

MID function

► *Applies To*

Here's your free trial of Microsoft 365

[Unlock now](#)

This article describes the formula syntax and usage of the **MID** function in Microsoft Excel.

Description

MID returns a specific number of characters from a text string, starting at the position you specify, based on the number of characters you specify.

Syntax

MID(text, start_num, num_chars)

The MID function syntax has the following arguments:

- **Text** Required. The text string containing the characters you want to extract.
- **Start_num** Required. The position of the first character you want to extract in text. The first character in text has start_num 1, and so on.
 - If start_num is greater than the length of text, MID returns "" (empty text).
 - If start_num is less than the length of text, but start_num plus num_chars exceeds the length of text, MID returns the characters up to the end of text.
 - If start_num is less than 1, MID returns the #VALUE! error value.

- **Num_chars** Required for MID. Specifies the number of characters you want MID to return from text.
 - If num_chars is negative, MID returns the #VALUE! error value.

Example

Copy the example data in the following table, and paste it in cell A1 of a new Excel worksheet. For formulas to show results, select them, press F2, and then press Enter. If you need to, you can adjust the column widths to see all the data.

Data

Fluid Flow

Formula	Description	Result
=MID(A2,1,5)	Returns 5 characters from the string in A2, starting at the 1st character.	Fluid
=MID(A2,7,20)	Returns 20 characters from the string in A2, starting at the 7th character. Because the number of characters to return (20) is greater than the length of the string (10), all characters, beginning with the 7th, are returned. No empty characters (spaces) are added to the end.	Flow
=MID(A2,20,5)	Because the starting point is greater than the length (10) of the string, empty text is returned.	

Important:

- The MIDB function is deprecated.
- In workbooks set to [Compatibility Version 2](#), MID has improved behavior with Surrogate Pairs, counting them as one character instead of two. Variation Selectors (commonly used with emojis) will still be counted as separate characters. Read more here: [The Unicode standard](#)