

Relative, Absolute and Mixed References

Calling cells by just their column and row labels (such as "A1") is called **relative referencing**. When a formula contains relative referencing and it is copied from one cell to another, Excel does not create an exact copy of the formula. It will change cell addresses relative to the row and column they are moved to. For example, if a simple addition formula in cell C1 " $=A1+B1$ " is copied to cell C2, the formula would change to " $=A2+B2$ " to reflect the new row.

To prevent this change, cells must be called by **absolute referencing** and this is accomplished by placing dollar signs "\$" within the cell addresses in the formula. Continuing the previous example, the formula in cell C1 would read " $=\$A\$1+\$B\1 " if the value of cell C2 should be the sum of cells A1 and B1. Both the column and row of both cells are absolute and will not change when copied.

Mixed referencing can also be used where only the row OR column fixed. For example, in the formula " $=A\$1+\$B2$ ", the row of cell A1 is fixed and the column of cell B2 is fixed.