How can I use VLOOKUP to identify duplicate values in Excel?

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VLOOKUP is a useful function in Excel that allows users to quickly identify duplicate values within a dataset. By using this function, users can easily search for a specific value in a column and retrieve the corresponding value from a different column. This can be particularly helpful when trying to identify duplicate values in a large dataset. To use VLOOKUP for this purpose, the user can first create a new column next to the column containing the data to be checked. Then, the VLOOKUP function can be applied to search for each value in the original column and return a result of "TRUE" or "FALSE" in the new column. By sorting the data based on the result column, all duplicate values can be easily identified and removed or managed accordingly. This simple but effective method can save time and effort in identifying and managing duplicate values in an Excel spreadsheet.

Excel: Find Duplicates Using VLOOKUP

You can use the following VLOOKUP formula in Excel to find values in one column that are duplicates of values in another column:

=VLOOKUP(B2, $A$2:$A$8, 1, FALSE)

This particular formula looks up the value in cell B2 in the range A2:A8 and returns B2 if it is found. Otherwise, #N/A is returned.

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

Example: Find Duplicates Using VLOOKUP in Excel

Suppose we have the following dataset in Excel that shows the names of various fruits sold by a store

during two consecutive weeks:

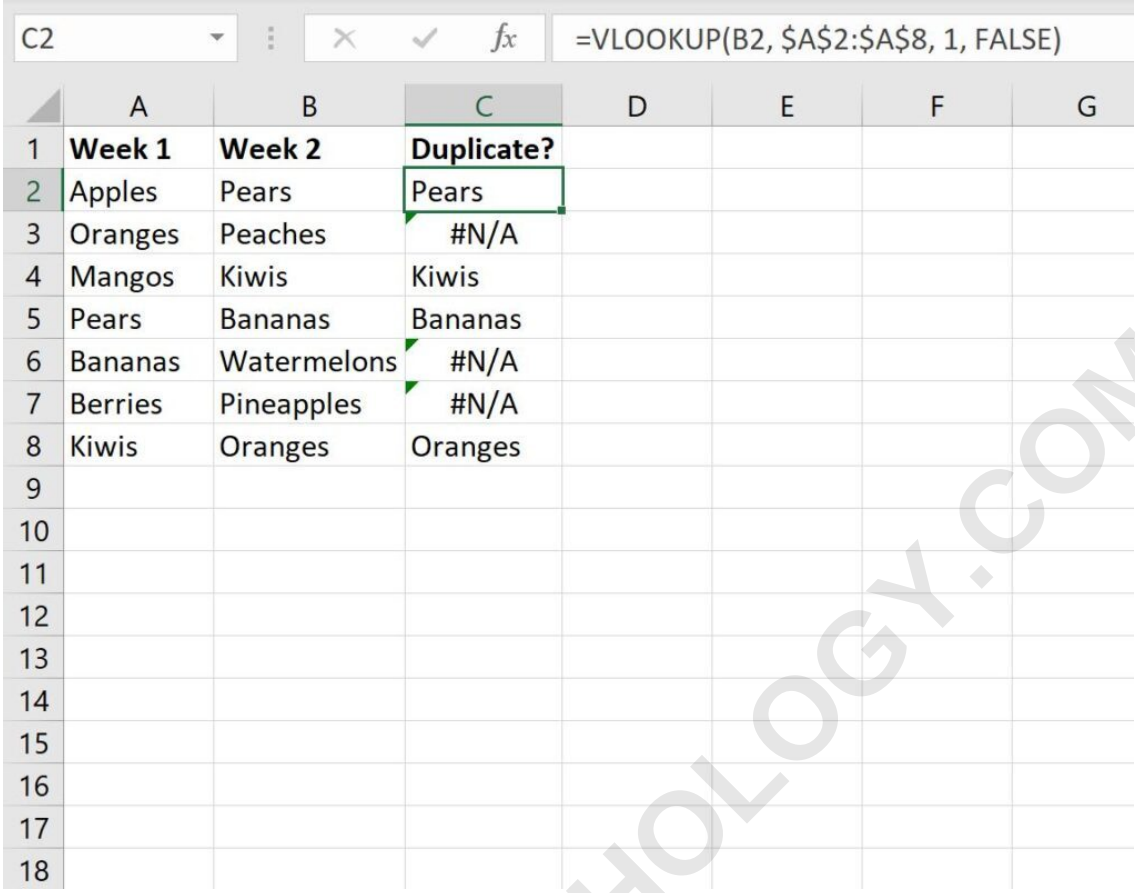
	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	**Week 1**	**Week 2**				
2	Apples	Pears				
3	Oranges	Peaches				
4	Mangos	Kiwis				
5	Pears	Bananas				
6	Bananas	Watermelons				
7	Berries	Pineapples				
8	Kiwis	Oranges				
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						
14						
15						
16						
17						
18						
19						
20						

Now suppose we would like to use a VLOOKUP function to find the names of the fruits in the Week 2 column that are duplicates of a name in the Week 1 column.

To do so, we can type the following formula into cell C2:

=VLOOKUP(B2, $A$2:$A$8, 1, FALSE)

We can then drag and fill this formula down to the remaining cells in column C:



	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	**Week 1**	**Week 2**	**Duplicate?**				
2	Apples	Pears	Pears				
3	Oranges	Peaches	#N/A				
4	Mangos	Kiwis	Kiwis				
5	Pears	Bananas	Bananas				
6	Bananas	Watermelons	#N/A				
7	Berries	Pineapples	#N/A				
8	Kiwis	Oranges	Oranges				
9							
10							
11							
12							
13							
14							
15							
16							
17							
18							

If the name of the fruit appears in column C, then it is a duplicate.

For example:

Pears is a duplicate.Peaches is not a duplicate.Kiwis is a duplicate.Bananas is a duplicate.

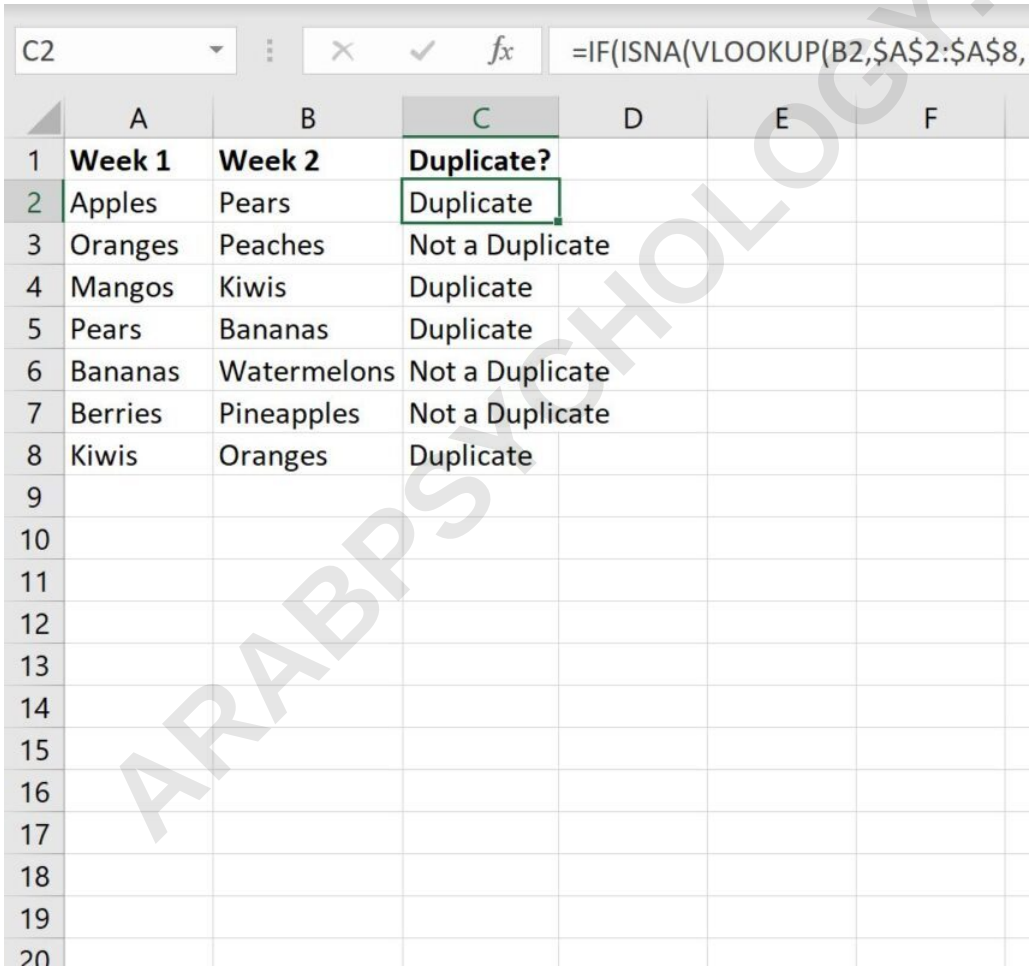
And so on.

Note that we could also use the following VLOOKUP formula to return specific values that indicate whether

or not each fruit is a duplicate:

=IF(ISNA(VLOOKUP(B2,$A$2:$A$8,1,FALSE)),"Not a Duplicate","Duplicate")

We'll type this formula into cell C2 and then drag and fill it down to each remaining cell in column C:



	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	**Week 1**	**Week 2**	**Duplicate?**			
2	Apples	Pears	Duplicate			
3	Oranges	Peaches	Not a Duplicate			
4	Mangos	Kiwis	Duplicate			
5	Pears	Bananas	Duplicate			
6	Bananas	Watermelons	Not a Duplicate			
7	Berries	Pineapples	Not a Duplicate			
8	Kiwis	Oranges	Duplicate			
9						
10						
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From the output we can see:

Pears is a duplicate.Peaches is not a duplicate.Kiwis is a duplicate.Bananas is a duplicate.

And so on.

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