

# How do I calculate the average difference in Excel?

Authored by  
**stats writer**

June 22, 2024

## RECOMMENDED CITATION

stats writer (2024). *How do I calculate the average difference in Excel?*. PSYCHOLOGICAL SCALES. Retrieved from <https://scales.arabpsychology.com/?p=146416>

To calculate the average difference in Excel, first select a range of numbers from which you want to find the difference. Then, use the "ABS" function to find the absolute value of the difference between each number and the previous one. Next, use the "AVERAGE" function to find the average of these absolute differences. This will give you the average difference for the selected range of numbers in Excel.

## Calculate Average Difference in Excel

You can use the following formula in Excel to calculate the average difference between two columns:

**=AVERAGE(B2:B11 - C2:C11)**

This particular formula calculates the average difference between the values in the range B2:B11 and C2:C11.

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

**Example: How to Calculate Average Difference in Excel**

Suppose we have the following dataset in Excel that shows the number of points scored and number of points allowed during various games by some basketball team:

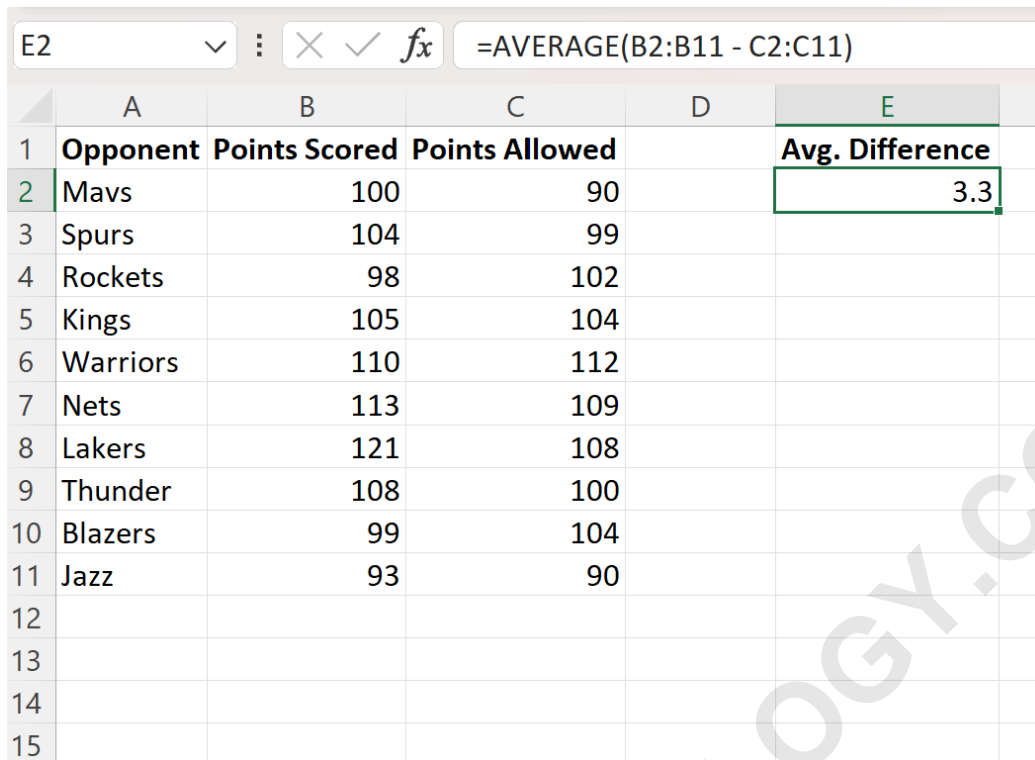
	A	B	C	D	E
1	<b>Opponent</b>	<b>Points Scored</b>	<b>Points Allowed</b>		
2	Mavs	100	90		
3	Spurs	104	99		
4	Rockets	98	102		
5	Kings	105	104		
6	Warriors	110	112		
7	Nets	113	109		
8	Lakers	121	108		
9	Thunder	108	100		
10	Blazers	99	104		
11	Jazz	93	90		
12					
13					
14					
15					
16					
17					

Suppose we would like to calculate the average difference between the values in the Points Scored column and the Points Allowed column.

We can type the following formula into cell E2 to do so:

**=AVERAGE(B2:B11 - C2:C11)**

The following screenshot shows how to use this formula in practice:



	A	B	C	D	E
1	<b>Opponent</b>	<b>Points Scored</b>	<b>Points Allowed</b>		<b>Avg. Difference</b>
2	Mavs	100	90		3.3
3	Spurs	104	99		
4	Rockets	98	102		
5	Kings	105	104		
6	Warriors	110	112		
7	Nets	113	109		
8	Lakers	121	108		
9	Thunder	108	100		
10	Blazers	99	104		
11	Jazz	93	90		
12					
13					
14					
15					

**We can see that the average difference between the values in the Points Scored column and the Points Allowed column is 3.3.**

**In other words, this team scores 3.3 points more than they allow per game, on average.**

### **How This Formula Works**

**Recall the formula that we used to calculate the average difference between the two columns:**

**=AVERAGE(B2:B11 - C2:C11)**

**For example, it calculates:**

**Row 1: 100 - 90 = 10**  
**Row 2: 104 - 99 = 5**  
**Row 3: 98 - 102 = -4**  
**Row 4: 105 - 104 = 1**  
**Row 5: 110 - 112 = -2**  
**Row 6: 113 - 109 = 4**  
**Row 7: 121 - 108 = 13**  
**Row 8: 108 - 100 = 8**  
**Row 9: 99 - 104 = -5**  
**Row 10: 93 - 90 = 3**

**It then uses the AVERAGE function to calculate the average of all these differences:**

**Average Difference = (10+5-4+1-2+4+13+8-5+3) / 10 = 3.3.**

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