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Excel format columns to fit text

I have a cell with carriage text content in Excel, and I want to format the cell so that its height fits the content that can span multiple lines. How can I achieve this behavior? By default, Excel has a certain column height and width, and when you enter something that takes up more space than the current size, you'll see it spill (as shown below). In these cases, you can adjust the rows and columns so that they fit the text in the cell (so that the text is completely inside the cell). You can do this by using the AutoFit feature in Excel. In this tutorial, I'll show you how to use autofit in Excel in several ways. You'll also use other Excel features when working with text data in Excel. What is Excel AutoFit? When you enter something in a cell in Excel, you'd notice that it spills when the text/data size is larger than the column size. AutoFit is a feature of Excel that allows you to quickly adjust the height or width of the column to fully fit the text (so that it does not consection with other cells). In addition, AutoFit means that you do not need to manually specify the column width or row height (or manually drag and adjust the column width). This is Auto- that is, it will understand for itself how much it should expand/contract to fit the width of the autofit column of the contents of the current cell: this function automatically adjusts the width of the column to fit the text in the cell. You can fit text to multiple columns at the same time (as we'll see later in the examples) Autofit row height: This function automatically adjusts the height of the row to fit the text in the cell. You can automatically fit multiple rows

at the same time. In most cases, you'll notice that Excel automatically adjusts the height of the row when you enter multiple rows in the same cell. In these cases, you will not need to make any adjustments to the row height. But sometimes, you might get a dataset from someone or as a download, where the row height has already been fixed and needs to be adjusted. In this case, you can use the 'AutoFit Row Height' function. How to automatically fit in Excel (Adjust rows and columns to fit text) There are a couple of ways to fit automatically in Excel: using the double-click mouse method Using the AutoFit option on the ribbon Using a keyboard shortcut All of these methods work You can choose the method that best suits the user. In most cases, I use the double-click mouse method because I find it the most convenient. Automatically fit rows and columns using the double mouse click Suppose you have a dataset, as shown below, where text pours over the other column because the column width is smaller. Here's how to automatically adjust column width with your mouse: Hover over the right edge of the column header You'd notice that the cursor switches to a double-arrow icon Double-click the left mouse button (or trackpad) That's it! You would see that the width of the column column automatically to adjust all cells so that there is no overflow of text on other cells. Note that the column width is expanded to adjust the cell that requires the maximum width. You can also use the double-click method to adjust multiple columns at once. Suppose you have the dataset as shown below, where there are two columns and both have text that needs to be automatically adjusted. You can use the following steps to automatically adjust the column width using the mouse: select all columns that need to be automatically adjusted, In this case, these would be columns A and B. With both columns selected, place the cursor on the right edge of the column header. While I showed you the example by automatically adapting text to columns (which is most commonly needed), the same can also be done with rows. You only need to place your cursor over the bottom edge of the selected row and double-click Fit Rows and Columns using the Excel ribbon Another quick way to automatically fit cells in Excel is to use the option on the ribbon. Suppose you have a dataset, as shown below, where you want to automatically fit column A. The following steps are as follows: Select the column that you want to automatically fit Click the Home tab In the Cells group, click the 'Format' option. Additional options will be shown in the Click the 'Fit Column Width' drop-down list. The previous steps would instantly expand the column to adjust the text in the cells. You can also use the same steps to automatically adjust the row height as well. To do this, you must first select the lines that you want to automatically fit, and then select the 'Fit Row Height Automatically' option. Automatically fit rows and columns using a keyboard shortcut If you're not a fan of mouse use and prefer a keyboard shortcut instead, this method is for you. Here are the keyboard shortcuts that automatically fit cells: To automatically fill column width: ALT + H + O + I To automatically fill row height: ALT + H + O + A Here's how to use these keyboard shortcuts: Select the row/column that you want to automatically fit Use the keyboard shortcut with keys in succession. For example, if you use the link ALT + H + O + I, press Alt, then press the H key, and so on (in succession). AutoFit not Working (Possible Solutions) While automatic adaptation works well in most of cases, sometimes you may find that this feature doesn't work. There may be many reasons why it doesn't work and in many cases, sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't. Here are some possible reasons why autofit might not work on Excel: When there are merged cells Sometimes, autofit refuses to work when there are merged cells in Excel. This is it's known issue if you are using really earlier versions of Excel (2003 or earlier). Microsoft even recognized this issue here. In this case, the only workaround is to manually set the row height or column width. After you apply carriage text When you have applied auto-carriage return to a cell and try to automatically fit the line, you may have some additional spaces at the bottom or top of the line. These don't range characters. This is just a space that exists for no reason. Sometimes, changing the width of the column causes it to go away. And there's always an option to manually resize the row (or right-click and use the row height option to specify the row height value) Another place where autofit might not work is when you have applied text to the cell and try to automatically fit the column. This is less autofit not working and more by design. Because text has been applied, Excel doesn't know what column width it should use when it automatically fits. After all, the carriage text means that any text would have been carriage-returning so that it would remain inside the cell. In that case, trying to automatically fit the column will do nothing. However, you can manually adjust the width of the column. Alternatives to the autofit option in Excel While autofit is what you want in most cases, there are also a few other options that can help you present your data better (especially in cases where automatic adaptation isn't the way to go). Text-in-shape If you have a cell with a lot of text, autofit the column will expand it and make the column huge. This may not be the right way to present your data, and it might make more sense to have a larger row and a narrower column. When you apply text to a cell, the contents of the cell remain within the cell. This way you can choose the width of the column you want, and then automatically adjust the row height to match the width of the column. Or vice versa... Adjust the height of the row as desired, and then use autofit to adjust the column width to make sure that the text is all the contents of the visible cell and inside the cell. Shrink to Fit Another option you can use is Shrink to Fit. Unlike automatic fit, which adjusts the width of the column or of the row, when you apply 'Reduce to Fit' on any cell, it would simply change the font of the cell to fit everything in the width of the specified column. For example, if there is text in a cell that is poured to other cells, when you apply to Reduce to fit this cell, the cell font is lowered to fit the contents of the cell in the width of the existing column. The following are steps to apply the format 'Reduce to Fit' to a cell: Select the cells to which you want to apply 'Reduce to Fit' Hold down ctrl and press key 1 (which will open the Format Cells dialog box) Click the 'Alignment' tab In the 'Text Control' options, select the 'Minimize fit' option Note that Reduce to text does not for cells that have 'Text in chief' applied. These are some of the ways you can use automatic row or column adjustment in Excel. I also covered some possible reasons why automatic adaptation may not work on your system and some alternatives to it in Excel. I hope you found this tutorial useful! You may also be able to use the following Excel tutorials: This tutorial will provide you with all the details about autofit Excel and how to use it on worksheets. Microsoft Excel offers a handful of different ways to change column widths and adjust row height. The easiest way to resize cells is to have Excel automatically determine how much to enlarge or narrow the column, and expand or collapse the row to match the size of the data. This feature is known as Excel AutoFit, and later in this tutorial you'll learn 3 different ways to use it. Excel AutoFit: The Basic Excel AutoFit feature is designed to automatically resize cells on a worksheet to contain data of different sizes without having to manually change the width and height of rows. Fit Column Width : Changes the width of the column to contain the largest value in the column. Fit Row Height —Adjusts the width of the column to match the largest value in the row. This option expands the line vertically to contain extra-line or extra-height text. Unlike column widths, the row height is automatically changed based on the height of the text you type in a cell, so you don't have to automatically adjust rows as often as columns. However, when exporting or copying data from another source, row heights may not be adjusted automatically, and in these situations AutoFit Row Height opting is useful. When resizing cells in Excel, either automatically or manually, be aware of the following limits for column and row size. Columns can have a maximum width of 255, or that is the maximum number of characters in the standard font size that a column can contain. Using a larger font size or applying additional font features, such as italic or bold, can significantly reduce the maximum column width. The default column size in Excel is 8.43. Rows can have a maximum height of 409 points, with 1 point equal to about 1/72 inches or 0.035 cm. The default height of an Excel row ranges from 15 points on a dpi to 14.3 points on a dpi of 200%. When a row width or height is set to 0, that column/row is not visible on a sheet (hidden). How to automatically adapt in Excel What I particularly like about Excel is that it provides more than one way to do most things. Depending on your preferred work style, you can automatically fit columns and rows using your mouse, ribbon, or keyboard. Automatically fit columns and rows with a double-click The easiest way to automatically fit Excel is to double-click the border of the column or row: To automatically fit a column, point to the right edge of the column Until the two-headed arrow appears, and then double-click the border. To automatically fit a row, point to the bottom edge of the row header and double-click the border. To automatically fit multiple columns/rows, select them and double-click a boundary between any column/row headers in the selection. To automatically fit the entire sheet, press CTRL+A or click the Select All button, and then double-click a border in a column or row header or both, as needed. Automatically fit columns and rows using the ribbon Another way to automatically fit in Excel is to use the following options on the ribbon: Automatically adjust the column width, select one, plus, or all columns on the sheet, go to the Cells > group on the Home tab, and then click Format > Fit Column Width. To automatically adjust row height, select the lines of interest, navigate to the Cells > Home tab group, and then click Format > Fit Row Height. Automatically adjust column width and row height using a keyboard shortcut Those of you who prefer to work with the keyboard most of the time, may be eligible as follows to automatically fit Excel: Select any cell in the column or row that you want to automatically fit: to automatically fit multiple nonadjacent columns/rows, select a column or row, and hold down CTRL while you select the other columns or rows. To automatically fit the entire sheet, press Ctrl+A or click the Select All button. Press one of the following keyboard shortcuts: To automatically adjust the column width: ALT+H, then O, and then I To automatically adjust the row height: ALT+H, then O, and then A Be careful that you don't need to press all the keys together, instead of each key/key combination being pressed and released in turn: ALT+H selects the Home tab on the ribbon. Or open the Format menu. The Fit Column Width option is selected. An object selects the Fit AutoFit Row Height option. If you're not sure if you remember the entire sequence, don't worry, as soon as you press the first key combination (ALT + H) Excel will display the keys to access all the options on the ribbon, and once you open the Format menu, you'll see the keys to select its items: Excel AutoFit doesn't work in most situations, Excel AutoFit works smoothly. However These are times when it can't automatically resize columns or rows, especially when Text-in-Chief is enabled. Here's a typical scenario: You set the width of the column you want, turn on Text Return, select the cells of interest, and double-click a row separator to automatically adjust the row height. In most cases, the rows are sized correctly. But sometimes (and this can happen in any version of Excel 2007 to Excel 2016), additional space is displayed under the last line of text as shown in the screenshot below. In addition, the text may appear correctly on the screen, but is cut when printed. For trial and error, the following solution has been found for the above problem. At first glance, it may seem illogical, but it works :) Press Ctrl+A for the entire worksheet. Make any column wider by dragging the right edge of the column header. Double-click a line separator to automatically fit the row height. Double-click a column separator to automatically adjust it to column widths. Done! Alternatives to autofit in Excel The AutoFit feature in Excel saves real time when it comes to adjusting column and row sizes based on content size. However, it is not an option when working with large text strings tens or hundreds of characters long. In this case, a better solution would be to carriage the text so that it appears on multiple lines instead of on a long line. Another possible way to contain long text is to merge multiple cells into a single large cell. To do this, select two or more adjacent cells and click Join & Center in the Alignment group on the Home tab. This uses the AutoFit feature in Excel to increase cell size and make it easier to read data. Thank you for reading and hope to see you on our blog next week! Week!