

Keyword: Excel consolidate

Title: Consolidate data in Excel: everything you need to know

SERP competitors: [Microsoft](#), [Coupler](#), [Barb Henderson \(YouTube\)](#), [Corporate Finance Institute](#), [Excel Easy](#), [Custom Guide](#), [Wall Street Mojo](#), [Happy.co](#)

Biz competitors: [Datarails](#)

Word count: 1500 - 2000

Target audience: FP&A managers, FP&A analysts

Example internal links:

- You want to use more "problem with spreadsheets" content rather than "financial consolidation" content, although you can certainly link to consolidation content

Questions to answer:

- Can Excel automatically consolidate data in each worksheet?
- What does consolidate do in Excel?
- How do I consolidate Excel spreadsheets?
- How do I consolidate rows in Excel?
- Why is my data not consolidated in Excel?
- How do I consolidate data in sheets?
- What is the difference between merge and consolidate?
- How do I consolidate multiple rows of data in Excel?
- Why do you consolidate data?
- What is data consolidation with an example?
- How do I make a master sheet automatically update?
- How do I consolidate dynamic Excel?
- How do I consolidate columns in Excel?
- Can Excel automatically transfer data to another sheet?
- Can Excel automatically compare two spreadsheets?
- How to consolidate data from multiple sheets in Excel using Power Query?
- How do you merge two Excel spreadsheets based on a common field?

Sample keywords to include:

- Excel consolidate formula
- excel consolidate rows
- grouping and consolidation tools in excel
- how to use consolidate in excel with multiple columns
- how to consolidate data in excel from multiple worksheets
- how to automate consolidation in excel
- excel consolidate duplicates
- consolidate function in excel for text

Consolidate Data in Excel: Everything You Need To Know

Excel is still the workhorse for most financial and accounting activities worldwide. Entire businesses can be run effectively and efficiently with the expert use of spreadsheets. Consolidation is a tool in Excel that lets you apply formulas across multiple sources and consolidate that calculated information. In financial accounting, this function can alleviate slow manual calculations, automate some tasks, and consolidate your data for better reporting.

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7. [Conclusion: Using Excel to consolidate data vs. Prophix](#)

What does it mean to consolidate data in Excel?

Consolidation in Excel is a function that allows you to pull data from multiple sheets or tables and combine it with a formula. You can choose the exact cells, the function, and the labels to be used in the end product.

Why might you need to consolidate data in Excel?

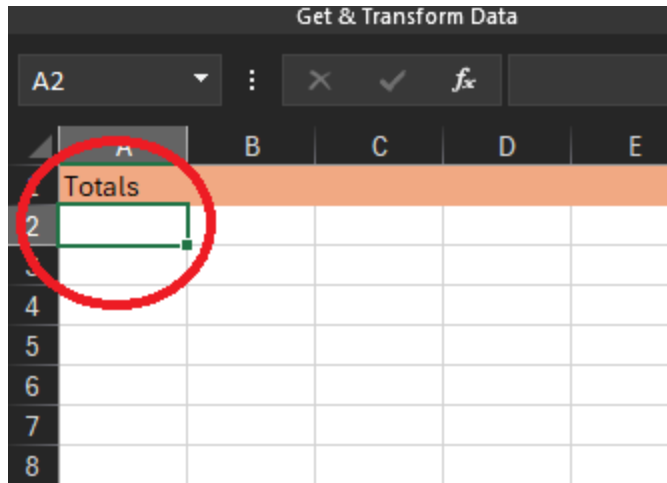
One example is the creation of a total expense sheet. By consolidating multiple expense sheets with a sum formula, you create a single table with the totals of all the others. Because this is a formula, any changes in the sources will be reflected in the total.

How to consolidate data in Excel

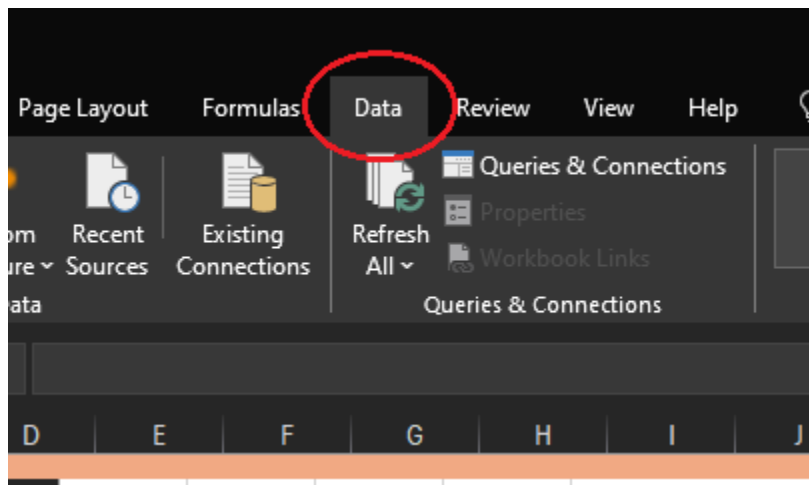
Excel has a built-in consolidation feature. This lets you quickly take large amounts of data and apply a function to it. Keep in mind that this functionality is currently only available in the desktop version of Excel. For those of you working with Excel Online, you can achieve similar results using a [Pivot Table](#). Microsoft's [documentation](#) on the consolidate function is a little thin, so let's get a little more detail.

Getting Started

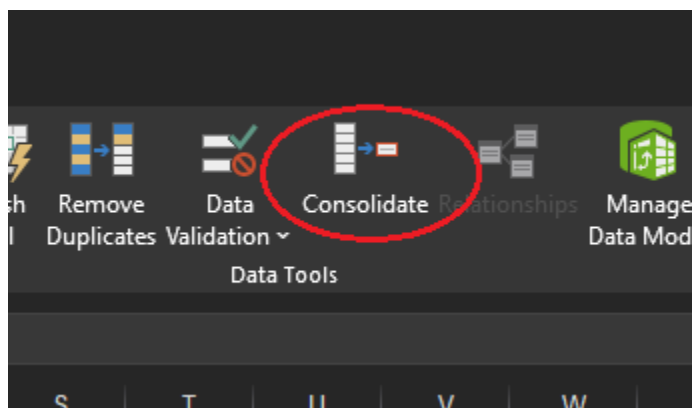
First, select the top left cell of the destination for the consolidated data.



Next, select Data from the top bar.



And find Consolidate.



This will bring up a little Consolidate window with some options.

Consolidate

Function:
Sum

Reference:
Browse...

All references:
Add
Delete

Use labels in
☒ Top row
☐ Left column
☐ Create links to source data

OK Close

For all the following examples, these first steps will be the same. The way that you select your references and labels will determine how the data will be displayed at the end.

Examples of consolidating data in Excel

Here are a few examples of how to use the consolidation function in Excel for a few different cases.

Consolidate data from multiple rows

Here we have a simple list of items, and their quantities. Though we have only two columns here, this can work with more than one column.

	A	B	C	D
1	Item	Quantity		
2	Book	4		
3	Pen	5		
4	Paper	3		
5	Poster board	8		
6	Book	7		
7	Book	9		
8	Pen	8		
9	Paper	6		
10	Pen	6		
11	Paper	7		
12	Book	5		
13	Pen	5		
14	Paper	4		
15	Book	6		
16	Poster board	7		
17	Pen	6		
18	Pen	4		
19	Book	4		
20	Poster board	7		
21	Poster board	8		
22	Paper	5		
23				
24				

Note that the “Item” column has many disordered repetitions. To quickly identify the total quantity of each item, we’ll consolidate all these rows.

Since this is all going to happen on the same sheet, we’ll copy over our column names and select D2 as our starting cell for consolidating the data.

Get & Transform Data				
	A	B	C	D
1	Item	Quantity	Item	Quantity
2	Book	4		
3	Pen	5		
4	Paper	3		
5	Poster board	8		
6	Book	7		
7	Book	9		
8	Pen	8		
9	Paper	6		

Selecting **Data > Consolidate** will bring us to our Consolidate window,

When the window opens, your cursor will be in the Reference field by default. If it isn't, click inside the empty Reference field before selecting your reference cells or entering them manually. For this example, we manually selected the cells before clicking Add.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
1	Item	Quantity		Item	Quantity						
2	Book	4									
3	Pen	5									
4	Paper	3									
5	Poster board	8									
6	Book	7									
7	Book	9									
8	Pen	8									
9	Paper	6									
10	Pen	6									
11	Paper	7									
12	Book	5									
13	Pen	5									
14	Paper	4									
15	Book	6									
16	Poster board	7									
17	Pen	6									
18	Pen	4									
19	Book	4									
20	Poster board	7									
21	Poster board	8									
22	Paper	5									
23											

Consolidate

Function: Sum

Reference: Rows!\$A\$2:\$B\$22

All references: Rows!\$A\$2:\$B\$22

Use labels in: ☒ Left column

☐ Create links to source data

Buttons: Add, Delete, OK, Close

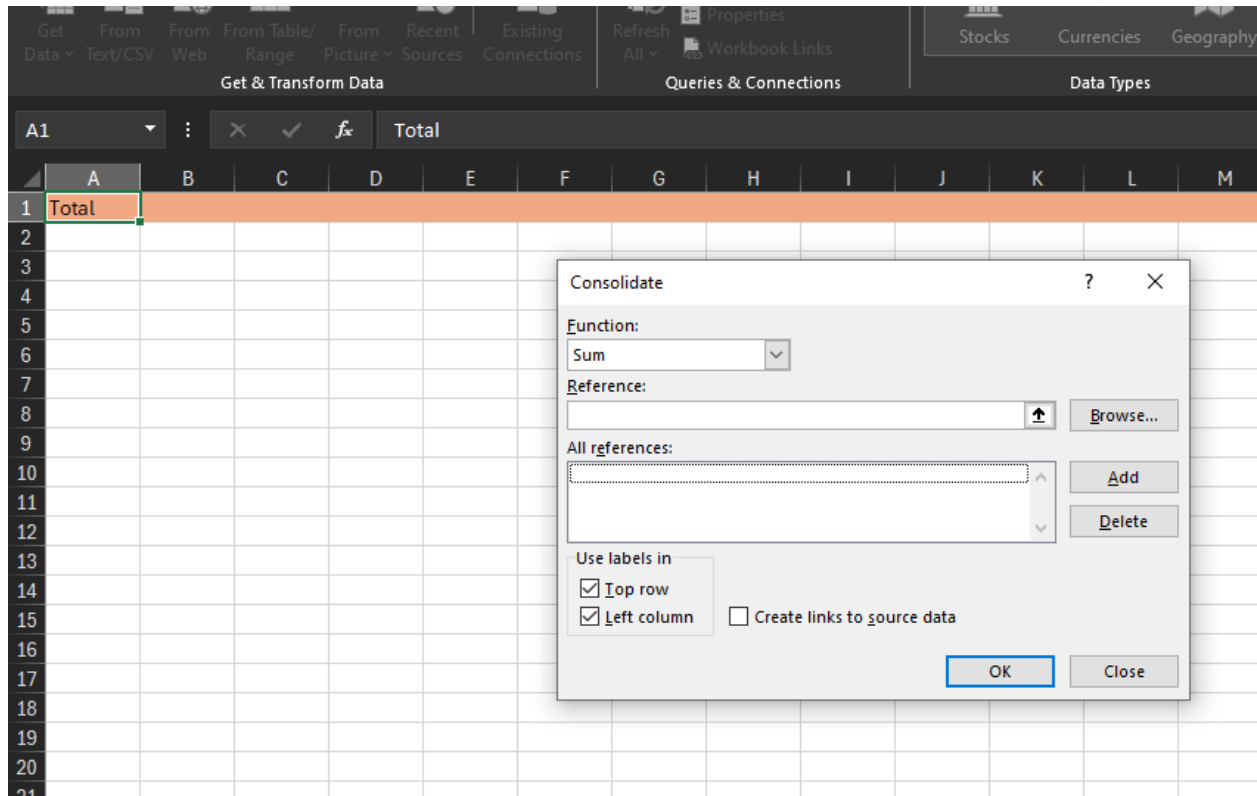
Lastly, we chose to use the labels in the Left Column before clicking OK.

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	Item	Quantity		Item	Quantity	
2	Book	4		Book	35	
3	Pen	5		Pen	34	
4	Paper	3		Paper	25	
5	Poster board	8		Poster board	30	
6	Book	7				
7	Book	9				
8	Pen	8				
9	Paper	6				
10	Pen	6				
11	Paper	7				
12	Book	5				
13	Pen	5				
14	Paper	4				
15	Book	6				
16	Poster board	7				
17	Pen	6				
18	Pen	4				
19	Book	4				
20	Poster board	7				
21	Poster board	8				
22	Paper	5				
23						

The resulting consolidation gives us a quick and easy summation of the selected cells, organized by type.

Consolidate data from multiple sheets

To consolidate data from multiple sheets, we'll start by creating a new sheet that will be the destination for our consolidation. Once this is created, we'll follow the [steps above](#) until we have the consolidate window open as shown below.



With the consolidate window open, make sure your cursor is in the Reference field and navigate to the first sheet in the workbook you wish to include, select the cells as before, and click Add. However, instead of clicking OK, go to the next sheet and repeat this process, selecting and adding all the fields you need before clicking OK.

The screenshot shows a spreadsheet with a table of data. The table has columns for 'Week 1', 'Week 2', 'Week 3', and 'Week 4', and rows for 'Book', 'Pen', 'Paper', and 'Poster board'. A red dashed box highlights the data range from A1 to E5. A 'Consolidate' dialog box is open, showing the 'Function' set to 'Sum', the 'Reference' set to 'Jim!\$A\$1:\$E\$5', and the 'All references' list containing 'Jim!\$A\$1:\$E\$5'. The 'Add' button is circled in red. The 'Use labels in' section has 'Top row' and 'Left column' checked, and 'Create links to source data' is unchecked.

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Book	48	44	7	3
Pen	234	4	55	6
Paper	2	5	8	49
Poster board	34	3	5	2

Consolidate

Function:
Sum

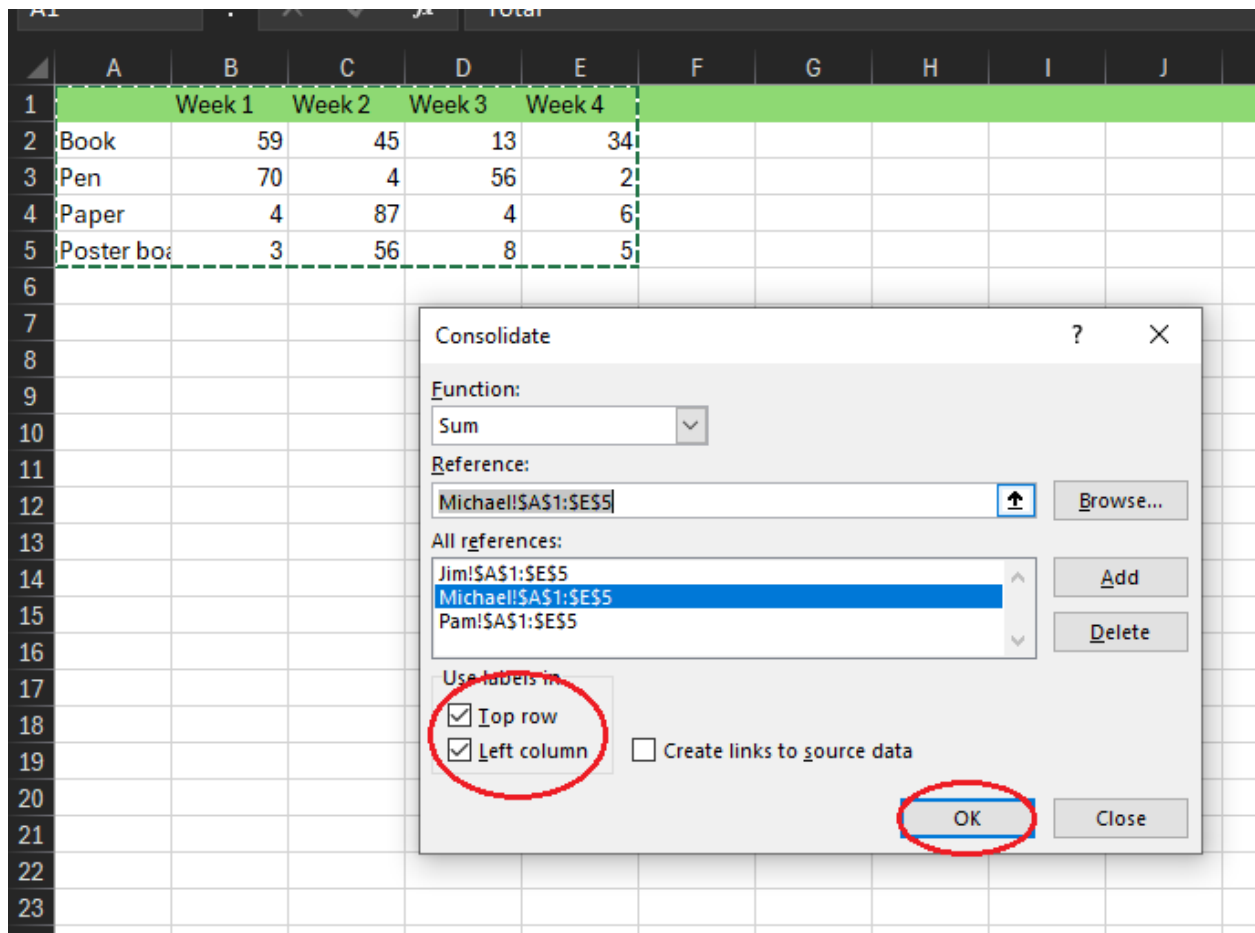
Reference:
Jim!\$A\$1:\$E\$5

All references:
Jim!\$A\$1:\$E\$5

Use labels in
☒ Top row
☒ Left column
☐ Create links to source data

Buttons: OK, Close, Add (circled), Delete, Browse...

Once all of the desired data has been added, select the Labels you wish you use, in this case, Top Row and Left Column, and click OK.

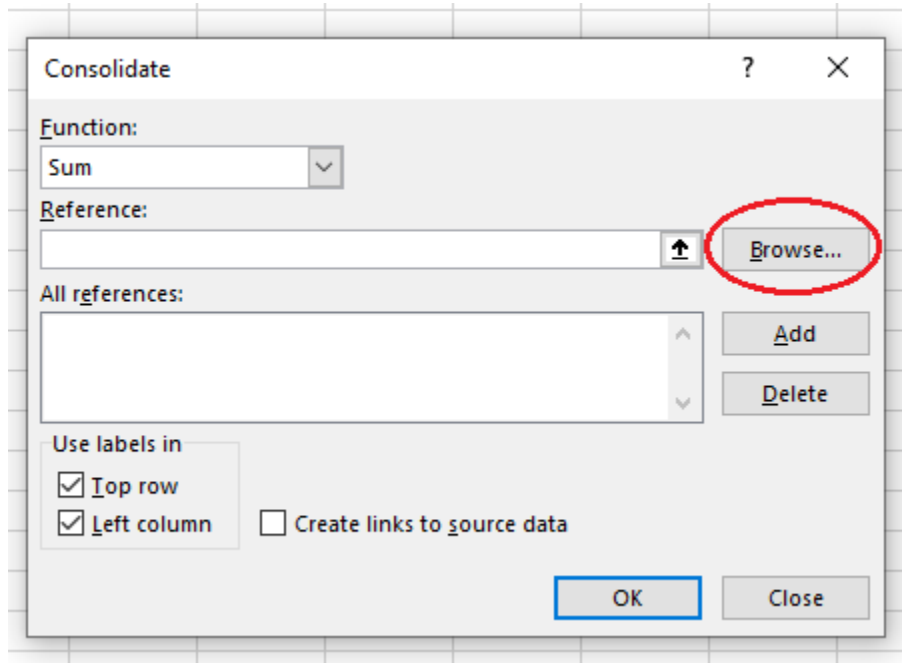


This should automatically return you to your destination sheet, as well as populate it with your consolidated data. We can clearly see total numbers for our three employees.

Get & Transform Data					
A1					Total
	A	B	C	D	E
1	Total	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
2	Book	163	97	63	59
3	Pen	353	42	167	12
4	Paper	102	126	17	121
5	Poster board	112	62	58	41
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					

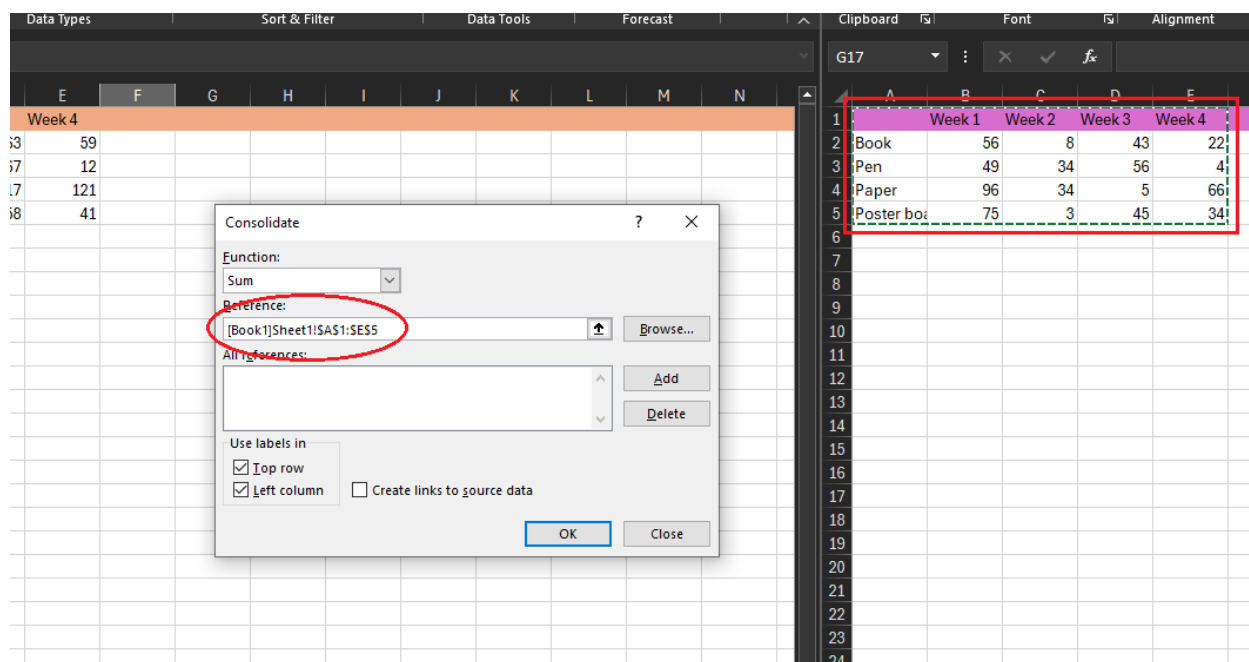
Consolidate data from disconnected workbooks

To consolidate between separate workbooks, there are two methods. The first is by using the Browse option in the Consolidate window:



This will let you use your file explorer to select an entire workbook to use.

If you only need to use a portion of data from another workbook, you can open the two workbooks at the same time, open the Consolidate window from the destination workbook, and select your references in the other:



Here, Pam's data has been moved to Book 1 but has been selected in the original workbook. You will know that the selection is outside of the workbook when the name of the workbook is referenced first. If the selection is from the same workbook, it will be the Sheet name that appears first in the reference address.

Bonus: Consolidate data with Prophix One

Excel is the backbone of business finance and accounting. There are few use cases that Excel cannot handle. However, managing massive amounts of data with spreadsheets, even when using all of the formulas and features it has to offer, still leaves room for improvement.

A purpose-built FP&A software like Prophix One with integration and automation in mind can take your unwieldy workbooks and use them as data sources for more agile processes and reports.

Challenges of data consolidation in Excel

As useful as Excel is, there are limits to what the software can do all on its own. The formulas and consolidations we've seen here are reasonably simple. Though they can be applied to much larger data sets, they can quickly become difficult to manage. Consolidating financial statements in Excel presents several challenges:

- Manual errors and inconsistent data formatting.
- Handling multiple sources or business entities can quickly become complicated.
- Managing large data sets and frequent updates manually takes a lot of time.
- Complex formulas are difficult to track back if there are broken links.
- Managing multiple users and file versions manually is difficult and time-consuming.

- Manual processes and limited system integration means there is little opportunity to leverage automation.

Common questions about using Excel to consolidate data

Why use the data consolidation function?

The data consolidation function lets you create amalgamated data very quickly. These functions are not limited to one sheet, or workbook, allowing the possibility of using an Excel consolidation with data from multiple sources. These are best suited for small sets of data, and for tasks that may not be repeated frequently. For repeat tasks, you may want to consider using Excel's Pivot Tables.

What if the data sources have different items?

Depending on the kind of consolidation options you choose, items can be treated differently. In [this example above](#), the item names were used as the labels for the total count, but the different items remained separate in the consolidated table. If the items themselves are different, the Excel consolidation will keep each different item discreet.

This can be a nuisance when the item names are nearly the same. Fortunately, Excel will successfully consolidate items with capitalization differences.

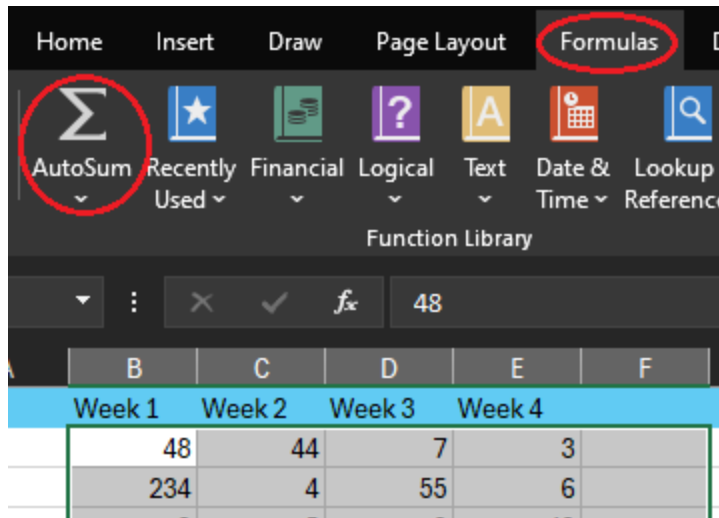
How to consolidate data from multiple columns?

Columns are oddly different from rows when it comes to consolidating in Excel. In fact they are much easier. Instead of using the consolidate function like the above examples, all you will need to use is a formula.

First, select the cells you wish to calculate, as well as the empty cells you wish to fill with the result of the calculation. The selection below will add all the cells in a row, and total them in the F column.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	Jim	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4		
2	Book	48	44	7	3		
3	Pen	234	4	55	6		
4	Paper	2	5	8	49		
5	Poster board	34	3	5	2		
6							
7							

Once the cells are selected, click Formulas on the top bar, and then select AutoSum.



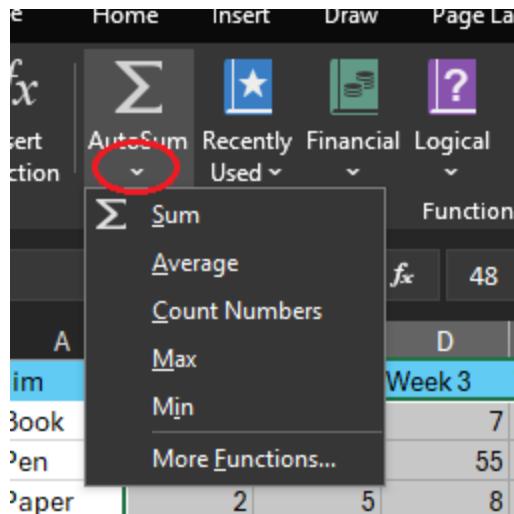
This will give you the summation of the rows in the empty cells you included in your initial selection.

Function Library

B2 : ✕ ✓ f_x 48

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	Jim	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4		
2	Book	48	44	7		3	102
3	Pen	234	4	55		6	299
4	Paper	2	5	8		49	64
5	Poster board	34	3	5		2	44
6							
7							

If it is not a sum you wish to calculate, you can select a different operation, like Average, from the drop-down menu below the AutoSum icon.



Solve the Challenges with Excel using Prophix One

The challenges you face when managing huge sets of data in spreadsheets can be solved. Prophix One is a focused finance and accounting platform that integrates with your existing data sources, like Excel sheets and provides in-depth automation and analysis tools that accelerate every stage of your finance and accounting workload. With connectors to unify all of your data in one place, there is no more hunting down the reports you need. And with tools and automation to turn that data into insights, reports, forecasts and more, Prophix One gives your financial and accounting teams the agility they need.

Conclusion: Using Excel to consolidate data vs. Prophix One

Excel is a powerful tool in your workspace, but its lack of in-depth automation means your teams still need to do a ton of manual work. With a purpose-built tool like Prophix One that facilitates all of your data sources and automates error-prone and tedious tasks, freeing up your financial teams to invest themselves in the activities only they can do.

Empower your financial teams to do more, and do it better. Want to see how? [Request a demo here.](#)