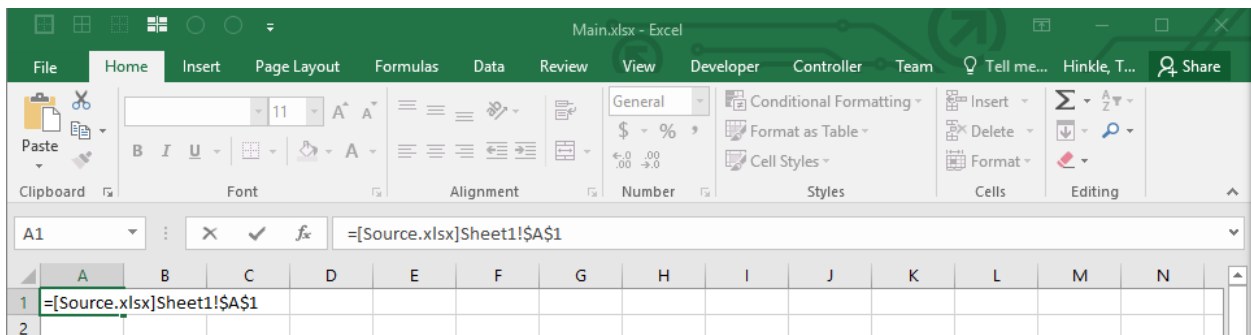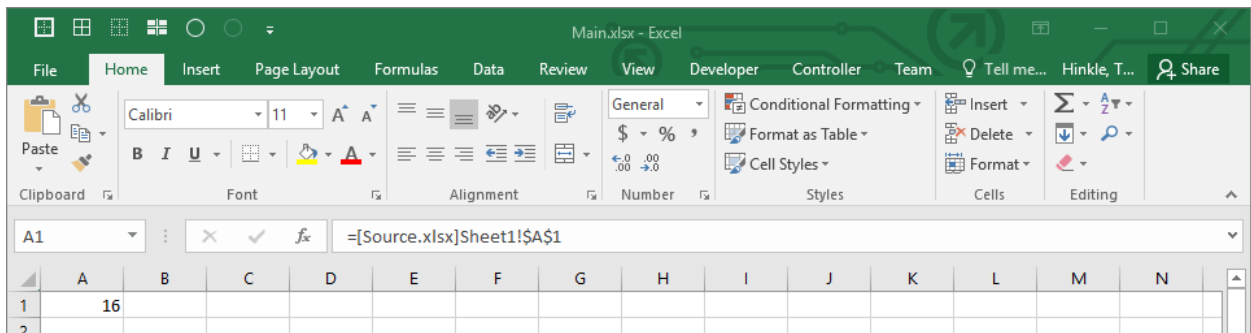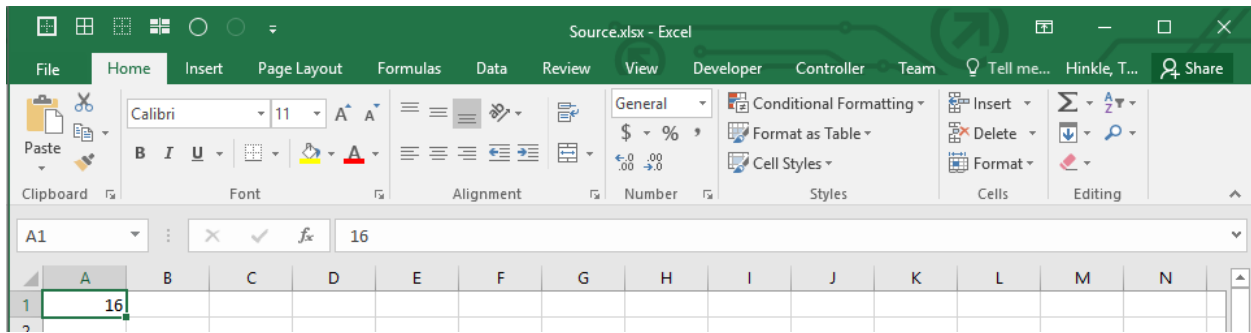# Working with closed workbooks

When you are working with data spread across a number of business units or departments, standardization and summarization become very important. Whether it is an individual budgeting their department for the next year or you are checking that a form is signed off, every document that is filled out by a user should be the same. When they are the same, you can navigate these workbooks while they are closed, saving space on your screen and your mind.

The first step is to open the two workbooks that you want to use. The workbook that will be linked to we will call the **source,** and the workbook that will hold the links we will call the **main**.

With the two workbooks open, double click into a cell in the main and then click into a cell in the source. In the cell you originally clicked (in the main) you should see something similar to the image below (here I linked cell A1 in the main to cell A1 in the source).
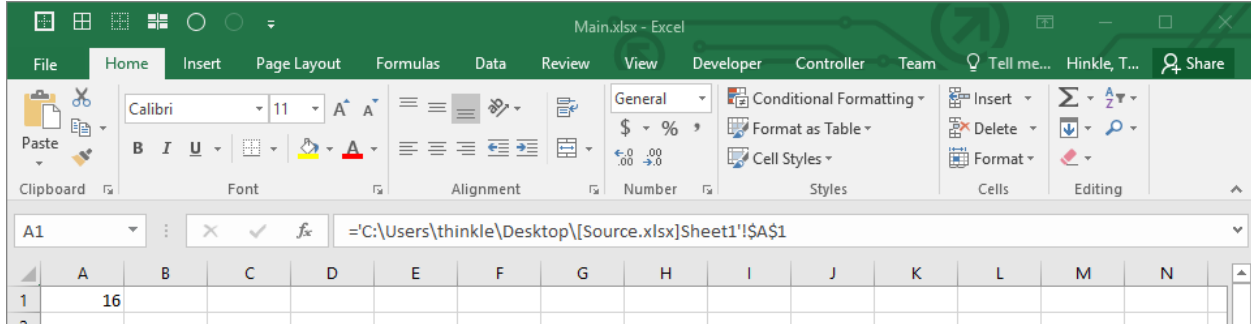

This allows you to enter a value in cell A1 in the source and automatically update cell A1 in the main.

Now you can close the source, and the value in the main will change to include the file path for the source. You can see what used to be in the cell at the end of the complete file path.

Now things can get technical. Let's say you want to check one cell in multiple workbooks, either to summarize the data or to check that they have been signed off. I've created new workbooks that are copies of Source.xlsx in the same place and added those filenames to the main. I've also added an apostrophe before the "=" in cell A1 so we can see the formula that is in there and use that to mirror what we want to check in the other books. You can do this manually or using a formula and I'll show both methods here. For the manual method, you can just copy the text and add "01", "02"… after source to link to the books. For the formula, you can use =SUBSTITUTE to replace each instance of "Source" with the value for the workbook name. The result at the end will be the same.
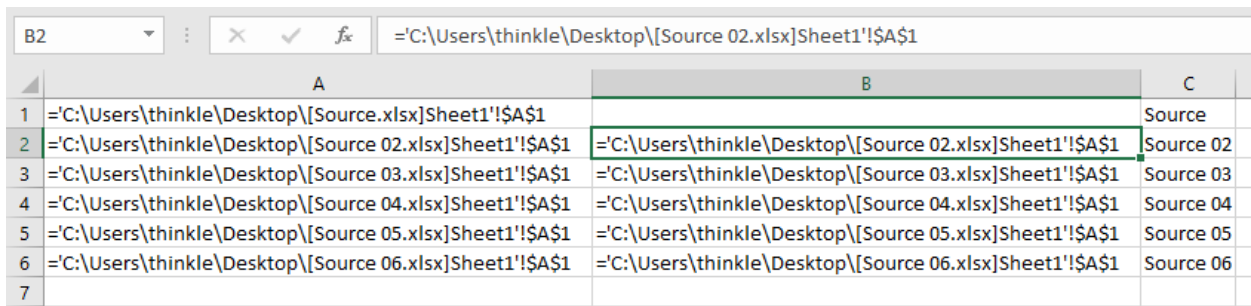
In the manual replacements, you can remove the apostrophe and in the formula method you can copy what is in the cell and paste values. They will have the same result, a link to a cell in a closed workbook. Once this is done the cells with show the value in the workbook you linked to.
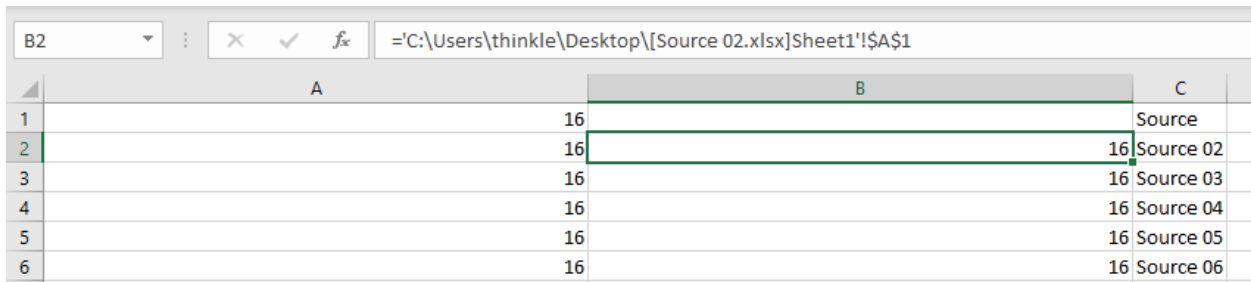
Using the same principle we can link to several weekly files and check the value in a single cell.

Working with closed Excel workbooks

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	Date	Filename	Check Cell	Value	Value	
2	4/6/2019	04062019.xlsx	E25	'C:\Users\thinkle\Desktop\[04062019.xlsx]Sheet1'!$E$25	684,638	
3	4/13/2019	04132019.xlsx	E25	'C:\Users\thinkle\Desktop\[04132019.xlsx]Sheet1'!$E$25	368,485	
4	4/20/2019	04202019.xlsx	E25	'C:\Users\thinkle\Desktop\[04202019.xlsx]Sheet1'!$E$25	330,598	
5	4/27/2019	04272019.xlsx	E25	'C:\Users\thinkle\Desktop\[04272019.xlsx]Sheet1'!$E$25	769,541	
6	5/4/2019	05042019.xlsx	E25	'C:\Users\thinkle\Desktop\[05042019.xlsx]Sheet1'!$E$25	278,458	
7	5/11/2019	05112019.xlsx	E25	'C:\Users\thinkle\Desktop\[05112019.xlsx]Sheet1'!$E$25	0	
8	5/18/2019	05182019.xlsx	E25	'C:\Users\thinkle\Desktop\[05182019.xlsx]Sheet1'!$E$25	384,138,483	
9	5/25/2019	05252019.xlsx	E25	'C:\Users\thinkle\Desktop\[05252019.xlsx]Sheet1'!$E$25	387,315	
10	6/1/2019	06012019.xlsx	E25	'C:\Users\thinkle\Desktop\[06012019.xlsx]Sheet1'!$E$25	638,467	
11	6/8/2019	06082019.xlsx	E25	'C:\Users\thinkle\Desktop\[06082019.xlsx]Sheet1'!$E$25	796,413	
12						
13						

Here we have some sales figures from different weekly files. Column D demonstrates the formula needed to get the result in column E. This is a great way to error check a document. You can see in week ending 05/11/2019 there is a zero listed and in WE 05/18/2019 the number is far above what is typical. A document like this saves the effort of opening and checking multiple files.