

# How many cells in an Excel spreadsheet contain a date that is less than a specific date?

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## RECOMMENDED CITATION

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The task at hand is to determine the number of cells within an Excel spreadsheet that contain a date that is earlier than a specified date. This involves identifying and counting all cells that meet the criteria of having a date value that falls before the specified date. This information can be useful for various purposes, such as tracking progress or identifying overdue tasks. By utilizing the date and comparison functions within Excel, the desired cell count can be easily calculated, providing a comprehensive and accurate overview of the data within the spreadsheet.

## Excel: COUNTIF Less Than Date

**You can use the following formula to count the number of cells in Excel that are less than a particular date:**

**=COUNTIF(A2:A11, "<"&D2)**

**This particular formula counts the number of cells in column A where the date is less than the date in cell D2.**

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

**Example: COUNTIF Less Than Date in Excel**

**Suppose we have the following dataset in Excel that shows the number of sales made by a company on various days:**

|    | A           | B            | C | D | E | F |
|----|-------------|--------------|---|---|---|---|
| 1  | <b>Date</b> | <b>Sales</b> |   |   |   |   |
| 2  | 1/4/2022    | 2            |   |   |   |   |
| 3  | 1/20/2022   | 5            |   |   |   |   |
| 4  | 2/5/2022    | 5            |   |   |   |   |
| 5  | 2/17/2022   | 6            |   |   |   |   |
| 6  | 3/2/2022    | 4            |   |   |   |   |
| 7  | 3/15/2022   | 7            |   |   |   |   |
| 8  | 4/2/2022    | 9            |   |   |   |   |
| 9  | 4/3/2022    | 4            |   |   |   |   |
| 10 | 4/9/2022    | 12           |   |   |   |   |
| 11 | 4/14/2022   | 8            |   |   |   |   |
| 12 |             |              |   |   |   |   |
| 13 |             |              |   |   |   |   |
| 14 |             |              |   |   |   |   |
| 15 |             |              |   |   |   |   |
| 16 |             |              |   |   |   |   |
| 17 |             |              |   |   |   |   |
| 18 |             |              |   |   |   |   |
| 19 |             |              |   |   |   |   |

Suppose we would like to count how many days are before 4/1/2022.

We can specify this date value in cell D2 and then type the following formula in cell E2:

**=COUNTIF(A2:A11, "<"&D2)**

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

|    |           |       |   |                          |                    |   |
|----|-----------|-------|---|--------------------------|--------------------|---|
| E2 |           |       |   | =COUNTIF(A2:A11, "<"&D2) |                    |   |
|    | A         | B     | C | D                        | E                  | F |
| 1  | Date      | Sales |   | Cutoff Date              | Days Before Cutoff |   |
| 2  | 1/4/2022  | 2     |   | 4/1/2022                 | 6                  |   |
| 3  | 1/20/2022 | 5     |   |                          |                    |   |
| 4  | 2/5/2022  | 5     |   |                          |                    |   |
| 5  | 2/17/2022 | 6     |   |                          |                    |   |
| 6  | 3/2/2022  | 4     |   |                          |                    |   |
| 7  | 3/15/2022 | 7     |   |                          |                    |   |
| 8  | 4/2/2022  | 9     |   |                          |                    |   |
| 9  | 4/3/2022  | 4     |   |                          |                    |   |
| 10 | 4/9/2022  | 12    |   |                          |                    |   |
| 11 | 4/14/2022 | 8     |   |                          |                    |   |
| 12 |           |       |   |                          |                    |   |
| 13 |           |       |   |                          |                    |   |
| 14 |           |       |   |                          |                    |   |
| 15 |           |       |   |                          |                    |   |
| 16 |           |       |   |                          |                    |   |
| 17 |           |       |   |                          |                    |   |
| 18 |           |       |   |                          |                    |   |
| 19 |           |       |   |                          |                    |   |

We can see that there are a total of 6 days in column A that occur before 4/1/2022.

Note that if we change the date in cell D2, the value in cell E2 will automatically update.

For example, suppose we change the date to 3/1/2022:

|    |           |       |   |             |                          |   |
|----|-----------|-------|---|-------------|--------------------------|---|
| E2 |           |       |   |             | =COUNTIF(A2:A11, "<"&D2) |   |
|    | A         | B     | C | D           | E                        | F |
| 1  | Date      | Sales |   | Cutoff Date | Days Before Cutoff       |   |
| 2  | 1/4/2022  | 2     |   | 3/1/2022    | 4                        |   |
| 3  | 1/20/2022 | 5     |   |             |                          |   |
| 4  | 2/5/2022  | 5     |   |             |                          |   |
| 5  | 2/17/2022 | 6     |   |             |                          |   |
| 6  | 3/2/2022  | 4     |   |             |                          |   |
| 7  | 3/15/2022 | 7     |   |             |                          |   |
| 8  | 4/2/2022  | 9     |   |             |                          |   |
| 9  | 4/3/2022  | 4     |   |             |                          |   |
| 10 | 4/9/2022  | 12    |   |             |                          |   |
| 11 | 4/14/2022 | 8     |   |             |                          |   |
| 12 |           |       |   |             |                          |   |
| 13 |           |       |   |             |                          |   |
| 14 |           |       |   |             |                          |   |
| 15 |           |       |   |             |                          |   |
| 16 |           |       |   |             |                          |   |
| 17 |           |       |   |             |                          |   |
| 18 |           |       |   |             |                          |   |
| 19 |           |       |   |             |                          |   |
| 20 |           |       |   |             |                          |   |

We can see that there are a total of 4 days in column A that occur before 3/1/2022.

#### Additional Resources

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