

What is the syntax for using the Excel LEFT function?

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RECOMMENDED CITATION

stats writer (2024). *What is the syntax for using the Excel LEFT function?*.

PSYCHOLOGICAL SCALES. Retrieved from <https://scales.arabpsychology.com/?p=158032>

The Excel LEFT function is a built-in formula that allows users to extract a specified number of characters from the left side of a cell or text string. The syntax for using this function is =LEFT(text, num_chars), where "text" refers to the cell or text string from which characters will be extracted, and "num_chars" specifies the number of characters to be extracted starting from the left side. This function can be useful for manipulating and organizing data in an Excel spreadsheet.

Excel LEFT Function

LEFT Function

The **LEFT** function is used to retrieve a chosen amount of characters, counting from the left side of an Excel cell.

The chosen number has to be greater than 0 and is set to 1 by default.

It is typed =LEFT

If you want to use the function on a single cell, write:

=LEFT(**cell**)

If you want to use the function on a range of cells, write:

=LEFT(**start cell:end cell**)

How to Use LEFT Function

To retrieve values from the left side of an Excel cell, use **LEFT**.

Step 1) Start the LEFT function

Select a cell E2 Type =LEFT Double click the **LEFT** command

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	Name	Type 1	Total stats					
2	Mankey	Fighting	305		=LEFT			
3	Poliwrath	Water	510					
4	Victreebel	Grass	490					
5	Tentacool	Water	335					
6	Magneton	Electric	465					
7	Dewgong	Water	475					
8	Cloyster	Water	525					
9	Onix	Rock	385					
10	Dragonair	Dragon	420					
11	Pidgeotto	Normal	349					
12	Rattata	Normal	253					
13	Beedrill	Bug	395					
14	Doduo	Normal	310					
15	Kingler	Water	475					
16	Nidoqueen	Poison	505					
17	Hitmonchan	Fighting	455					
18	Charmeleon	Fire	405					
19	Arbok	Poison	438					
20	Gastly	Ghost	310					
21	Magikarp	Water	200					
22								

Follow along the tutorial by trying it yourself!

Copy the values in the example above and try it on your own!

Step 2) Enter values to the LEFT function

Select a cell (A2) Hit enter

	A	B	C	D	E
1	Name	Type 1	Total stats		
2	Mankey	Fighting	305		=LEFT(A2)
3	Poliwrath	Water	510		
4	Victreebel	Grass	490		
5	Tentacool	Water	335		
6	Magneton	Electric	465		
7	Dewgong	Water	475		
8	Cloyster	Water	525		
9	Onix	Rock	385		
10	Dragonair	Dragon	420		
11	Pidgeotto	Normal	349		
12	Rattata	Normal	253		
13	Beedrill	Bug	395		
14	Doduo	Normal	310		
15	Kingler	Water	475		
16	Nidoqueen	Poison	505		
17	Hitmonchan	Fighting	455		
18	Charmeleon	Fire	405		
19	Arbok	Poison	438		
20	Gastly	Ghost	310		
21	Magikarp	Water	200		
22					

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	A	B	C	D	E
1	Name	Type 1	Total stats		
2	Mankey	Fighting	305		M
3	Poliwrath	Water	510		
4	Victreebel	Grass	490		
5	Tentacool	Water	335		
6	Magneon	Electric	465		
7	Dewgong	Water	475		
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11	Pidgeotto	Normal	349		
12	Rattata	Normal	253		
13	Beedrill	Bug	395		
14	Doduo	Normal	310		
15	Kingler	Water	475		
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17	Hitmonchan	Fighting	455		
18	Charmeleon	Fire	405		
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`=LEFT(A2)` uses the default function of **LEFT** and retrieves the first symbol from the **A2** cell.

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How to Use the LEFT Function with a Defined Length of Characters

Learn to use `=LEFT` to get more than one character.

Step 1) Start the LEFT function

Select a cell E2 Type `=LEFT` Double click the **LEFT** command

Note: The different parts of the function are separated by a symbol, like comma `,` or semicolon `;`

The symbol depends on your Language Settings.

	A	B	C	D	E
1	Name	Type 1	Total stats		
2	Mankey	Fighting	305		=LEFT(A2, 3)
3	Poliwrath	Water	510		
4	Victreebel	Grass	490		
5	Tentacool	Water	335		
6	Magneton	Electric	465		
7	Dewgong	Water	475		
8	Cloyster	Water	525		
9	Onix	Rock	385		
10	Dragonair	Dragon	420		
11	Pidgeotto	Normal	349		
12	Rattata	Normal	253		
13	Beedrill	Bug	395		
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17	Hitmonchan	Fighting	455		
18	Charmeleon	Fire	405		
19	Arbok	Poison	438		
20	Gastly	Ghost	310		
21	Magikarp	Water	200		
22					

Step 2) Select cells and set the number of characters

Enter the cell name (A2) and define the length of characters you want to retrieve, using a `,` as a delimiter (A2, 3) Hit enter

The function returns the first 3 characters from cell A2.

	A	B	C	D	E
1	Name	Type 1	Total stats		
2	Mankey	Fighting	305		Man
3	Poliwrath	Water	510		
4	Victreebel	Grass	490		
5	Tentacool	Water	335		
6	Magneon	Electric	465		
7	Dewgong	Water	475		
8	Cloyster	Water	525		
9	Onix	Rock	385		
10	Dragonair	Dragon	420		
11	Pidgeotto	Normal	349		
12	Rattata	Normal	253		
13	Beedrill	Bug	395		
14	Doduo	Normal	310		
15	Kingler	Water	475		
16	Nidoqueen	Poison	505		
17	Hitmonchan	Fighting	455		
18	Charmeleon	Fire	405		
19	Arbok	Poison	438		
20	Gastly	Ghost	310		
21	Magikarp	Water	200		
22					

How to use the LEFT Function on a Range of Cells

Step 1) Start the LEFT function

Select a cell E2 Type =LEFT Double click the LEFT command

	A	B	C	D	E
1	Name	Type 1	Total stats		
2	Mankey	Fighting	305		=LEFT(A2:A4, 3)
3	Poliwrath	Water	510		
4	Victreebel	Grass	490		
5	Tentacool	Water	335		
6	Magneon	Electric	465		
7	Dewgong	Water	475		
8	Cloyster	Water	525		
9	Onix	Rock	385		
10	Dragonair	Dragon	420		
11	Pidgeotto	Normal	349		
12	Rattata	Normal	253		
13	Beedrill	Bug	395		
14	Doduo	Normal	310		
15	Kingler	Water	475		
16	Nidoqueen	Poison	505		
17	Hitmonchan	Fighting	455		
18	Charmeleon	Fire	405		
19	Arbok	Poison	438		
20	Gastly	Ghost	310		
21	Magikarp	Water	200		
22					

Step 2) Select cells and number of characters

Select the cells (A2:A4) and define the length of characters you want to retrieve, using a , as a delimiter (A2:A4, 3) Hit enter

The function returns the first 3 characters from each cell within the range A2:A4.

	A	B	C	D	E
1	Name	Type 1	Total stats		
2	Mankey	Fighting	305		Man
3	Poliwrath	Water	510		Pol
4	Victreebel	Grass	490		Vic
5	Tentacool	Water	335		
6	Magneton	Electric	465		
7	Dewgong	Water	475		
8	Cloyster	Water	525		
9	Onix	Rock	385		
10	Dragonair	Dragon	420		
11	Pidgeotto	Normal	349		
12	Rattata	Normal	253		
13	Beedrill	Bug	395		
14	Doduo	Normal	310		
15	Kingler	Water	475		
16	Nidoqueen	Poison	505		
17	Hitmonchan	Fighting	455		
18	Charmeleon	Fire	405		
19	Arbok	Poison	438		
20	Gastly	Ghost	310		
21	Magikarp	Water	200		
22					

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