



Using the COUNTIF Function

The COUNTIF function can be used to count totals or to count how many of that item is in a list. For example: in a datasheet you might want to find out how many people have the postcode NG5.

The screenshot shows an Excel spreadsheet with the following data:

	A	B	C	D
1	NG5		NG5	=COUNTIF(A1:A11,C1)
2	NG3			
3	WD6			
4	NG6			
5	NG15			
6	LN4			
7	LE11			
8	LE9			
9	NG5			
10	NG5			
11	NG1			
12				
13				

You can use Excel to COUNT!

Method

Copy the data into a new sheet. (use the Copy and Paste icons)

Click in the cell where you want the information to go.

Type =COUNTIF(A1:A11,C1)

(This means count the number of times NG5 appears in cells A1 to cells A11 by checking it against the criteria in cell C1)

Press Enter

The screenshot shows an Excel spreadsheet with the following data:

	A	B	C	D	E
1	2	3	3	6	10
2					
3	Number 3	=COUNTIF(A1:E1,3)			
4					

Method

Copy the data into a new sheet. (use the Copy and Paste icons)

Click in the cell where you want the information to go.

Type =COUNTIF(A1:E1,3)

(This means count the number of times 3 appears from cell A1 to cell E1)

Press Enter

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet with the following data:

	A	B	C	D
1	Eye Colour			
2	Blue		=COUNTIF(\$A\$2:\$A\$24,"Blue")	Blue
3	Brown			8 Brown
4	Blue			5 Other
5	Blue			1 Green
6	Blue			23
7	Blue			
8	Blue			
9	Brown			
10	Brown			
11	Other			
12	Other			
13	Blue			
14	Blue			
15	Brown			
16	Other			
17	Brown			
18	Brown			
19	Brown			
20	Other			
21	Brown			
22	Blue			
23	Other			
24	Green			

Method

Copy the data into a new sheet. (use the Copy and Paste icons)

Click in the cell where you want the information to go.

Type **=COUNTIF(\$A\$2:\$A\$24,"Blue")**

(This means count the number of times 'Blue' appears in cells A1 to cells A24)

You will notice the '\$' signs in front of the cell references. This allows you to copy the formula without the cell references changing (and miscounting the data.); you will still need to change the criteria though!

Remember

The = sign tells Excel that you are about to do a sum or enter a formula.

Make sure you label your work so that you know what the data means.

This technique is useful for finding out how popular an item is in a list.