

Fill in Table Data Automatically with a Macro
WordPerfect Magazine
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January, February – can you figure out what comes next? So can the computer. If you often find yourself filling out the top of a table by tediously typing J-a-n-u-a-r-y, F-e-b-r-u-a-r-y, all the way through December, give your fingers a rest and let the computer do the work!

The included DATAFILL.WPM macro reads a pattern in a table and finishes filling in the data for you. For example, you can create a calendar like the one shown in Figure 1 below by typing Sun in one cell and using the macro to fill in the rest of the days in the week. You can then place your cursor in the first day of the month and type 1, tab to the next cell and type 2, then use the macro to number all the other days in the calendar.

You can also use the macro to fill in much of the repetitive data in multiplication tables, spreadsheets and attendance rolls (see Figures 2 through 4 below), among many other document types that use tables.

Running the Macro

You'll first use the macro to fill in the calendar data in Figure 1. Create a seven-column, seven-row table by pressing Columns/Table (Alt-F7), (2) Tables, (1) Create. Enter 7 for the number of columns and 7 for the number of rows. Join the first row by pressing Block (Alt-F4), (End), (7) Join and (Y) Yes. Press Exit (F7) to exit Table Edit mode. Press (Tab) to move to Cell A2 and type Sun.

When you're ready to run the macro, make sure your cursor is still in Cell A2. Always make sure your cursor is in the first cell containing the fill pattern when you run the macro. The macro uses the text in the current cell as a basis for filling the other cells. To run the macro, press Macro (Alt-F10), type "datafill" and press (Enter).

At the Cursor to ending cell; press (Enter) prompt, press (Home), (Home), (Home), (Right Arrow) to move to the last cell in the row and press (Enter). You've just filled in the days of the week. Easy, wasn't it?

Now move your cursor to Cell E3. Type 1, press (Tab) to move to Cell F3 and type 2. Press Left Margin Release (Shift-Tab) to move back to Cell E3 and you're ready to run the macro again. Press Macro (Alt-F10), type "datafill" and press (Enter). At the Cursor to ending cell; press (Enter) prompt, press (Tab) twice and (Down Arrow) four times to move to Cell G7 and press (Enter). You've just made a calendar.

Create another table and experiment with the macro to see how it works in a variety of situations.

What the Macro Can Do

The macro can fill in a variety of your repetitive data. Here are some of the things it can do:

- Fill in full-length names of the months and days of the week (e.g., January, February; Sunday, Monday).

- Fill in abbreviated (three-character) names of the months and days of the week (e.g., Jan, Feb; Sun, Mon).
- Fill in consecutive months and days of the week (e.g., January, February, March, April).
- Fill in non-consecutive months and days of the week that follow a numeric pattern, such as every third month (March, June, September, December, March) or every other day (e.g., Sun, Tue, Thu, Sat, Mon).
- Fill in years and other consecutive numbers (e.g., 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992).
- Fill in non-consecutive numbers that follow a specific pattern (e.g., 1, 8, 15, 22, 29).
- Fill in negative numbers (e.g., -3, -5, -7, -9).
- Fill in numbers between -1,000,000,000 and 1,000,000,000.

Points to Remember

Keep the following in mind when using the macro:

- It can only be used with data that's in a table.
- It won't work with decimal numbers or fractions.
- It won't work properly if you have formatting codes (such as font or tab set codes) in the cells that are used to establish the fill pattern.
- After you start the macro, if you cursor to a cell in the same column and press (Enter), it fills in only that column.
- When you use numbers, the numbers can only be between -1,000,000,000 and 1,000,000,000.
- The names of months and days should have an initial uppercase letter (the name can't be in all uppercase). If you want the months or days to be in all uppercase or all lowercase, run the macro using months or days with an initial capital letter first. When the macro has finished, block the text using Block (Alt-F4), press Switch (Shift-F3) and (U) Uppercase or (L) Lowercase.
- When you fill in numbers, you must provide two numbers in the table to establish a pattern.
- If you're filling in days of the week or months of the year, as long as the following cell is empty you only need to type one item to have the macro fill in consecutive days or months. If you want to fill in the table with non-consecutive days or months, the names of two days or months are required to establish a pattern.
- The items you're using to establish a pattern can't wrap in the cell. If they do, then the items inserted by the macro will be incorrect.

Ideas on Using the Macro

If you plan to use this macro often, rename it as an Alt-letter macro.

To create a multiplication table like the one shown in Figure 2, create a table with the desired number of columns and rows. Next, type the numbers 1, 2, 2 and 4 in cells A1, B1, A2 and B2 respectively. With the cursor in Cell A1, run the macro. When you're asked to move your cursor, cursor down to the last cell in this column and press (Enter). Next, place your cursor in Cell B1 and run the macro again. This time when you're asked to move your cursor, cursor down to the last cell in Column B and press (Enter).

You're now ready to run the macro and fill in the information across each row. Place your cursor in Cell A1 again, run the macro and press (Home), (Home), (Home), (Right Arrow), (Enter) to have the macro fill in the rest of the first row. Move your cursor down to Cell A2 and repeat the last step. Continue running the macro in the first cell of each row until you reach the bottom of the table. You'll probably find a variety of other ways to use this macro. When you do, you'll find that it will definitely save you some time, not to mention your hands and carpal tunnel nerves!

December 1994						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Figure 1

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
2	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24
3	6	9	12	15	18	21	24	27	30	33	36
4	8	12	16	20	24	28	32	36	40	44	48
5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60
6	12	18	24	30	36	42	48	54	60	66	72
7	14	21	28	35	42	49	56	63	70	77	84
8	16	24	32	40	48	56	64	72	80	88	96
9	18	27	36	45	54	63	72	81	90	99	108
10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100	110	120
11	22	33	44	55	66	77	88	99	110	121	132
12	24	36	48	60	72	84	96	108	120	132	144

Figure 2

Quarterly Revenues						
	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994
April						
July						
October						
January						

Figure 3

Name	October				November					December			
	5	12	19	26	2	9	16	23	30	7	14	21	28
Michelle													
Michael													
Jude													
Jill													
Brian													
Wendy													
Jennie													
Lee Ann													

Figure 4