How to Find the First Negative Number in Excel with a Simple Formula

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Excel is a powerful spreadsheet software that offers various functions and tools to analyze and organize data. One useful function is the ability to find the first negative value in a given range of data. This feature is helpful in identifying the first occurrence of a negative value, which can be useful in financial analysis or data tracking. To use this feature, the user can simply select the range of data and use the built-in function "MIN" with a condition to only consider negative values. This will return the first negative value in the selected range, allowing the user to easily identify and analyze the data. By utilizing this feature, Excel can efficiently assist in data analysis and decision making processes.

Excel: Find First Negative Value in Range

You can use the following formula to find the first negative value in a particular range in Excel:

=XLOOKUP(-1,SIGN(B2:B13),A2:B13)

This particular formula will look for the first cell in the range B2:B13 that contains a negative value and return the entire row from the range A2:B13 as a result.

The following example shows how to use this formula in practice.

Example: How to Find First Negative Value in Range in Excel

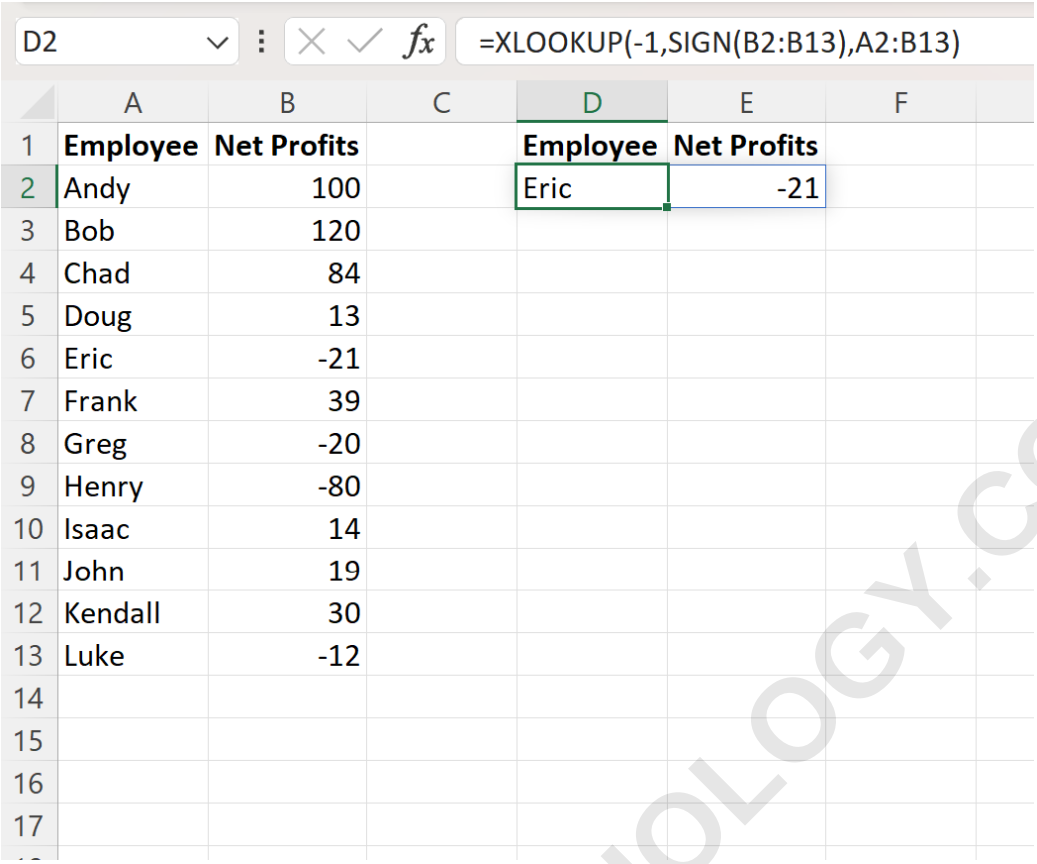
Suppose we have the following dataset that shows the total profits made by various employees at some company:

	A	B	C	D	E
1	**Employee**	**Net Profits**			
2	Andy	100			
3	Bob	120			
4	Chad	84			
5	Doug	13			
6	Eric	-21			
7	Frank	39			
8	Greg	-20			
9	Henry	-80			
10	Isaac	14			
11	John	19			
12	Kendall	30			
13	Luke	-12			
14					
15					
16					
17					

Notice that some of the values in the Net Profits column are positive while others are negative.

Suppose that we would like to find the first negative value in the Net Profits column.

We can type the following formula into cell D2 to do so:



	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	**Employee**	**Net Profits**		**Employee**	**Net Profits**	
2	Andy	100		Eric	-21	
3	Bob	120				
4	Chad	84				
5	Doug	13				
6	Eric	-21				
7	Frank	39				
8	Greg	-20				
9	Henry	-80				
10	Isaac	14				
11	John	19				
12	Kendall	30				
13	Luke	-12				
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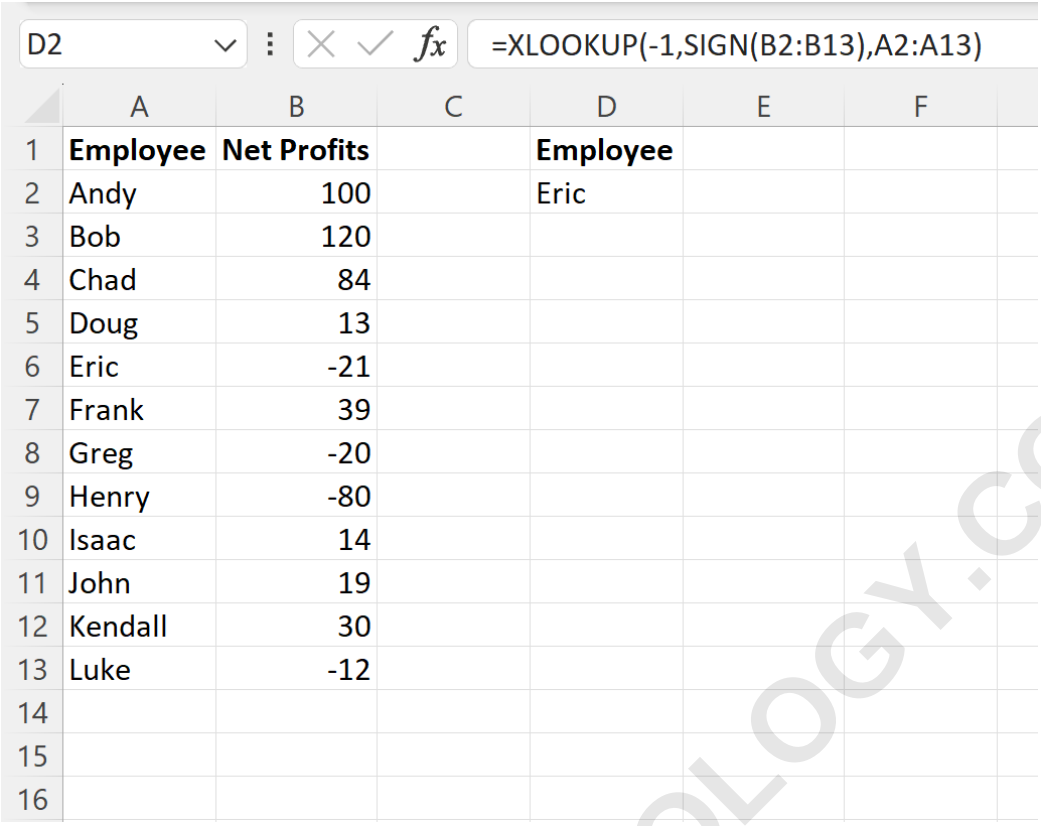
The formula returns the values from both the Employee and Net Profits columns that correspond to the first negative value from the Net Profits columns.

We can manually verify that Eric is indeed the first employee with a negative value in the Net Profits column:

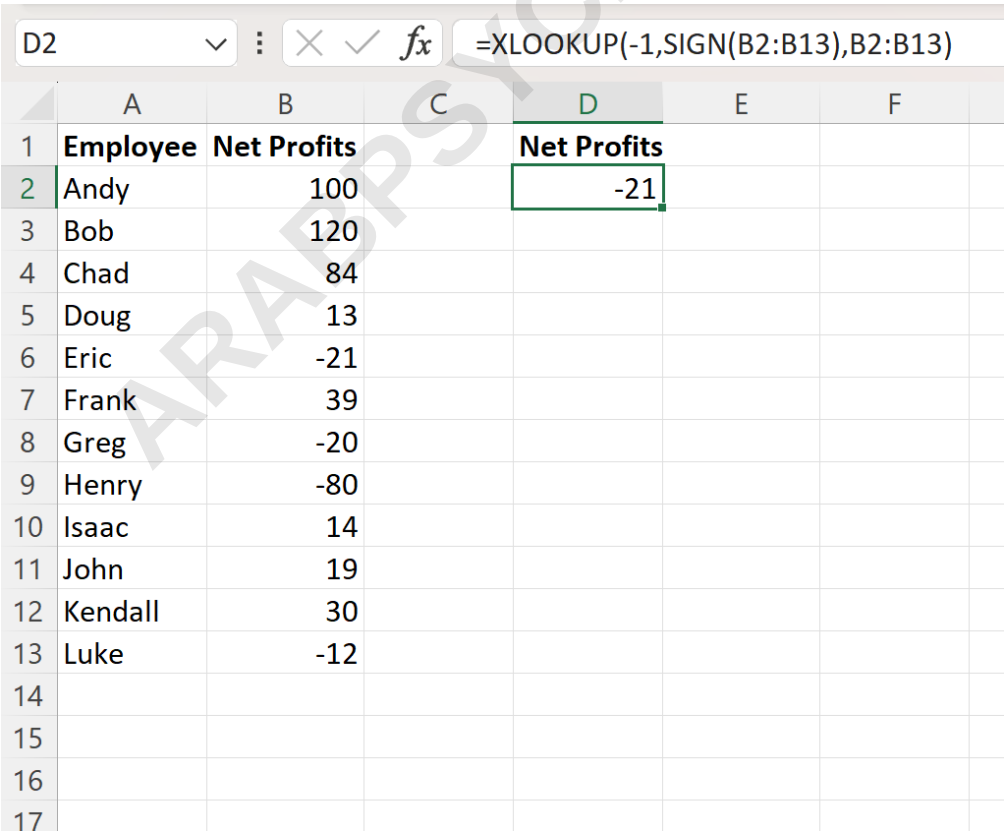
	A	B	C	D	E
1	**Employee**	**Net Profits**		**Employee**	**Net Profits**
2	Andy	100		Eric	-21
3	Bob	120			
4	Chad	84			
5	Doug	13			
6	**Eric**	**-21**			
7	Frank	39			
8	Greg	-20			
9	Henry	-80			
10	Isaac	14			
11	John	19			
12	Kendall	30			
13	Luke	-12			
14					
15					
16					

Note that since we used A2:B13 as the last argument in the XLOOKUP function, we returned both values from column A and column B.

However, we could instead use A2:A13 as the last argument to only return the name of the employee with the first negative value in the Net Profits column:



	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	**Employee**	**Net Profits**		**Employee**		
2	Andy	100		Eric		
3	Bob	120				
4	Chad	84				
5	Doug	13				
6	Eric	-21				
7	Frank	39				
8	Greg	-20				
9	Henry	-80				
10	Isaac	14				
11	John	19				
12	Kendall	30				
13	Luke	-12				
14						
15						
16						



	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	**Employee**	**Net Profits**		**Net Profits**		
2	Andy	100		-21		
3	Bob	120				
4	Chad	84				
5	Doug	13				
6	Eric	-21				
7	Frank	39				
8	Greg	-20				
9	Henry	-80				
10	Isaac	14				
11	John	19				
12	Kendall	30				
13	Luke	-12				
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How This Formula Works

Recall the formula that we used to find the first negative value in the Net Profits column:

=XLOOKUP(-1,SIGN(B2:B13),A2:B13)

The XLOOKUP function returns the first matching value from a column.

In this formula, we first use the SIGN function to convert each value in the range B2:B13 to either 1 or -1 to indicate if each value is positive or negative.

We then use the XLOOKUP function to look up the first value equal to -1, which returns the first negative value from the Net Profits column.

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