Module 29: Use Autofill : A Time Saving Trick

29.1 Use Autofill

The Autofill function will automatically fill in data that follows a pattern, which will save you time when inputting repetitive numbers, words, or strings of words.

There are multiple ways in which Autofill functions. You can allow Excel to finish filling in words or strings of words you have previously written: When you start to type, and Excel detects it is the same as a previously entered piece of data, it will show up completed and highlighted. If it is what you want, you can press enter on your keyboard. If not, continue typing.

You can also fill data into adjacent cells by using the Fill command. The Fill command will fill the active cell or selected range with the contents of an adjacent cell or range. To do this, select a cell that is adjacent to the cell with the data you want copied (you can select multiple adjacent cells). Then, on the Home tab, find the Editing group, and click Fill. Then click Down, Right, Up or Left to specify where you want the data placed.

You can also fill formulas into adjacent cells. To do this, select the cell that contains the formula you want to fill to adjacent cells. Drag the handle (a little square that appears in the lower right corner of the cell that is activated), across the cells you want to fill. Here, you can choose how you want to fill the selection by clicking Auto Fill Options and clicking the option you want.

If you want Excel to automatically complete a series (1,2,3,4,5… or 2,4,6,8,10,…, etc.) select the first cell in the range that you want to fill. Type the starting value, and continue typing some values in the direction you would like. There should be enough to establish a pattern. Then, select the cell or cells that contain the starting values for the series, and drag the fill handle (again, the small black box in the lower right corner of an activated cell) across the range you want to fill.

By using the Fill command in the Editing group of the Home tab, you can also fill a series by defining a certain type of data.

29.2 Video Instruction

Use Autofill – 2m 55s

29.3 Task

Estimated Time: 10 minutes Download the worksheet that accompanies this video by clicking below. Once downloaded practise using Autofill using the video above as a reference.
Download Worksheet

Option #2: Worksheet without formula
Download Worksheet

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