

# Tuesday TechTip:

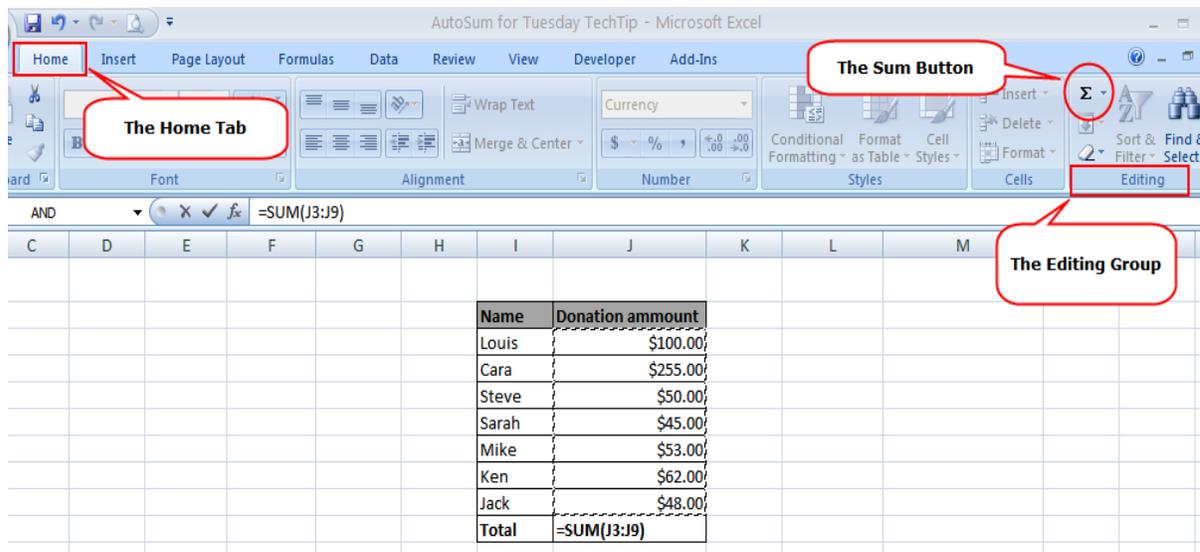
## **What are functions and how can they help me?**

Functions in Excel are predefined formulas that perform different actions based on data in your spreadsheet. A function can add a group of numbers, combine or separate text, calculate future interest on loan and perform almost endless actions on your data. As you may imagine, these functions can get pretty complicated. Excel, however, contains many commonly used functions that are useful and easily accessed.

### **The AutoSum Button.**

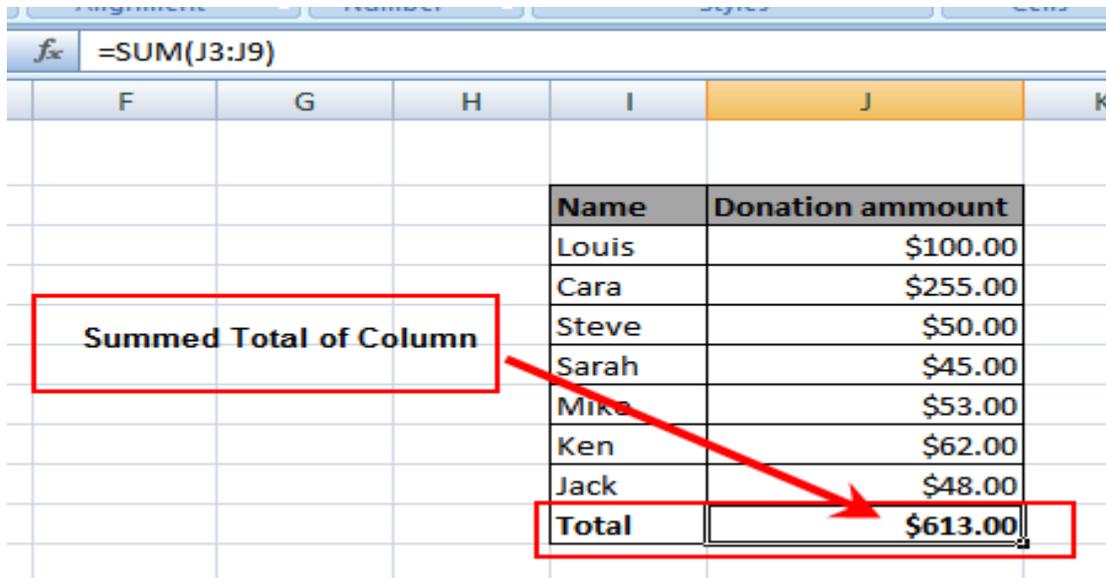
The SUM function is used more often than any other function in Excel. This function simply adds a column or row of numbers and returns the total into a cell. The **AutoSum** button offers a quick method to access this function. Let's take a look at how this works:

1. Select the cell below a column of numbers and click the **AutoSum** button in the *Editing* group on the *Home* tab.



2. The button inserts the formula for you and suggests a range of numbers to add.
3. Press the **Enter** button on your keyboard to accept the range or select a new range and press **Enter**.

4. The column of numbers is summed and the total appears in your selected cell.



The screenshot shows an Excel spreadsheet with the formula bar displaying `=SUM(J3:J9)`. The spreadsheet contains a table with the following data:

Name	Donation amount
Louis	\$100.00
Cara	\$255.00
Steve	\$50.00
Sarah	\$45.00
Mike	\$53.00
Ken	\$62.00
Jack	\$48.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$613.00</b>

A red box highlights the text "Summed Total of Column" in cell F9, with a red arrow pointing to the total value of \$613.00 in cell J9. Another red box highlights the total row (I9:J9).

### More Functions.

The **AutoSum** button includes a menu that appears when you click the arrow next to the button. This allows you to quickly look at the average, minimum, maximum, or the count of a row or column of numbers just as you would do with the Sum formula.

### One more tip.

You can select data you would like to examine and get a quick summary of the average, sum, minimum and maximum values, and counts of cells as they would appear in a cell after calculation.

Name	Donation amount
Louis	\$100.00
Cara	\$255.00
Steve	\$50.00
Sarah	\$45.00
Mike	\$53.00
Ken	\$62.00
Jack	\$48.00
Total	\$613.00

**Highlighted Data**

**Summary of Highlighted Data**

Average: \$87.57   Count: 7   Numerical Count: 7   Min: \$45.00   Max: \$255.00   Sum: \$613.00

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