Find and Correct Errors in Formulas

*Excel* displays an error if a formula cannot evaluate a result. These instructions will show you how to troubleshoot a worksheet containing common errors. For more information on troubleshooting formulas, see:

Evaluate Nested Formulas
Trace Relationships Between Formulas and Cells
Use the Error Check Tool

Common Errors

### - Column isn't wide enough to display the content, or a negative date or time is used.
- If the column isn't wide enough, you can either widen it to fit the contents, or shrink the contents to fit the column. In some cases you can change the number format.
- If the date or times are negative, make sure the formulas are correct. If the negative value is correct, change the cell format.

#### - The wrong argument or operand is used. Use the Trace Error tool to check your arguments, such as cell references, numbers, and operands.
- Check to see if text was entered when a number or a logical value, such as TRUE or FALSE, is required.
- Make sure a range hasn't been used when a single value is required.
- Check array formulas. Select the cell or range of cells, press F2 to edit the formula, then press CTRL+SHIFT+Enter.
- Make sure a cell reference, a formula, or a function hasn't been entered as an array constant.

### - Occurs when a number is divided by zero.
- Check for division by zero in your formula; for example, =4/0.
- If the formula has a cell reference to a blank cell or to a cell that contains zero as the divisor, do one of the following:
  1. Change the cell reference to another cell.
  2. Enter a value other than zero in the cell used as a divisor.
  3. Enter the value #N/A into the cell reference as the divisor to denote that the divisor value is not available for that cell.
  4. Use the IF worksheet function to calculate the value only if the divisor is zero.
- Check any macros in the worksheet to be sure the divisor in the macro function or formula is not zero or blank.
#NAME? - Excel does not recognize text in the formula.
- Verify the formula name exists.
- Make sure the name is spelled correctly.
- If the formula uses labels, make sure labels are allowed.
- Verify all ranges in the formula use a colon.
- Check for sheet references not enclosed in single quotation marks.
- Install the Analysis ToolPak add-in if necessary.

#REF! - The formula contains an invalid cell reference.
- Make sure you haven't deleted or pasted over cells referenced by the formula.
- Make sure all programs that the formula links to are running.
- Check any macro functions to see if an argument refers to an invalid cell or range of cells.