

**MSBA PROBATE & TRUST LAW SECTION E-NEWSLETTER**

December 2017

**Call for Submissions**

We are always looking for attorneys to write brief articles for this newsletter. Articles can focus on any issues relevant to probate and trust law. This newsletter is distributed to the Probate and Trust Law Section membership, which consists of approximately 1,071 practitioners. Writing for the newsletter is a great way to share your knowledge and expertise with your colleagues.

If you are interested in submitting an article, please contact Emma Maddy ([emma.maddy@stinson.com](mailto:emma.maddy@stinson.com)) with your idea.

Please visit the Section's website for ideas and to see the various articles that have been written in the past.

Best Regards,  
Emma Maddy  
Probate & Trust Newsletter Editor

**Upcoming Events and CLE Programs**

- **Greater MN Probate & Trust Study Group Conference Call**
  - Wednesday, December 20, 2017 at 9 a.m. (the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of every month)
  - Call-in Number: (800) 406-9170 passcode: 1491722
  - Contact Patrick Lowther ([pat@lawmanpal.com](mailto:pat@lawmanpal.com)) with any questions or to join the group.
- **MSBA Probate & Trust Law Section Meeting**
  - January 18, 2018 at 3:30pm
  - Location: Fredrikson & Byron PA, Minneapolis
- **CLEs**
  - MSBA, January 11, 2018: [Keeping the Farm](#)
  - MinnesotaCLE, January 8, 2018: [Estate Planning for Business Owners](#)
  - RCBA, January 25, 2018: [Common Pitfalls in Probate Court](#)
  - February 8, 2018: [So It Might Be Time for a New Fiduciary When to Make the Tough Decision and How to Handle it With Composure](#)
  - MSBA, March 8, 2018: [Communications Best Practices and Pitfalls for Trusts and Estates Lawyers](#)

## Tech Tip

### Calculating Due Dates in Excel

By: Richard Baum, Technology Chair, Probate and Trust Section

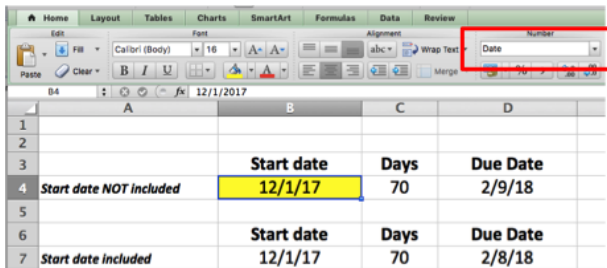
Let's face it, we can agree there is usually more one than one way to get a job done. Calculating a due date is something that can be done manually or use any of a number of tools available on a computer. If you are someone who tracks tasks in an Excel spreadsheet, then here is a tip you can use to calculate due dates.

#### First Things First—Data Formats

As you may (or may not) know, information in a spreadsheet can be defined at the individual cell level. Cell formats are set on the tool bar in Excel, and Excel defaults to the category “General” for all cells until you change the format. For better or worse, Excel will sometimes try to guess what you are doing and change the format to what it thinks you are trying to do. Sometimes that works, and sometimes it creates a horror show that makes you think you will never touch Excel again, but I digress.

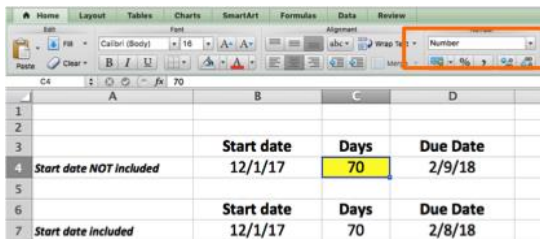
*NOTE: my screenshot examples were done in Excel for Mac 2011. The same functionality exists in the PC versions of Excel, although the tab/menu locations may vary.*

1. In the example below, cell B4 (in yellow) contains our start date. Note that I changed the cell to the “Date” format (noted in the red box).



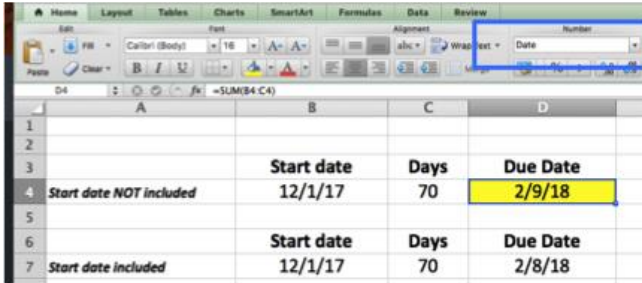
	A	B	C	D
1				
2				
3		Start date	Days	Due Date
4	Start date NOT included	12/1/17	70	2/9/18
5				
6		Start date	Days	Due Date
7	Start date included	12/1/17	70	2/8/18

2. Next, I format the “Days” cell to be “Number” (orange box).

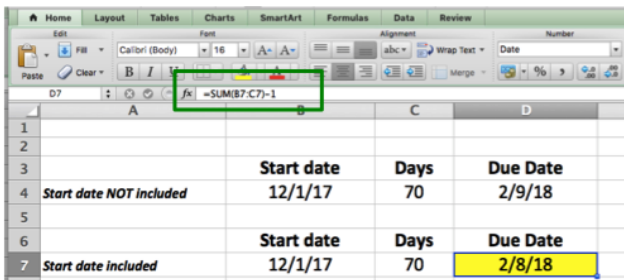


	A	B	C	D
1				
2				
3		Start date	Days	Due Date
4	Start date NOT included	12/1/17	70	2/9/18
5				
6		Start date	Days	Due Date
7	Start date included	12/1/17	70	2/8/18

3. The “Due Date” cell is also formatted as “Date”. In addition, the “Due Date” cell contains the formula that does the dark magic of calculating the due date (blue box). If you are familiar at all with Excel, you will see that the formula is doing addition with the SUM function. You may also have noticed that the calculation does not include the start date, hence the label “Start date NOT included:”.



4. If you want to include the start date in your date calculation, you will need to subtract one from the formula (green box). In other words, you must subtract to add a day.



If you really wanted to geek out, you could add if/then logic to the formula that would add three days based upon the yes/no question “Add three days for service by mail?”. That, however, will be the topic for a future tip.

Have a technology question? Send me an email at [rbaum@hawkelawgroup.com](mailto:rbaum@hawkelawgroup.com).

Newsletter Committee Chair: Emma Maddy (emma.maddy@stinson.com)

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