

What is the difference between COUNT and COUNTA in Excel?

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June 30, 2024

RECOMMENDED CITATION

stats writer (2024). *What is the difference between COUNT and COUNTA in Excel?*. PSYCHOLOGICAL SCALES. Retrieved from <https://scales.arabpsychology.com/?p=162808>

COUNT and COUNTA are two commonly used functions in Microsoft Excel that are used to count the number of cells in a given range. While both functions are used for counting, there is a key difference between them. COUNT is used to count the number of cells that contain numeric values, whereas COUNTA is used to count the number of cells that contain any type of data, whether it is numeric, text, or logical values. In other words, COUNT only counts cells with numerical values, while COUNTA counts all types of values. This distinction makes COUNTA a more versatile function as it can be used to count non-numeric data as well.

COUNT vs. COUNTA in Excel: What's the Difference?

In Excel, the COUNT and COUNTA functions both count the number of cells in a range, but they use slightly different behaviors:

The COUNT function counts the number of cells in a range that contain numbers. The COUNTA function counts the number of cells in a range that are not empty.

The COUNT function is useful for counting the number of cells in a range that contain *numeric* values.

The COUNTA function is useful for counting the number of cells in a range that contain *any* value.

The following examples show how to use each function in practice.

Example 1: All Values in Range are Numeric

If we use the **COUNT** and **COUNTA** functions to count the number of cells in a range in which every cell is numeric (or blank), the two functions will return the same value:

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	Person	Sales			COUNT	9	=COUNT(B2:B11)
2	A	22			COUNTA	9	=COUNTA(B2:B11)
3	B	24					
4	C	8					
5	D	13					
6	E	10					
7	F						
8	G	15					
9	H	11					
10	I	0					
11	J	21					
12							
13							
14							
15							
16							
17							
18							
19							

In this case, there are 9 cells in the **Sales** column that contain numeric values and one cell that is blank.

The **COUNT** function tells us that there are 9 cells with *numeric* values in the **Sales** column.

The **COUNTA** function tells us that there are **9** cells with *any* value in the **Sales** column.

Example 2: Some Values in Range are Not Numeric

If we use the **COUNT** and **COUNTA** functions to count the number of cells in a range in which some cells are not numeric, the two functions will return different values:

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	Person	Sales			COUNT	7	=COUNT(B2:B11)
2	A	22			COUNTA	9	=COUNTA(B2:B11)
3	B	24					
4	C	8					
5	D	Thirteen					
6	E	10					
7	F						
8	G	15					
9	H	11					
10	I	None					
11	J	21					
12							
13							
14							
15							
16							
17							
18							
19							

In this case, there are seven cells in the **Sales** column that contain numeric values, two cells that contain character values, and one cell that is blank.

The **COUNT** function tells us that there are 7 cells with *numeric* values in the Sales column.

The **COUNTA** function tells us that there are 9 cells with *any* value in the Sales column.

Additional Resources

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

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