

How can I use the REPLACE and REPLACEB functions in Excel to replace characters in a specific cell or range of cells?

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The REPLACE and REPLACEB functions in Excel are useful tools for replacing specific characters in a cell or range of cells. These functions allow users to specify the position of the characters to be replaced and the number of characters to be replaced. This makes it easy to update and modify data in a specific cell or range of cells without the need for manual editing. Additionally, the REPLACE and REPLACEB functions can also be used in conjunction with other Excel functions to perform more complex data manipulations. Overall, these functions provide a convenient and efficient way to replace characters in Excel, saving time and effort for the user.

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

Description

REPLACE replaces part of a text string, based on the number of characters you specify, with a different text string.

REPLACEB replaces part of a text string, based on the number of bytes you specify, with a different text string.

Important:

These functions may not be available in all languages.

REPLACE is intended for use with languages that use the single-byte character set (SBCS), whereas REPLACEB is intended for use with languages that use the double-byte character set (DBCS). The default language setting on your computer affects the return value in the following way:

REPLACE always counts each character, whether single-byte or double-byte, as 1, no matter what the default language setting is.

REPLACEB counts each double-byte character as 2 when you have enabled the editing of a language that supports DBCS and then set it as the default language. Otherwise, REPLACEB counts each character as 1.

The languages that support DBCS include Japanese, Chinese (Simplified), Chinese (Traditional), and Korean.

Syntax

REPLACE(old_text, start_num, num_chars, new_text)

REPLACEB(old_text, start_num, num_bytes, new_text)

The REPLACE and REPLACEB function syntax has the following arguments:

Old_text Required. Text in which you want to replace some characters.

Start_num Required. The position of the character in old_text that you want to replace with new_text.

Num_chars Required. The number of characters in old_text that you want REPLACE to replace with new_text.

Num_bytes Required. The number of bytes in old_text that you want REPLACEB to replace with new_text.

New_text Required. The text that will replace characters in old_text.

Example

Copy the example data in the following table, and paste it in cell A1 of a new Excel worksheet. For formulas to show results, select them, press F2, and then press Enter. If you need to, you can adjust the column widths to see all the data.

Data		
abcdefghijkl		
2009		
123456		
Formula	Description (Result)	Result
=REPLACE(A2,6,5,"*")	Replaces five characters in abcdefghijk with a single * character, starting with the sixth character (f).	abcde*k
=REPLACE(A3,3,2,"10")	Replaces the last two digits (09) of 2009 with 10.	2010
=REPLACE(A4,1,3,"@")	Replaces the first three characters of 123456 with a single @ character.	@456