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## » Using Cell Reference with Keyboard signs in the Criteria Range argument when using COUNTIF formula.

**CATEGORY:** [Excel Text Formulas](#)      **VERSIONS:** [All Microsoft Excel Versions](#)

Explanation:

When you want to use the greater, less or equal signs (" $<$ ", " $>$ ", " $=$ ") in the criteria range of the COUNTIF formula you should include the expression within quotation marks.

Example: `=COUNTIF(A1:A8,">=4")`

Problem:

A problem arises if you want to use a cell reference in place of the number. It is wrong to include it within quotation marks.

`=COUNTIF(A1:A8, ">=B1")` since Excel will identify the cell reference as a string

Solution:

The key is to include only the signs ( $<$ ,  $>$ ,  $=$ ) within quotation marks and use the "&" operator to join (CONCATENATE) them with the cell reference:

`=COUNTIF(A1:A8, ">="&B1)`

Screenshot // Using Cell Reference with Keyboard signs in the Criteria Range argument when using COUNTIF formula.

	C1	
	A	B
1	1	
2	2	
3	15	
4	3	
5	1	

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