

How can I use the DATEVALUE function in Excel?

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The DATEVALUE function in Excel is a useful tool that allows users to convert a date stored as text into a date value that can be used in calculations or formatted as desired. By simply entering the text representation of a date into the function, it will return the corresponding numerical value for that date. This can be particularly helpful when working with data that contains dates in text format, as it allows for easier manipulation and analysis. Using the DATEVALUE function can save time and improve the accuracy of data analysis in Excel.

This article describes the formula syntax and usage of the **DATEVALUE** function in Microsoft Excel.

Description

The **DATEVALUE** function converts a date that is stored as text to a serial number that Excel recognizes as a date. For example, the formula **=DATEVALUE("1/1/2008")** returns 39448, the serial number of the date 1/1/2008. Remember, though, that your computer's system date setting may cause the results of a **DATEVALUE** function to vary from this example

The **DATEVALUE** function is helpful in cases where a worksheet contains dates in a text format that you want to filter, sort, or format as dates, or use in date calculations.

To view a date serial number as a date, you must apply a date format to the cell. Find links to more information about displaying numbers as dates in the **See Also** section.

Syntax

DATEVALUE(date_text)

The DATEVALUE function syntax has the following arguments:

Date_text Required. Text that represents a date in an Excel date format, or a reference to a cell that contains text that represents a date in an Excel date format. For example, "1/30/2008" or "30-Jan-2008" are text strings within quotation marks that represent dates.

Using the default date system in Microsoft Excel for Windows, the **date_text** argument must represent a date between January 1, 1900 and December 31, 9999. The **DATEVALUE** function returns the #VALUE! error value if the value of the **date_text** argument falls outside of this range.

If the year portion of the **date_text** argument is omitted, the **DATEVALUE** function uses the current year from your computer's built-in clock. Time information in the **date_text** argument is ignored.

Remarks

Excel stores dates as sequential serial numbers so that they can be used in calculations. By default, January 1, 1900 is serial number 1, and January 1, 2008 is serial number 39448 because it is 39,447 days after January 1, 1900.

Most functions automatically convert date values to serial numbers.

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