

Excel Quick Tips

The fastest formulas, shortcuts, and time-savers in Microsoft Excel — straight from the Solace IT team.

Formula Time-Savers

VLOOKUP

=VLOOKUP(lookup_value, table, col_num, FALSE) — find a value in the first column and return data from another column on the same row. Always use **FALSE** for exact match.

XLOOKUP (modern replacement)

=XLOOKUP(lookup_value, lookup_array, return_array) — works in any direction, no column counting. Use this in Microsoft 365.

SUMIF / SUMIFS

=SUMIFS(sum_range, criteria_range, criteria) — totals only values that match conditions. Great for category totals.

IFERROR

Wrap any formula in **=IFERROR(formula, "Not found")** to replace ugly #N/A errors with clean text.

Lightning-Fast Navigation

SHORTCUT	WHAT IT DOES
Ctrl + Arrow Keys	Jump to the edge of a data range — no scrolling needed
Ctrl + Shift + Arrow	Select a whole range in one direction
Ctrl + Home / End	Jump to the start or last used cell of the sheet
Ctrl + Page Up/Down	Move between worksheets
F5 → Special	Jump to blank cells, formulas, errors, etc.

Formatting in Seconds

- **Freeze top row:** View tab → Freeze Panes → Freeze Top Row. Headers stay visible as you scroll.
- **AutoFit columns:** Select all (Ctrl+A) then double-click any column divider — every column resizes to fit content.
- **Conditional Formatting:** Home → Conditional Formatting → Highlight Cell Rules. Make outliers, duplicates, or top values pop instantly.
- **Format Painter:** Click the paintbrush, then click any cell to copy formatting. Double-click the brush to apply to multiple cells.

Pro tip — Flash Fill: Type the pattern you want once, then press **Ctrl + E**. Excel intelligently fills the rest. Great for splitting first/last names, reformatting phone numbers, or extracting initials.

Quick Math Without Formulas

Highlight any range of numbers and look at the bottom-right of the Excel window. The **status bar** automatically shows the count, average, and sum — no formula required. Right-click the status bar to add more stats like Max, Min, and Numerical Count.

Pivot Tables in 30 Seconds

- 1 Click anywhere in your data**
with column headers in row 1.
- 2 Insert → PivotTable**
. Accept the defaults and click OK.
- 3 Drag fields into the boxes:**
categories into Rows, values into Values, and you'll instantly get a summary report.
- 4 Refresh anytime**
with right-click → Refresh when the source data changes.

Need more help getting the most out of Excel?

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