

## Add Information to Excel Formulas

Ever find yourself working on an Excel formula and wondering how in the world the person you're handing this off to will ever understand some of the more complex calculations?

Short of writing lengthy documentation, or spending a whole lot of time walking them through things piece by piece, there probably isn't much you can do... or is there?

What if we could put some documentation right with the formula – not a comment – but actual information in the formula?

Sounds like a plan to me, so let's take a look at how to make the "magic" happen. Start out with your **usual formula** routine. At the end of the formula add the following:

**+N("enter your comment text here")**

The screenshot shows the Microsoft Excel interface. The formula bar at the top displays the formula `=SUM(A1:A3)+N("adds the first three cells in the column")`. The text `+N("adds the first three cells in the column")` is enclosed in a red rectangular box. Below the formula bar, a blue callout box with white text points to the end of the formula bar, stating: "As you can see, the additional information is at the end of the formula but doesn't affect the data in the cell." The spreadsheet grid shows column A with rows 1, 2, and 3 containing the values 15, 16, and 22 respectively. Cell A5 is selected and contains the value 53, which is the sum of the values in A1, A2, and A3.

As you can see in the picture, when you hit the **Enter** key, you'll find that the formula works as expected. But, with the cell selected, the formula bar displays the formula and the informational text.

Cool – now when your formula demands a small explanation, you can convey it without actually having to say it, or repeat it because they forgot it.

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**Note:** This tip applies to all versions of Excel

Source: <http://www.worldstart.com/add-information-to-excel-formulas/>

Graphic: Bodo Schwarz