

Can TRUE or FALSE be used in VLOOKUP?

Authored by
stats writer

June 23, 2024

RECOMMENDED CITATION

stats writer (2024). *Can TRUE or FALSE be used in VLOOKUP?*. PSYCHOLOGICAL SCALES. Retrieved from <https://scales.arabpsychology.com/?p=147876>

The VLOOKUP function in Microsoft Excel allows users to search for a specific value in a column and return a corresponding value from a different column. The VLOOKUP function accepts both numerical and text values, but does not accept logical values such as TRUE or FALSE. This is because logical values are not considered as valid inputs for the VLOOKUP function. Therefore, TRUE or FALSE cannot be used in a VLOOKUP formula.

Excel: Use TRUE or FALSE in VLOOKUP

You can use the VLOOKUP function in Excel to look up some value in a range and return a corresponding value.

This function uses the following syntax:

VLOOKUP(lookup_value, table_array, col_index_num,)

where:

lookup_value: The value you want to look up
table_array: The range of cells to search for the lookup value
col_index_num: The column number that contains the return value
range_lookup: TRUE = approximate match, FALSE = exact match

Notice that the last argument allows you to specify TRUE to look for an approximate match of the value you want to look up or FALSE for an exact match.

The default value is TRUE, but in most cases you will want to use FALSE because this tells Excel that you want to find an exact match of the value you're looking for.

When using TRUE, the VLOOKUP function will often return unexpected and inaccurate results.

The following examples show the difference between using TRUE and FALSE in the VLOOKUP function with the following dataset in Excel:

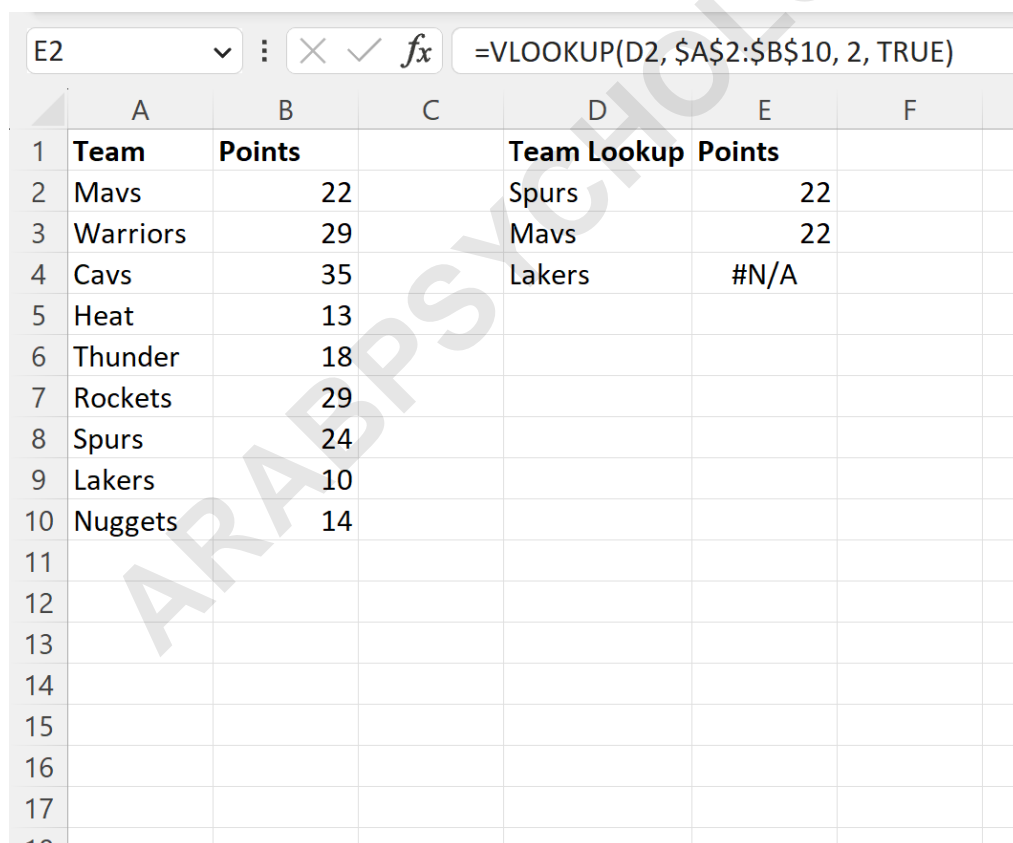
	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	Team	Points				
2	Mavs	22				
3	Warriors	29				
4	Cavs	35				
5	Heat	13				
6	Thunder	18				
7	Rockets	29				
8	Spurs	24				
9	Lakers	10				
10	Nuggets	14				
11						
12						
13						
14						
15						
16						
17						
18						

Example 1: Using VLOOKUP with TRUE

Suppose we use the following formula with VLOOKUP to look up the team names in column D and return the corresponding value from the points column:

=VLOOKUP(D2, \$A\$2:\$B\$10, 2, TRUE)

The following screenshot shows how to use this formula in practice:



	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	Team	Points		Team Lookup	Points	
2	Mavs	22		Spurs	22	
3	Warriors	29		Mavs	22	
4	Cavs	35		Lakers	#N/A	
5	Heat	13				
6	Thunder	18				
7	Rockets	29				
8	Spurs	24				
9	Lakers	10				
10	Nuggets	14				
11						
12						
13						
14						
15						
16						
17						
18						

Since we specified TRUE for the last argument in

VLOOKUP, we specified that Excel should look for "approximate" matches for the team names.

Notice that none of the points values returned in column E match the team names from column D.

Example 2: Using VLOOKUP with FALSE

Suppose we use the following formula with **VLOOKUP** to look up the team names in column D and return the corresponding value from the points column:

=VLOOKUP(D2, \$A\$2:\$B\$10, 2, FALSE)

The following screenshot shows how to use this formula in practice:

exact match is not found.

The following tutorials explain how to perform other common operations in Excel:

ARABPSYCHOLOGY.COM