
Lesson 5 Find and Replace

Lesson Topics

- The Find Command
- The Replace Command
- Finding and Replacing Formats

Lesson Objectives

At the end of the lesson, you will be able to:

- Use the Find and Replace dialog box to locate information in a worksheet;
- Use the various Find options (e.g., Match case and Find entire cells only) to improve the search results;
- Use the Replace dialog box to replace text in a worksheet;
- Distinguish between searching for values displayed in a cell or values within a formula;
- Use the ? and * characters to search for word patterns;
- Replace formats with other formats.

Student Files Used

You will use the following file from your student folder:

- Search

The Find Command

Excel's *Find* feature lets you locate information, and even formats, in a workbook. Excel's *Replace* feature lets you replace information and formats with something else. Whatever is being searched for is called the *search string* and whatever is being replaced is called the *replacement string*.

You can search the entire worksheet or a selected range. To search a range, select it before starting the *Find* feature. To search the entire worksheet, just select a single cell. You will learn how to search an entire workbook a little later. Your searches in this lesson will be for the entire worksheet.

You are going to open a workbook and search for all occurrences of *sales*.

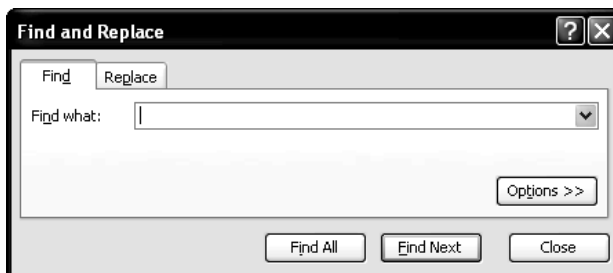
1. **Open Search.**
2. A search starts with the active cell and then searches forward. When it reaches the end of the worksheet it goes to the beginning and continues searching. For this search, you are going to begin at A1.

Go to A1.

Tip: Remember, you can always use CTRL/HOME to go to A1.

3. **On the Edit menu, choose *Find*.**

The Find and Replace dialog box appears.



4. **In the *Find what* text box, type: sales**

Excel is going to find all occurrences of this search string, regardless of capitalization. This is because the *Match case* option (you will learn about it later) has not been chosen.
5. **So that you will be able to see the results of the search, drag the Find and Replace dialog box to the lower left hand corner of the screen.**

6. Click the Find Next button.

Excel finds an occurrence of *Sales*.

7. Click the Find Next button.

Excel finds the next occurrence of *Sales*.

8. Click the Find Next button.

Notice that Excel goes to the next occurrence of *Sales*, which is in cell C9, *Sales Intern*.

- 9.** Instead of clicking the Find Next button, it can be easier to use the FIND NEXT key (SHIFT/F4). This works only if the Find and Replace dialog box is closed.

Close the Find and Replace dialog box.**10. Use SHIFT/F4.**

Notice that Excel goes to the cell containing *Consales*. Since the text *sales* appears as part of this word, Excel assumes that you want to find it.

11. Use SHIFT/F4.

Notice that Excel goes back to the beginning of the worksheet and starts again with the first occurrence of *Sales*.

Find Entire Cells Only

The *Find Entire Cells Only* option lets you go to cells that contain only the search string and nothing else.

1. On the Edit menu, choose Find.

Tip: You can also use CTRL/F to access the Find and Replace dialog box.

2. If the Options button has arrows pointing right, click it.

Several options are added to the dialog box.

Within:	Sheet	<input type="checkbox"/> Match case
Search:	By Rows	<input type="checkbox"/> Match entire cell contents
Look in:	Formulas	Options <<

3. Select the Match entire cell contents option.**4. Click the Find Next button.**

Excel goes to the second occurrence of *Sales*.

5. Click the Find Next button.

Notice that Excel has started the search again at the beginning of the worksheet. It skipped both the *Sales Intern* and the *Consales* cells. Since there were no other cells that contained only *sales*, Excel resumed the search at the beginning.

6. Click Close.

Notes

The *Within* list box on the Find and Replace dialog box allows you to search the active sheet or the entire workbook.

To search backwards from the Find and Replace dialog box, hold down the SHIFT key and click the Find Next button. If the Find and Replace dialog box is not open, you can use the FIND PREVIOUS key (CTRL/SHIFT/F4).

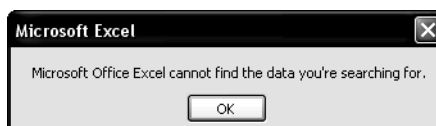
You can use the *Search* drop-down list box on the Find and Replace dialog box to specify how the search should be performed — either row by row or column by column. You can use the *Look in* drop-down list box to specify where you want to search — in *Values*, *Formulas*, or in *Comments*.

Match case

As mentioned, if you choose the *Match case* option, Excel will find only occurrences of the string that are an exact match of the capitalization. If it is not chosen, Excel ignores capitalization. This is why Excel found *Sales*, although you typed *sales* in the *Find what* text box.

- 1. On the Edit menu, choose *Find*.**
- 2. Verify that *sales* is in the *Find what* text box.**
- 3. Select the *Match case* option.**
- 4. Verify that *Match entire cell contents* is still selected.**
- 5. Click the Find Next button.**

Excel displays an alert box, because there are no lowercase occurrences of *sales* in a cell.



6. Click OK. You can leave the Find and Replace dialog box open for the next section.

Wildcard Characters

The wildcard characters * and ? can be used in a search string. You can use the question mark wildcard character to represent any single character in a string. For example, if you want to find both *disk* and *desk*, you could enter *d?sk* in the *Find what* text box. This character is especially useful for finding words such as *effect* and *affect* — *?ffect* will find both. You can use the wildcard more than once in a string. For example, *the??* will find *there*, *their*, *theme*, and *these*. You can use the asterisk wildcard character to search for an unspecified number of wildcard characters. For example, *sens** will find *sense*, *senses*, and *sensational*.

1. You are going to search for occurrences of 212, 222, 232, etc., as a telephone exchange.

If the Find and Replace dialog box is not open, choose *Find* on the Edit menu.

2. **Change the contents of the *Find what* text box to:**
2??
3. **De-select the *Match case* option.**
4. **De-select the *Match entire cell contents* option.**
5. **Click the Find Next button.**

Notice that Excel finds a match.

6. **Continue to click the Find Next button.**

Notice that Excel finds occurrences of both 212 and 222 as a telephone exchange. It also finds 242.

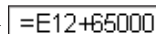
7. **When you are finished, close the Find and Replace dialog box.**

Formulas vs. Values

When searching, the Find and Replace feature considers whatever is on the Formula bar, a *formula*. It does not have to be the kind of formula you are used to beginning with an equal sign (=). So far, you have been searching for whatever is on the Formula bar when a cell is selected. When you search for values, you search for what is displayed in the cell — either the results of formulas or the results of formatting commands.

1. **Go to F12.**

Notice that *65000* is on the Formula bar as part of a formula.



2. **Go to F13 and notice the same thing.**
3. You are going to search for *65000* as a formula and then as a value.
On the Edit menu, choose *Find*.
4. **In the *Find what* text box, type: 65000**
5. **Verify that *Formulas* is chosen in the *Look in* text box.**
6. **Click the *Find Next* button.**

Excel goes to E2.

7. **Keep clicking *Find Next* and notice that Excel goes to E3, F12, and F13.**

When those cells are active, *65000* is somewhere on the Formula bar.

8. You are now going to search for *65000* as a value. Excel will go only to E3, because that is the only cell that displays *65000*. Cell E2 displays a dollar sign and a comma with it (*\$65,000*) and cells F12 and F13 do not display it at all.
9. **Click the *Look in* drop-down list, and choose *Values*.**
10. **Click the *Find Next* button.**
Notice that Excel goes to E3.
11. **Click the *Find Next* button.**
Notice that Excel will not go to any other cell.
12. **Click *Close* on the *Find and Replace* dialog box.**

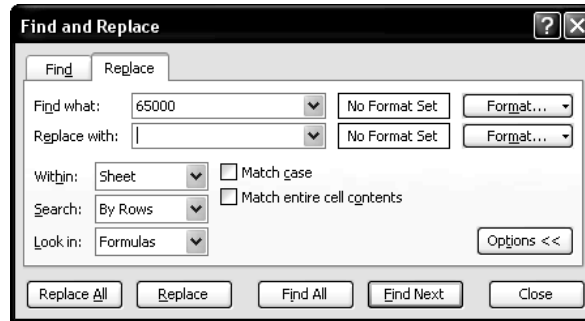
The Replace Command

The *Replace* command lets you replace a string with another string. You are going to replace occurrences of *Sales* with *Marketing*.

1. **Use CTRL/HOME to go to the beginning of the worksheet.**
2. **On the Edit menu, choose *Replace*.**

The Find and Replace dialog box appears with a few

added features. Especially notice the *Replace with* text box.

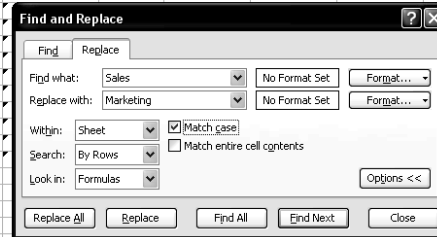


3. In the *Find what* text box, type: Sales
4. In the *Replace with* text box, type: Marketing
5. Click the *Match case* option to select it.

If you click the Replace All button, Excel will replace all occurrences. For this exercise, you are going to replace only some of the occurrences.

6. If you cannot see most of column C, move the Find and Replace dialog box to the right.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	NAME	PHONE	DEPARTMENT	DEPT. CODE	SALARY	BONUS		
2	Goldstein	212-543-1212	Sales	12	\$65,000	0		
3	Smith	222-333-2344	Sales	12	65000	0		
4	Jones	718-881-1214	Administration					
5	Adams	212-998-7654	Mail Room					
6	Fenton	914-223-3333	Administration					
7	Avery	718-454-1834	Cafeteria					
8	Grasso	212-444-1234	Cafeteria Supervisor					
9	Lincoln	212-252-7820	Sales Intern					
10	Milano	222-932-9333	Administration Intern					
11	Jordan	718-673-9832	Accounting					
12	Matthews	212-967-9009	Office					
13	Donaldson	914-583-8204	Office					
14	Kenton	516-242-1234	Team Consoles					
15								
16								
17								
18								



7. Click the Find Next button to start the replace.

Excel stops at the first occurrence of *Sales*.
8. Click the Replace button to replace *Sales* with *Marketing*.
9. At the next occurrence, click the Find Next button to skip this occurrence.
10. At the next occurrence, click the Replace button.

Excel has found the last occurrence.
11. Click Close to close the Replace dialog box.

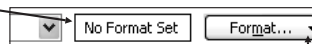
Note: CTRL/H is the keyboard shortcut for *Replace*.

Finding and Replacing Formats

The Find and Replace dialog box can also be used to find and replace formatting.

1. **Search should be the active workbook.**
2. **Use CTRL/H to open the Find and Replace dialog box.**
3. **Delete whatever is in the *Find what* or *Replace with* boxes. Both boxes should be empty.**
4. **If the Options button has two arrows pointing right, click it to show the lower half of the Find and Replace dialog box. If the arrows point to the left, you do not have to click it.**

To the right of the *Find what* and *Replace with* boxes, notice *No Format Set*, indicating that Excel will find cells with any formatting that happens to be applied. Each box has its own Format button to specify formats to find and replace.



5. **If the text to the right of the *Find what* box reads *Preview* instead of *No Format Set*, click the arrow on the right side of the Format button and choose *Clear Find Format*. Do the same for the Format button to the right of the *Replace with* box if the button reads *Preview* rather than *No Format set*.**
6. **Once both boxes read *No Format set*, click the Format button to the right of the *Find what* text box and choose *Format*.**

The Find Format dialog box appears, which is just like the Format Cells dialog box.

7. **Click the tabs of the Find Format dialog box and notice that no formats are chosen.**

This means that Excel will find cells with any formatting.

8. There is one difference from the Format Cells dialog box – the Choose Format From Cell button.

Click the Choose Format From Cell button (it is in the lower left corner of the dialog box).

The pointer turns into a cross with an eyedropper. It allows you to pick up formatting from a cell in the workbook.



9. Click in cell A1.

The Find and Replace dialog box reappears. Next to the *Find what* box, notice *Preview** in bold, which shows that Excel will find bold formatting.

10. Click the second Format button (the one next to the Replace with text box).

11. In the Replace Format dialog box, click the Patterns tab.

12. Choose a color of your preference.

Before you click OK, notice the Clear button below the Sample box - this button allows you to remove the formatting on the current tab.

13. Click OK to accept the color format.

Notice the color in the *Replace with Preview* box. Also notice that *Preview** is in bold — because you have not specified the *Replace with* font, the bold formatting you are finding will remain in place.

14. Click Replace all.

Excel tells you that 6 replacements were made.

15. Click OK, and then click Close.

Note: You can also find and replace text combined with formats. For example, to add formatting to all cells that contain the text "Paycheck," you would enter *Paycheck* in both the *Find what* and *Replace with* boxes, and select the new formatting in the *Replace with* box.

Note: You can replace one text string or format with nothing, thereby removing all occurrences of that string or format. This is sometimes referred to as a *global delete*.