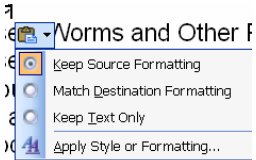


Tip of the Month: Smart Tags in Microsoft Office

By Jennifer Jahedkar

Smart tags, first introduced in Microsoft Office XP, are icons that appear on their own when a certain action is possible. You may have seen little buttons pop up for some reason in Word or Excel! Some are application-specific, so there are Stock Symbol smart tags in Excel, and Address smart tags in Word. And others, like the Paste Options smart tag, are found throughout the Microsoft Office suite. Each tag offers different options.



After you paste data in a Microsoft Office application, you can click on the clipboard-shaped smart tag to see a menu with formatting choices, including Match Destination Formatting and Keep Source Formatting, as shown in figure 1.

Figure 1: Paste Options smart tag

When you type text into a new Word document or open an existing document, the logic in the smart tag looks for words that match the data types in the list. When the smart tag finds a match, it places a purple line under the matched term and enables certain actions. The actions you can take depend on the type of data that Word recognizes and labels with a smart tag. If you type an address, smart tag offers options to display a map or driving directions, as in figure 2.

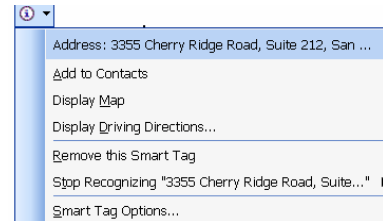
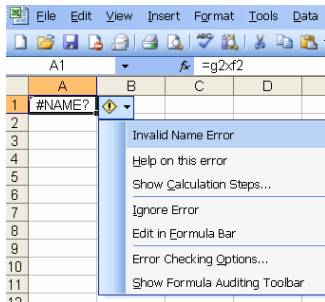


Figure 2: Address smart tag



Error-checking smart tags in Excel appear when a cell entry violates a set of rules for a function or formula. As shown in figure 3, choices offered help spot possible errors in calculations and correct them.

To review and change smart tag options or even turn them off, go to AutoCorrect Options from the Tools menu of any Microsoft Office application, and click the smart tags tab.

Smart tags can be helpful! And if you don't think so, just press the escape key to make them go away.

Figure 3: Error-checking smart tag