Data Validation in Excel

This guide will explain how to use the data validation feature which ensures that users are entering valid data into a cell. Data validation can allow input to be constricted to desired values, can inform users about the acceptable input, and can notify users when incorrect data has been entered.

Restricting Data Entries

Step 1
Select a cell or range of cells. Click the Data Validation button located under the Data tab in the Data Tools group. If users will be selecting data from a drop down list, a list must be created prior to entering the Data Validation menu.

Step 2
Click on the drop down arrow next to the Allow box and select the data type. Enter the remaining criteria in the boxes that appear. When creating a list, click the cell reference button and select the created list as the range.

Step 3
Click OK to add data validation to the cells.

Informing Users about Restrictions

Step 1
To add a message informing users of restrictions, first select the cell or range of cells. Then click the Data Validation button located in the Data tab.
Step 2
In the Data Validation window, click the Input Message tab. Type a title and message in the provided fields and press OK.

![Data Validation Window]

Step 3
Click on a cell to view the input message.

![Input Message]

Notifying Users about Incorrect Entries

Step 1
To add an alert for users after they have entered an incorrect value, first select the cell or range of cells. Then click the Data Validation button located in the Data tab.

Step 2
In the Data Validation window, click the Error Alert tab. Select a style from the drop down menu. Stop prevents a user from entering invalid data and prompts the user to retry. Warning informs the user that invalid data has been entered and prompts the user to continue. Information informs the user when invalid data has been entered but does not prompt a change.
More Information
For access to additional information, tutorials and workshops, please visit the Center for Academic Technology website, http://www.butler.edu/it/cat, contact any Center for Academic Technology staff member at training@butler.edu, or contact the Information Commons desk in Irwin Library at infocommons@butler.edu or 940-9235.

Bibliography

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