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Summarizing data is Microsoft Excel's main function. The good news is that a lot of number crunching can be done on the fly and without any specialized knowledge. Even if you know advanced summarize Excel data with little effort almost like magic. I'm using Microsoft Excel on Office 365 (desktop) on a Windows 10 64-bit system, but these tips will work in older versions and in the browser. You can work with your own data or download the demonstration .xlsx and .xls files. LEARN MORE: Office 365 Consumer pricing and features How to use the status bar to summarize Excel data The status bar provides instant gratification when summarizing—all you have to do is select the values. Figure A shows the March values selected. The status bar responds by displaying the average, count, and sum of the selected values—all you did was select a few values. This trick can make you look great during a meeting; it's an illusion, but the boss doesn't need to know. Figure A That's not all. You can customize the status bar to display exactly the information you need. Simply right-click and check the appropriate options (Figure B). Figure B How to use AutoSum to summarize Excel data You probably know about Excel's AutoSum tool: You select a cell below or to the right of a few continuous values, click the AutoSum option, and out pops a rabbit... I mean, the sum of the adjacent values. Let's work through a quick example. Using the demonstration sheet shown in Figure A, click G3 and then click AutoSum in the Editing group on the Home tab-don't look away, or you might miss it. Before pressing Enter a second time, you can see that AutoSum inserted a SUM() function that evaluates all of the contiguous values to the left (Figure C). Press Enter a second time to commit the function. If you select a range of cells, AutoSum will insert multiple functions. For instance, if you select G3:G14, AutoSum will enter a SUM() function for each row.You probably know about AutoSum option and out pops a rabbit... I mean, the sum of the adjacent values. Let's work through a quick example. Using the demonstration sheet shown in Figure A, click G3 and then click AutoSum in the Editing group on the Home tab. Don't look away or you might miss it. Before pressing Enter a second time, you can see (Figure C) that AutoSum inserted a SUM() function that evaluates all of the contiguous values to the left. Press Enter a second time to commit the function. If you select a range of cells, AutoSum will insert multiple functions. For instance, if you select G3:G14, AutoSum will enter a SUM() function for each row. Figure C But wait: There's more! The AutoSum option has a dropdown that offers several other functions–SUM() is the default, but simply select a different option and continue. How's that for a nice sleight of hand? How to filter a table in Excel EExcel's Filter feature is probably one of my favorites; I use it a lot, because it's quick and effective. We won't explore the entire feature, but I will show one quick behavior that you'll probably come to respect as much as I do—this feature summarizes. To apply the filter, click anywhere inside the data range, click the Data tab, and then click Filter in the Sort & Filter group. This displays dropdowns in each header cell. Click those dropdowns to explore filtering options, but that's not what we're interested in right now. So far, so good, but instead of pursuing filtering options, let's convert this ordinary data range into a Table object. Follow these steps. Click anywhere inside the data range. Click the Insert tab. Click Table in the Tables group. In the resulting dialog, confirm whether your data range has headers (ours does) and click OK. The Table object has a neat feature—a totaling row—that combined with the built-in filtering feature is almost magical. What's great about it is that the function evaluates only the filtered set. Prepare to be enchanted: Click anywhere inside the Table and then click the contextual Table Design tab. In the Table Style Options group, check the Total Row option. Figure D shows the results of a SUBTOTAL() function, which is a powerful and flexible function that you'll want to explore further. Figure D shows the results of a SUBTOTAL() function, which is a powerful and flexible function that you'll want to explore further. purpose. In addition, you can add a function to each column in the Table. The setup takes a few easy steps to implement, but once it's in place, those summarized results in further calculations, but you won't always need that-sometimes, you only need a quick look at what's going on, and that's when these techniques will come in handy and really help you shine. Once you're familiar with these tricks, you will find yourself using them all the time. It's not really magic-it just seems like it. Stay tuned for future articles on summarizing Excel data: I'll also cover the Subtotal feature, PivotTables, and more. Send me your Microsoft Office questions I answer readers' questions when I can, but there's no quarantee. Don't send files unless requested; initial requests for help that arrive with attached files will be deleted unread. You can send screenshots of your data to help clarify your question. When contacting me, be as specific as possible. For example, "Please troubleshoot my workbook and fix what's wrong" probably won't get a response, but "Can you tell me why this formula isn't returning the expected results?" might. Please mention the app and version that you're using. I'm not reimbursed by TechRepublic for my time or expertise when helping readers, nor do I ask for a fee from readers I help. You can contact me at susansalesharkins@gmail.com. In general, data consolidation means combining information from separate sources into a single report, screen or spreadsheet. For example, to get the total inventory value from five different warehouses, you could look at five different reports and add them by hand, or you could consolidate the information into a single report. Microsoft Excel has a feature that automatically pulls information from different spreadsheets, it puts needed information in one place, saving time compared to looking it up in many different places. To define what "consolidated" means, understand that the data with which you run your business may come from different sources. If all of it is in spreadsheets, you might have dozens or even hundreds of them. Alternatively, you might keep your data in FileMaker Pro, Access or SQLite databases, or you may have a hodgepodge of databases, spreadsheets and mobile apps. When it's time to run your monthly reports, do your taxes or handle some other important business function, it can be a time-consuming chore to chase down essential data if it's scattered in multiple places. With consolidated data, however, you save precious time and reduce costly errors. The computer does the work of hunting down the details for you. Data consolidation involves adding a process to your software that ties the specific pieces of needed information together into a single unit. Excel, for example, has a built-in consolidation in Excel, first open all the spreadsheets from which you want to pull data. You also need to select or create a separate destination spreadsheet and click in the following steps: Find the Consolidate feature in the Data tab in the Data Tools group. Excel will display a list of functions. Select a function, such as sum, with which to consolidate the source data. Select the data range in each source spreadsheet. Click the Create Links to Source Data checkbox if you're combining separate spreadsheets. Doing so will automatically update the consolidated data if the source data consolidation function is the math you want performed on your source data to produce the consolidated data. In many cases, you use the sum function to create totals. For example, say you have a spreadsheet of item sales and you want the total dollar amount. Note that the consolidation function is a drop-down list that in addition to sum also includes average, count, minimum and maximum among others. These are useful when you need to find an average selling price, the item with the lowest shipping weight or the total number of transactions in a month. The pivot table is another time-saving tool available in Excel, which is similar to data consolidation. A pivot table automatically summarizes spreadsheet data using criteria you select. It can select a subset of data, such as a particular month, from specific columns you pick, producing subtotals and totals. It can also pull information from external sources, such as Access tables. Though many small businesses keep all their data in spreadsheets, databases are another powerful data management tool that allows many users to share information at the same time. As with spreadsheets, databases are another powerful data management tool that allows many users to share information at the same time. As with spreadsheets, databases are another powerful data management tool that allows many users to share information at the same time. databases. A typical way to consolidate a database is with a view, which combines data from several different permanent tables on the fly into one temporary table. Data consolidation tasks can be technical and tricky, especially when your sources come from several types. For example, dates in a spreadsheet and dates in a database can have completely different formats. Sometimes, the task may be too difficult to accomplish with Excel alone. A software developer can create a custom app to handle low-level details such as these. Though it might be pricey, a custom data consolidation app can be worth it, especially if you have large amounts of data.

