



Module 43: LEFT Function

43.1 LEFT Function

The LEFT function in Excel can be used when you want to extract characters starting on the left side of a text. It will also extract spaces and special characters.

LEFT can also be used to extract digits from numbers, but number formatting will not be extracted. So keep in mind that a currency value, such as \$5, will only return a 5.

The formula is written as: **=LEFT(text, [num_chars]) text**

text - the text from which to extract characters.

num_chars - [optional] the number of characters to extract, starting on the left side of the text. This will have a default of 1 if it is left out of the formula. You can use a cell address or you can hard code the number of characters to extract.

You can also use similar functions called RIGHT and MID (not discussed in the video). The RIGHT function returns characters starting from the right side and MID returns a specified number of characters from the middle of a supplied text string.

The RIGHT formula is written as: =RIGHT (text, [num_chars]) text - The text from which to extract characters from the right. num_chars - [optional] the number of characters to extract, starting on the right side of the text. This will have a default of 1 if it is left out of the formula.

The MID formula is written as: MID(text, start_num, num_chars) text - The text from which to extract characters. start_num - a number that specifies the position of the first character that you want to be returned num_chars - the number of characters to extract.

43.2 Video Instruction

LEFT Function - 2m 09s

43.3 Task

Estimated Time: 10 minutes

Download the worksheet that accompanies this video by clicking below. Once downloaded, follow the video above and you will see how to use the LEFT function.

[Download Worksheet](#)

Option #2: Worksheet without formula

[Download Worksheet](#)

[Tweet "I just completed Module 43 of the Microsoft Excel Advanced Course"]
