

How can I check if all values in Excel are the Same?

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Mastering Data Uniformity Checks in Microsoft Excel

One of the most frequent tasks in data analysis is verifying the integrity and consistency of your datasets. Specifically, determining whether every value within a designated cell range is identical can be crucial for quality control, especially when dealing with large organizational records or financial reports. Fortunately, Microsoft Excel provides powerful tools and Excel formulas that allow us to perform this check efficiently, resulting in a simple **TRUE** or **FALSE** output. This guide will walk you through two essential techniques for comparing values, ensuring your data meets strict uniformity requirements.

We achieve this precision by combining two key logical functions: the case-sensitive EXACT function and the powerful aggregation tool, the AND function. These combinations are implemented as robust Array formulas, designed to handle multiple comparisons simultaneously across selected cells.

Understanding the Necessity of EXACT and AND for Rigorous Comparison

Many users initially attempt to use a simple equality comparison (e.g., `=B2:E2=B2`) combined with the **AND** function. While this works adequately for purely numeric data, it fails drastically when comparing text strings that require strict case sensitivity. The core benefit of the EXACT function is its ability to enforce absolute textual matching, including capitalization, spacing, and formatting, making it the preferred tool for validation of names, IDs, or sensitive coded information where 'abc' is not the same as 'Abc'.

Furthermore, the AND function is indispensable here because, when applied to an array resulting from multiple comparisons, it acts as a decisive gatekeeper. It compresses the multiple Boolean logic outcomes (one for each cell comparison) into a single, definitive Boolean logic answer (TRUE or FALSE). If even a single comparison within the range returns **FALSE**, the overall **AND** result is **FALSE**. This ensures that the check is not just superficial but rigorous, satisfying requirements that demand 100% fidelity between entries.

Formula 1: Checking for Uniformity within a Single Range

The first common requirement is to verify if every cell in a specific row or column contains the exact same text or numeric value. This is highly useful for validation columns where a consistent input is expected. The technique involves comparing every cell in the target range back to a single, authoritative cell within that same range, usually the first cell.

When you apply the EXACT function across an entire range against a single cell, Excel generates an array of **TRUE** or **FALSE** values corresponding to each comparison. The subsequent application of the AND function then evaluates this entire array, requiring every single element to

be **TRUE** for the final output to be **TRUE**.

To check if all values in a defined range are identical, use the following syntax:

=AND(EXACT(B2:E2, B2))

This powerful construction checks if every cell within the range **B2:E2** matches the value found in the starting cell, **B2**. If even one cell differs, the **AND** function returns **FALSE**. It is important to note that because this formula operates on an array, in older versions of Microsoft Excel (pre-Microsoft 365), it must be entered as an Array formulas using **Ctrl+Shift+Enter**. Modern versions handle this implicitly.

Detailed Walkthrough: Example 1 - Checking Employee Performance Consistency

Let us apply the first formula to a practical scenario involving performance data. Suppose we maintain a dataset tracking the employee who achieved the best performance metric during each quarter across various years. Our goal is to quickly identify which years maintained the same top-performing employee consistently across all four quarters (Q1 through Q4). Consistency in these metrics is often a key indicator of stable business operations or leadership.

The dataset below illustrates the data organized by year in column A, with performance results recorded across columns B, C, D, and E, representing the four quarters. We need a definitive way to check if, for instance, Year 2021 (Row 2) had the same employee listed in B2, C2, D2, and E2.

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2	Year 1	Andy	Andy	Andy	Andy	
3	Year 2	Bob	Andy	Bob	Doug	
4	Year 3	Chad	Chad	Bob	Chad	
5	Year 4	Doug	Doug	Doug	Doug	
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						
14						
15						

To execute this precise check for the first year (Row 2), we will type the following Excel formulas into cell **F2**. This array formula compares the contents of the entire quarterly range (B2:E2) against the value in the starting cell (B2):

=AND(EXACT(B2:E2, B2))

Upon entering this formula, Excel calculates whether all four quarterly entries match the Q1 entry. The formula generates an array such as {TRUE, TRUE, FALSE, TRUE} if, for example, Q3 differed. The outer **AND** function then evaluates this array, returning **FALSE** instantly. We can then efficiently determine the consistency for all other years by clicking and dragging the formula down through the remaining cells in column F. This action automatically adjusts the row references for each subsequent year.

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	All Names Equal?
2	Year 1	Andy	Andy	Andy	Andy	TRUE
3	Year 2	Bob	Andy	Bob	Doug	FALSE
4	Year 3	Chad	Chad	Bob	Chad	FALSE
5	Year 4	Doug	Doug	Doug	Doug	TRUE
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						
14						
15						

The resulting column F now provides a clear flag, using **TRUE** or **FALSE**, indicating immediate visibility into which years maintained a uniform top performer across all four quarters. As seen above, 2021 and 2023 show **TRUE**, while 2022 and 2024 show **FALSE**, revealing the exact rows requiring investigation for variance.

Formula 2: Comparing Uniformity Between Two Corresponding Ranges

The second critical scenario involves comparing whether two separate but corresponding ranges hold identical values in parallel positions. This is fundamentally a data reconciliation task, often used in auditing, cross-referencing databases, or merging records where two sources must agree exactly on a set of corresponding entries.

In this application, the EXACT function is used to compare the cells sequentially: the first cell in the first range is compared only to the first cell in the second range, the second cell to the second cell, and so forth. This rigorous, index-based comparison generates a large array of Boolean logic results, indicating where matches occurred.

The AND function then ensures that every single comparison within that resulting array yielded **TRUE**. If any pair of corresponding cells differs--even if only by a lowercase letter--the overall result immediately becomes **FALSE**, indicating a comprehensive data mismatch.

To check if all values in range 1 correspond exactly to all values in range 2, use this structure:

=AND(EXACT(B2:B5, C2:C5))

This specific example checks if the values spanning the cell range **B2:B5** are exactly equal to the corresponding values in the range **C2:C5**. This method is exceptionally powerful for ensuring synchronized data integrity across parallel columns, which is essential for audit trails.

Detailed Walkthrough: Example 2 - Reconciling Data Across Two Companies

In our second example, we focus on a comparison scenario. Suppose two companies, Company A and Company B, are required to submit identical records for compliance or regulatory purposes. We need a swift mechanism to verify that the employee names listed by Company A across quarters Q1 through Q4 exactly match the employee names listed by Company B for the corresponding quarters. A single formula should give us a definitive answer regarding the entire set of records.

The data below is structured so that Company A's quarterly data resides in column B, and Company B's corresponding quarterly data resides in column C. We are looking for perfect alignment across the entire vertical range, from row 2 to row 5.

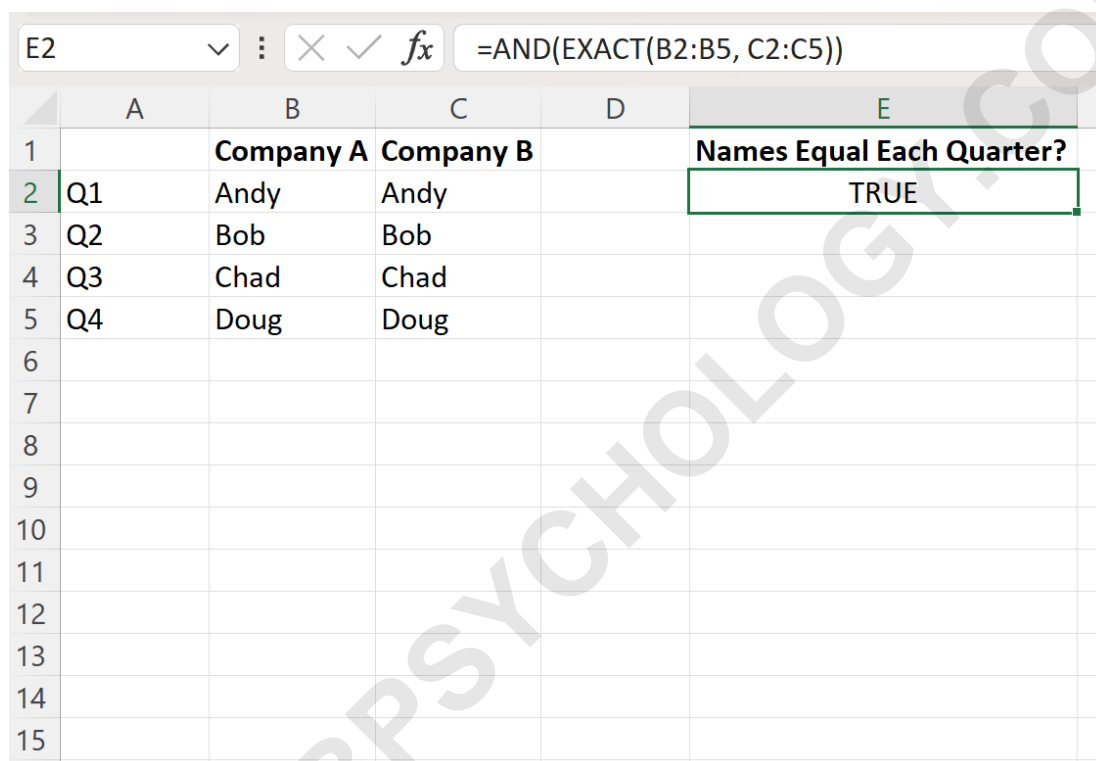
	A	B	C	D	E
1		Company A	Company B		
2	Q1	Andy	Andy		
3	Q2	Bob	Bob		
4	Q3	Chad	Chad		
5	Q4	Doug	Doug		
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					
15					
16					

To perform this comprehensive comparison, we will input the Formula 2 structure into cell **E2**. This formula instructs Microsoft Excel to compare the entire range of Company A's data (B2:B5) against

the entire range of Company B's data (C2:C5) on a one-to-one basis, utilizing the strict comparison rules of EXACT.

=AND(EXACT(B2:B5, C2:C5))

This formula acts as a global audit check. The result summarizes the findings of four separate comparisons (B2 vs C2, B3 vs C3, etc.) into a single cell. This efficiency is why Array formulas are indispensable for large-scale data integrity tasks.



The screenshot shows an Excel spreadsheet with the following data:

	A	B	C	D	E
1		Company A	Company B		Names Equal Each Quarter?
2	Q1	Andy	Andy		TRUE
3	Q2	Bob	Bob		
4	Q3	Chad	Chad		
5	Q4	Doug	Doug		
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					
15					

As demonstrated in the resulting screenshot, cell **E2** returns **TRUE** because every entry in the **Company A** data range matches the corresponding entry in the **Company B** data range exactly. If, for instance, Company A had listed "Jane Doe" in Q4 and Company B had listed "Jane Doe " (with a space), the case-sensitive and character-sensitive nature of the EXACT function would detect the difference, causing the entire result to become **FALSE** immediately.

Advanced Alternatives for Numerical Data

While the **AND(EXACT(...))** method is the most reliable for text and case-sensitive data, analysts often require faster methods when dealing exclusively with numerical values where case sensitivity is irrelevant. These alternatives avoid the complexity and resource demands associated with Array formulas.

Two highly efficient techniques exist for checking the uniformity of numbers within a cell range:

Using COUNTIF and Range Size: This method relies on counting how many cells in the range match the first cell, and checking if that count equals the total size of the range. The logic is: if the count of matches equals the total count of cells, they must all be the same. The formula structure is: `=COUNTIF(Range, FirstCell) = ROWS(Range) * COLUMNS(Range)`. For horizontal data like Example 1, we can use `=COUNTIF(B2:E2, B2) = COLUMNS(B2:E2)`. This is extremely quick to process.

Using MAX and MIN: For purely numerical data, the most mathematically elegant and simplest solution is to check if the maximum value in the range is equal to the minimum value in the range. If `=MAX(B2:E2) = MIN(B2:E2)`, then all numbers must be identical. If there is any variance, **MAX** will be greater than **MIN**, returning **FALSE**. This approach is highly recommended for optimizing performance on large numerical datasets in Microsoft Excel.

While these alternatives are faster, they lack the case-sensitive string matching capability provided by the **EXACT** function, reinforcing why the **AND(EXACT(...))** method is essential when dealing with text data integrity.

Summary of Formula Capabilities

These specific Excel formulas provide tailored solutions depending on your data integrity needs. Understanding which formula to deploy based on the type of check--internal uniformity or cross-comparison--is key to efficient spreadsheet management.

Internal Uniformity Check (Formula 1): This is ideal for validating consistency within a single record set (e.g., verifying that all quarterly reports for one year match). It confirms that every cell in the array **B2:E2** matches the anchor cell **B2**.

Cross-Range Comparison Check (Formula 2): This is essential for reconciliation and auditing, confirming that two parallel lists of values (**B2:B5** and **C2:C5**) are perfectly synchronized and match element by element.

By mastering these rigorous array-based comparisons, you can automate critical data quality checks that provide immediate, actionable feedback via simple Boolean logic, significantly streamlining your data validation workflows.