value\) Axis with the options in the Forma...](#)

[FIGURE 1-13: Sparklines graphics representing the variation in the data in a wo...](#)

[FIGURE 1-14: Adding a Bing Maps infographic to illustrate the 2021 population b...](#)

[FIGURE 1-15: Adding a People Graph infographic to illustrate the 2021 populatio...](#)

[FIGURE 1-16: Adding a Filled Map chart infographic to illustrate the 2021 popul...](#)

## **Book 5 Chapter 2**

[FIGURE 2-1: When you click a graphic object to select it, the rotation and circ...](#)

[FIGURE 2-2: Graphic objects on top obscure any worksheet data and parts of othe...](#)

[FIGURE 2-3: The worksheet after moving the hundred-dollar bill graphic to the t...](#)

[FIGURE 2-4: Grouping the hundred-dollar bill photo and its caption to turn them...](#)

[FIGURE 2-5: Selecting a web image to download into your worksheet.](#)

[FIGURE 2-6: Selecting an online 3-D model to insert into your worksheet.](#)

[FIGURE 2-7: Selecting a local image to insert into your worksheet.](#)

[FIGURE 2-8: Use this box to select from a large collection of ready-to-use imag...](#)

[FIGURE 2-9: Selecting the text style for the new WordArt text from its drop-dow...](#)



[FIGURE 2-10: Select the SmartArt list, diagram, or picture to insert in the wor...](#)

[FIGURE 2-11: Adding text for a new organizational chart in the SmartArt text pa...](#)

## **Book 6 Chapter 1**

[FIGURE 1-1: Creating an employee table with the row of field names and first da...](#)

[FIGURE 1-2: Opening the data form in the new table to add a new record. \(Sample...](#)

[FIGURE 1-3: Using the Remove Duplicates dialog box to remove duplicate records ...](#)

[FIGURE 1-4: Set up to sort records alphabetically by location and salary. \(Samp...](#)

[FIGURE 1-5: Employee table sorted by location and salary. \(Sample workbook: Emp...](#)

[FIGURE 1-6: The Sort dialog box with five levels of sorting keys for sorting th...](#)

[FIGURE 1-7: The Personnel table after sorting by department, supervisor, last, ...](#)

[FIGURE 1-8: Using the Subtotal dialog box to subtotal the salaries for each dep...](#)

[FIGURE 1-9: Bottom of the table showing the subtotals and grand total for depar...](#)

## **Book 6 Chapter 2**

[FIGURE 2-1: The employee table after filtering the Dept and Location fields. \(S...](#)

[FIGURE 2-2: Using the Top 10 Items AutoFilter to filter out all records except ...](#)

[FIGURE 2-3: Using Custom AutoFilter to filter out records except for those with...](#)

[FIGURE 2-4: Using Advanced Filter to copy records that meet the criteria in the...](#)

[FIGURE 2-5: Copied records where the location is Boston and the date hired is p...](#)

[FIGURE 2-6: Copied records where the location is Boston and the date hired prio...](#)

[FIGURE 2-7: Copied records extracted from the table for employees whose salarie...](#)

[FIGURE 2-8: Using DSUM to total the salaries over \\$55,000 in the Employee table...](#)

[FIGURE 2-9: Using the Navigator to select which data tables and queries from th...](#)

[FIGURE 2-10: Customers worksheet with the data imported from the Access Custome...](#)

[FIGURE 2-11: Orders worksheet with the data imported from the Orders data table...](#)

[FIGURE 2-12: Importing the data in a tab-delimited text file into a worksheet u...](#)

[FIGURE 2-13: Creating a new query in the Power Query Editor using a data table ...](#)

[FIGURE 2-14: Setting the filtering and sorting criteria for the new data query ...](#)

[FIGURE 2-15: The Contoso Stores data queried in the Power Query Editor after lo...](#)

## **Book 7 Chapter 1**

[FIGURE 1-1: Creating a one-variable data table. \(Sample workbook: Data Table 1 ...](#)

[FIGURE 1-2: The completed one-variable data table. \(Sample workbook: Data Table...](#)

[FIGURE 1-3: Creating a two-variable data table. \(Sample workbook: Data Table 2 ...](#)

[FIGURE 1-4: The completed two-variable data table. \(Sample workbook: Data Table...](#)

[FIGURE 1-5: Adding a new Most Likely scenario for the sales forecast. \(Sample w...](#)

[FIGURE 1-6: Specifying the changing values in the Scenario Values dialog box. \(...](#)

[FIGURE 1-7: Worksheet after showing the Worst Case scenario. \(Sample workbook: ...](#)

[FIGURE 1-8: Designating the result cells in the Scenario Summary dialog box. \(S...](#)

[FIGURE 1-9: A Scenario Summary report for the scenarios in the Sales Forecast t...](#)

[FIGURE 1-10: Using goal seeking to find out how much sales must increase to rea...](#)

[FIGURE 1-11: A worksheet showing a goal-seeking solution and the Goal Seek Stat...](#)

[FIGURE 1-12: Specifying the parameters to apply to the model in Solver Paramete...](#)

[FIGURE 1-13: The Solver Results dialog box showing that Solver found a solution...](#)

[FIGURE 1-14: Modifying the solution options in the Options dialog box.](#)

## **Book 7 Chapter 2**

[FIGURE 2-1: Previewing the PivotTable created from the selected data in the Qui...](#)

[FIGURE 2-2: Previewed PivotTable created on a new worksheet with the Quick Anal...](#)

[FIGURE 2-3: Creating a new PivotTable from the sample PivotTables displayed in ...](#)

[FIGURE 2-4: Indicate the data source and PivotTable location in the Create Pivo...](#)

[FIGURE 2-5: A new PivotTable displaying the blank table grid and the PivotTable...](#)

[FIGURE 2-6: A completed PivotTable after adding the fields from the employee ta...](#)

[FIGURE 2-7: The revised PivotTable in the Outline Form with an extra blank row ...](#)

[FIGURE 2-8: The PivotTable after filtering the Gender Filter Report field and t...](#)

[FIGURE 2-9: Employee PivotTable showing the men's salaries in the Engineering d...](#)

[FIGURE 2-10: Employee PivotTable using a timeline filter to show the salaries f...](#)

[FIGURE 2-11: Pivoting the table so that Dept is now the Column Labels Field and...](#)

[FIGURE 2-12: The PivotTable after adding Profit Sharing as another Report Filte...](#)

[FIGURE 2-13: Creating a calculated field for a PivotTable.](#)

[FIGURE 2-14: Modifying the PivotTable options in the PivotTable Options dialog ...](#)

[FIGURE 2-15: Clustered column PivotChart moved to its own PivotChart sheet. \(Sa...](#)

[FIGURE 2-16: The Power Pivot window with tabs for all the data tables imported ...](#)

[FIGURE 2-17: Switching from Data View to Diagram View in the Power Pivot for Ex...](#)

[FIGURE 2-18: 3D Maps window with new Clustered Column 3-D animation for visuali...](#)

[FIGURE 2-19: Defining the options for a new line chart that shows historical an...](#)

[FIGURE 2-20: Worksheet with embedded line chart depicting historical and foreca...](#)

## **Book 8 Chapter 1**

[FIGURE 1-1: Getting ready to record the CompanyName macro in the Record Macro d...](#)

[FIGURE 1-2: Selecting the macro to run in the Macro dialog box.](#)

## **Book 8 Chapter 2**

[FIGURE 2-1: The Visual Basic Editor window as it normally appears when editing ...](#)

[FIGURE 2-2: The buttons on the Visual Basic Editor's Standard toolbar.](#)

[FIGURE 2-3: Using the Find feature to locate the code to edit in the Code windo...](#)

[FIGURE 2-4: The CompanyName Code window after adding variables and the InputBox...](#)

[FIGURE 2-5: The Worksheet Title dialog box that appears when you run the Compan...](#)

[FIGURE 2-6: Entering the Commission user-defined function in the Personal Macro...](#)

[FIGURE 2-7: Adding a description for the Commission user-defined function.](#)

[FIGURE 2-8: Selecting a cell in the RV Sales worksheet into which to enter the ...](#)

[FIGURE 2-9: Specifying the TotalSales and ItemsSold arguments in the RV Sales w...](#)

[FIGURE 2-10: Completed worksheet for all salespeople computed with the Commissi...](#)

[FIGURE 2-11: Protecting the VBA project so that its user-defined functions can'...](#)

[FIGURE 2-12: Activating the new add-in file in the Add-Ins dialog box.](#)

# Introduction

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*Excel All-in-One For Dummies* brings together plain and simple information on using all aspects of Microsoft Excel. It's designed to be of help no matter how much or how little experience you have with the program. As the preeminent spreadsheet and data analysis software for all sorts of computing devices running Windows (desktops, laptops, tablets, and even smartphones), Excel offers its users seemingly unlimited capabilities too often masked in technical jargon and obscured by explanations only a software engineer could love. On top of that, many of the publications that purport to give you the lowdown on using Excel are quite clear on how to use particular features without giving you a clue as to why you would want to go to all the trouble.

The truth is that understanding how to use the abundance of features offered by Excel is only half the battle, at best. The other half of the battle is to understand how these features can benefit you in your work; in other words, "what's in it for you." I have endeavored to cover both the "how to" and "so what" aspects in all my discussions of Excel features, being as clear as possible and using a minimum of tech-speak.

Fortunately, Excel is well worth the effort to get to know because it's definitely one of the best data-processing and analysis tools that has ever come along. From let-Excel-do-all-the-work features such as Flash Fill and Analyze Data to eyebrow-raisingly powerful tools such as PivotTables and Solver, Excel has whatever you need to get your numbers crunched. Excel is a blast to use when you know what you're doing, and my great hope is that this "fun" aspect of using the program comes through on every page (or, at least, every other page).

# ***About This Book***

As the name states, *Excel All-in-One For Dummies* is a reference (whether you keep it on your desk or use it to prop up your desk is your business). This means that although the chapters in each book are laid out in a logical order, each stands on its own, ready for you to dig into the information at any point.

As much as possible, I have endeavored to make the topics within each book and chapter stand on their own. When there's just no way around relying on some information that's discussed elsewhere, I include a cross-reference that gives you the chapter and verse (actually the book and chapter) for where you can find that related information if you're of a mind to.

Use the full Table of Contents and Index to look up the topic of the hour and find out exactly where it is in this compilation of Excel information. You'll find that although most topics are introduced in a conversational manner, I don't waste much time cutting to the chase by laying down the main principles at work (usually in bulleted form) followed by the hard reality of how you do the deed (as numbered steps).

## ***Foolish Assumptions***

I'm only going to make one foolish assumption about you, and that is that you have some need to use Microsoft Excel under Windows in your work or studies. If pushed, I further guess that you aren't particularly interested in knowing Excel at an expert level but are terribly motivated to find out how to do the stuff you need to get done. If that's the case, this is definitely the book for you. Fortunately, even if you happen to be one