# How to Autofill Days of the Week in Excel: A Step-by-Step Guide

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Mastering the Autofill feature in Excel is fundamental for professionals managing schedules, conducting data analysis, or building complex timelines. When dealing with time-based data, efficiency is paramount, and manually typing out days of the week or filtering out weekends is time-consuming and prone to errors. Fortunately, Excel provides sophisticated tools to automate this process. This comprehensive guide explores three distinct and highly effective methods for automatically generating sequences of days, ranging from simple repetitive lists to advanced date calculations that intelligently skip non-working days.

## Overview of Autofill Methods for Days of the Week

Depending on whether your requirement is a repeating textual list of days or a sequence of specific calendar dates that excludes weekends, one of the following three methods will provide the optimal solution. Understanding the context--whether you need day names (like Monday, Tuesday) or actual dates (like 2024/01/01)--is the first step toward selecting the right technique.

We will demonstrate each approach using practical examples, highlighting the nuances of Excel's internal logic, which recognizes and handles custom lists such as the days of the week automatically. The first two methods rely primarily on the mouse-based drag functionality, while the third leverages a powerful built-in function to handle complex date calculations.

**Method 1: Autofill Each Day of the Week**

**Example:** Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday, ... This method generates a continuous, repeating cycle of all seven days.

**Method 2: Autofill Weekdays Only (Pattern Repetition)**

**Example:** Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Monday, Tuesday, ... This technique forces a specific pattern of only five days to repeat indefinitely.

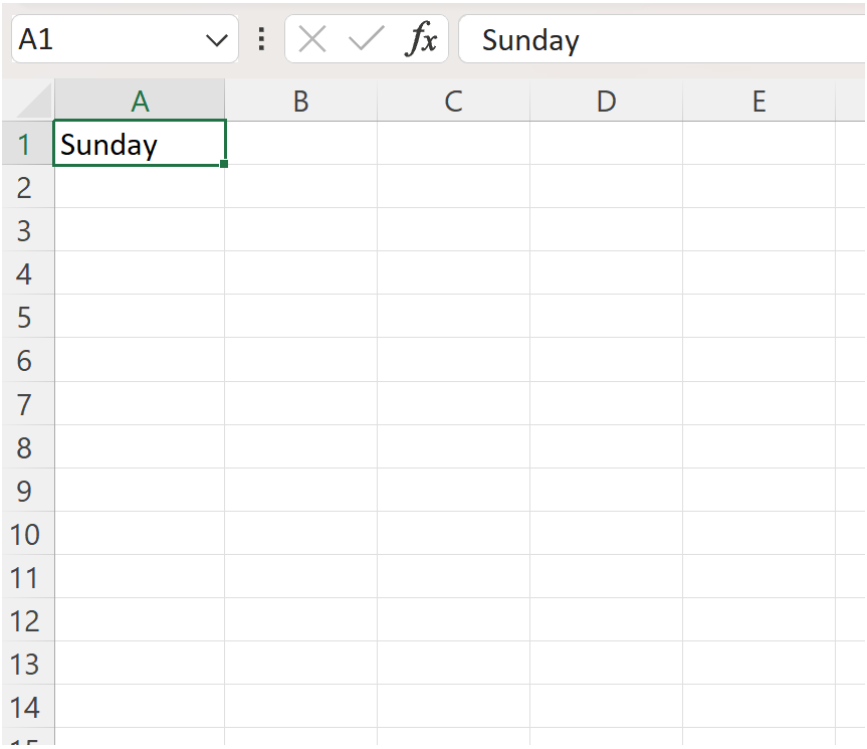
**Method 3: Autofill Weekday Dates Only (Skipping Weekend Dates)**

**Example:** 2/1/2024, 2/2/2024, 2/5/2024, 2/6/2024, ... This advanced method utilizes a formula to ensure the resulting sequence consists only of actual working dates, bypassing Saturdays and Sundays based on the calendar.

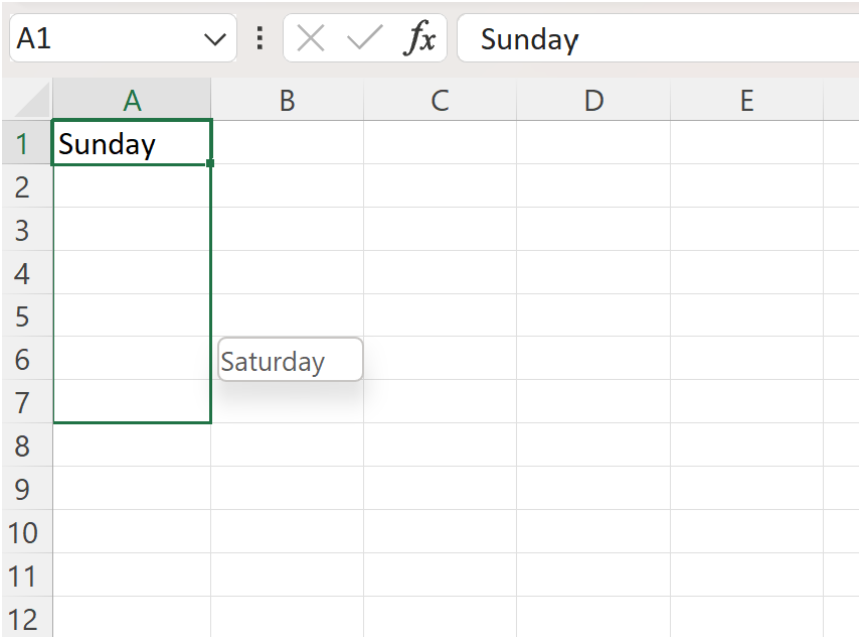
## Example 1: Autofilling All Days of the Week Using the Fill Handle

The simplest way to generate a continuous sequence of days involves using the native Autofill feature, which is activated via the small square known as the fill handle located at the bottom-right corner of a selected cell. Excel is inherently programmed to recognize full or abbreviated day names (e.g., 'Mon', 'Monday') as part of a sequential list, allowing for immediate extrapolation.

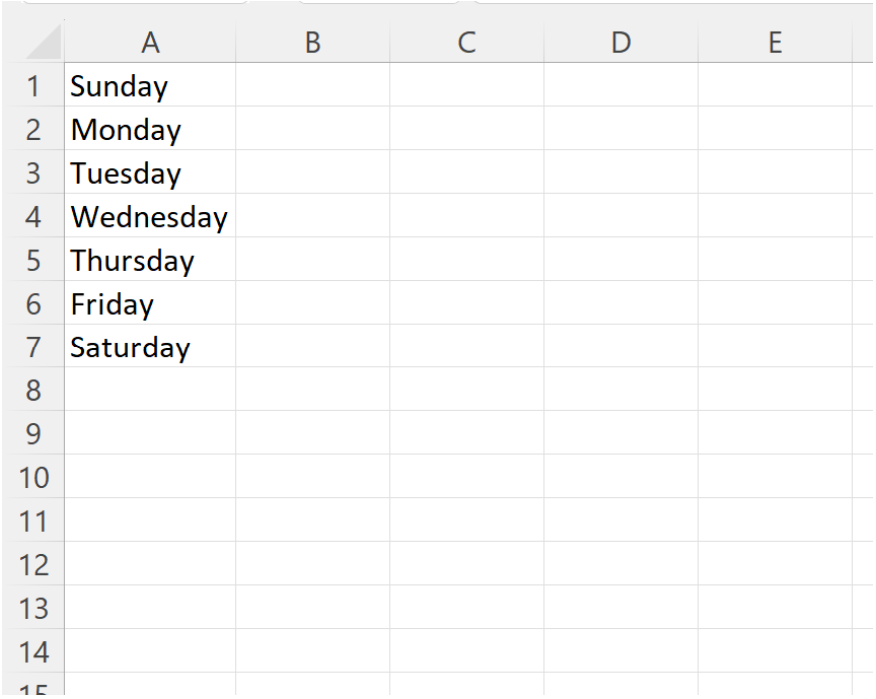
To begin this process, simply type the name of the first day you intend to start the sequence with into your designated starting cell. For this demonstration, we will input "Sunday" into cell **A1**. This initial entry establishes the starting point and the format (full name or abbreviation) that Excel will follow for the entire sequence.




Once the initial day is entered, position your cursor over the fill handle in the bottom right-hand corner of cell **A1**. The cursor will transform into a thin cross ( **+** ). This transformation indicates that the drag-and-drop functionality is active. Click and drag this handle downwards across the desired number of rows in column A. As you drag, Excel intelligently identifies the pattern of the seven-day week and automatically populates the subsequent cells with the correct sequence.



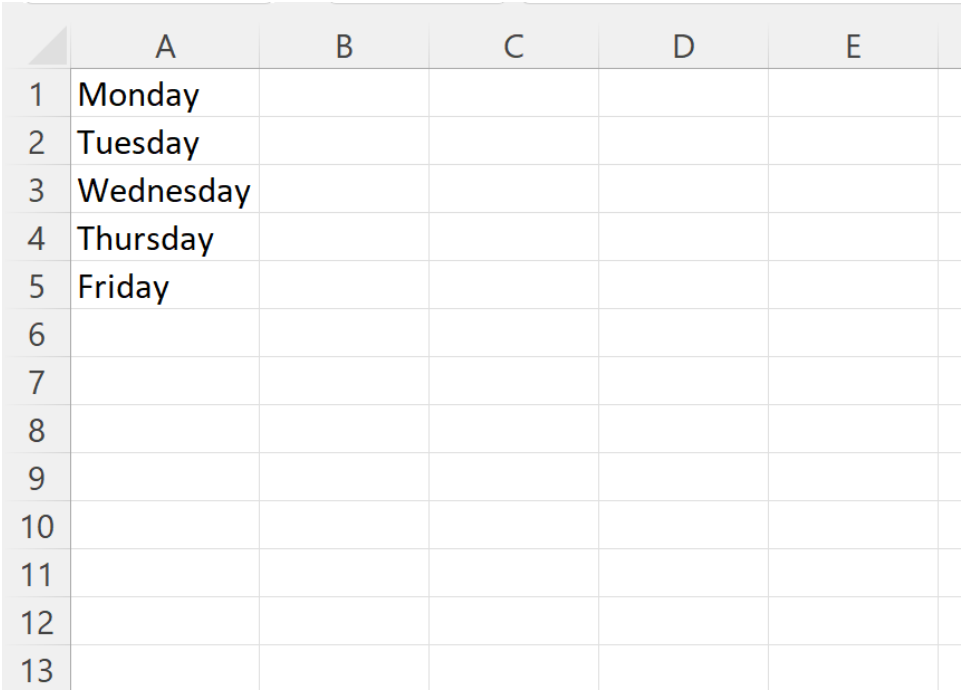

The result is a flawless, predictable list where each day of the week is displayed sequentially in column A. It is important to note that this method creates a cyclical pattern. If you continue dragging the list beyond seven entries, the sequence will automatically wrap around and begin again with Sunday. This is ideal for scenarios requiring rotating shifts or weekly schedules where every day must be included.



## Example 2: Autofilling Weekdays Only via Pattern Repetition

While the basic Autofill method is efficient for continuous cycles, it cannot inherently skip weekends if you are listing the names of the days rather than dates. If your objective is to generate a list that strictly contains only 'Monday' through 'Friday' and then immediately loops back to 'Monday,' you must teach Excel the desired pattern explicitly. This method requires establishing the full list of weekdays first to define the repeating unit.

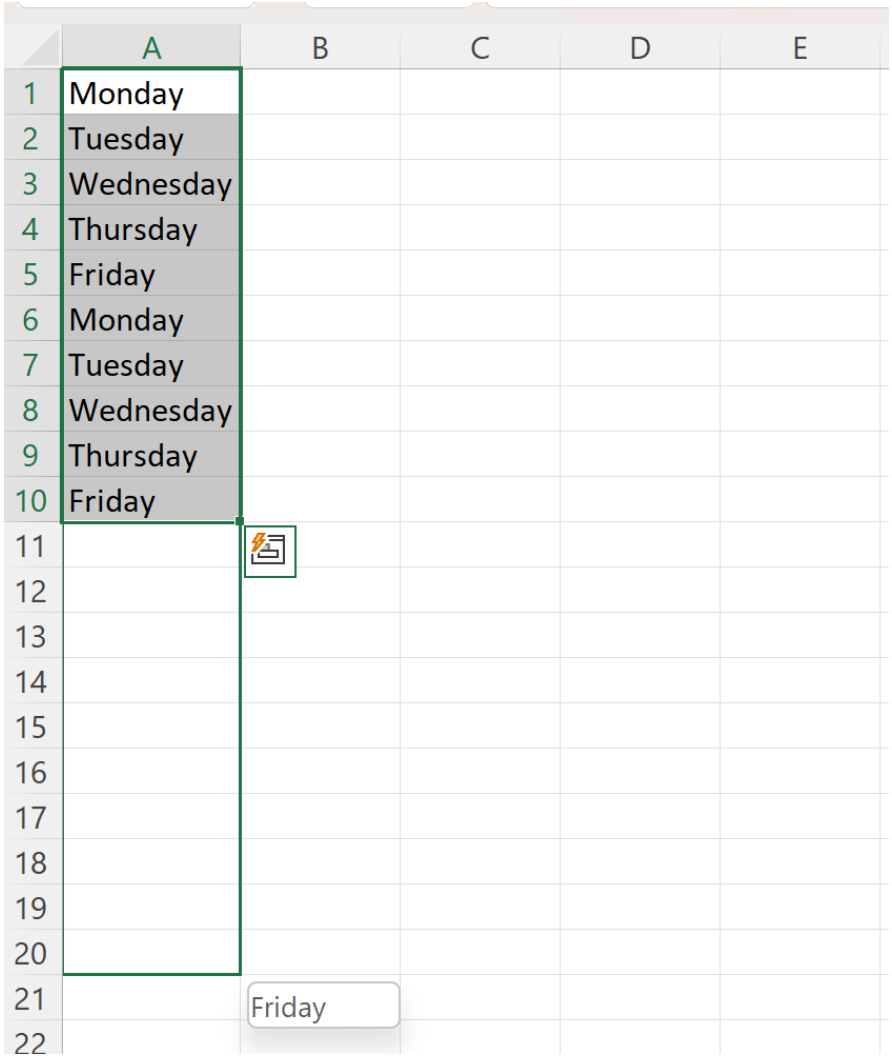
The initial step involves manually typing out the complete sequence of weekdays: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. Ensure these entries are placed in consecutive cells, such as A1 through A5. This block of five cells represents the core pattern that we intend to repeat throughout the column.




To reinforce this pattern for Excel's recognition algorithm, it is highly recommended to copy and paste this list immediately below the original sequence. For instance, if the first list occupies A1:A5, paste the duplicate list into A6:A10. This duplication solidifies the desired five-day repetition, making it clear to the software that the jump from Friday back to Monday is an intentional feature of the required list, overriding the default seven-day cycle.

| | A | B | C | D | E |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Monday | | | | |
| 2 | Tuesday | | | | |
| 3 | Wednesday | | | | |
| 4 | Thursday | | | | |
| 5 | Friday | | | | |
| 6 | Monday | | | | |
| 7 | Tuesday | | | | |
| 8 | Wednesday | | | | |
| 9 | Thursday | | | | |
| 10 | Friday | | | | |
| 11 | | | | | |
| 12 | | | | | |
| 13 | | | | | |
| 14 | | | | | |
| 15 | | | | | |

Finally, highlight the entire two-cycle list (A1 through A10 in our example). With this range selected, click and drag the fill handle down to the remaining cells in column A. By analyzing the repeated pattern of Monday through Friday, Excel will now successfully autofill the rest of the column, ensuring that 'Saturday' and 'Sunday' are consistently skipped, resulting only in a list of weekdays.



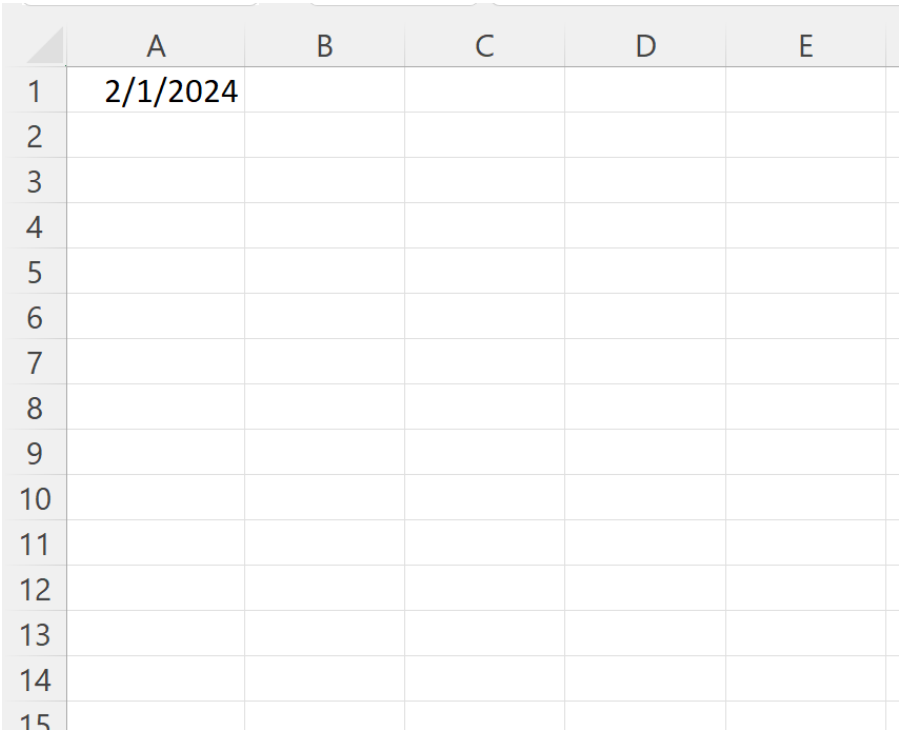

This technique is a clever workaround when dealing with static textual day names. However, it must be emphasized that this method does not rely on actual calendar dates; it is purely a repetition of text strings based on the pattern you define. For applications that require date awareness (i.e., skipping real weekend dates), the next method is essential.

## Example 3: Autofilling Weekday Dates Only (Skipping Weekend Dates)

When schedules or project timelines demand a sequence of working dates where Saturdays and Sundays must be completely excluded--regardless of the starting day--Excel's standard Autofill function is insufficient. For such precision, we must employ the powerful WORKDAY.INTL function. This function calculates a future date based on a given number of working days, allowing for customizable weekend definitions.

Start by entering the first date of your desired sequence into cell **A1**. This date should ideally be a weekday, but the function will handle it correctly even if it falls on a weekend. Use a standard date

format recognized by Excel, such as MM/DD/YYYY.

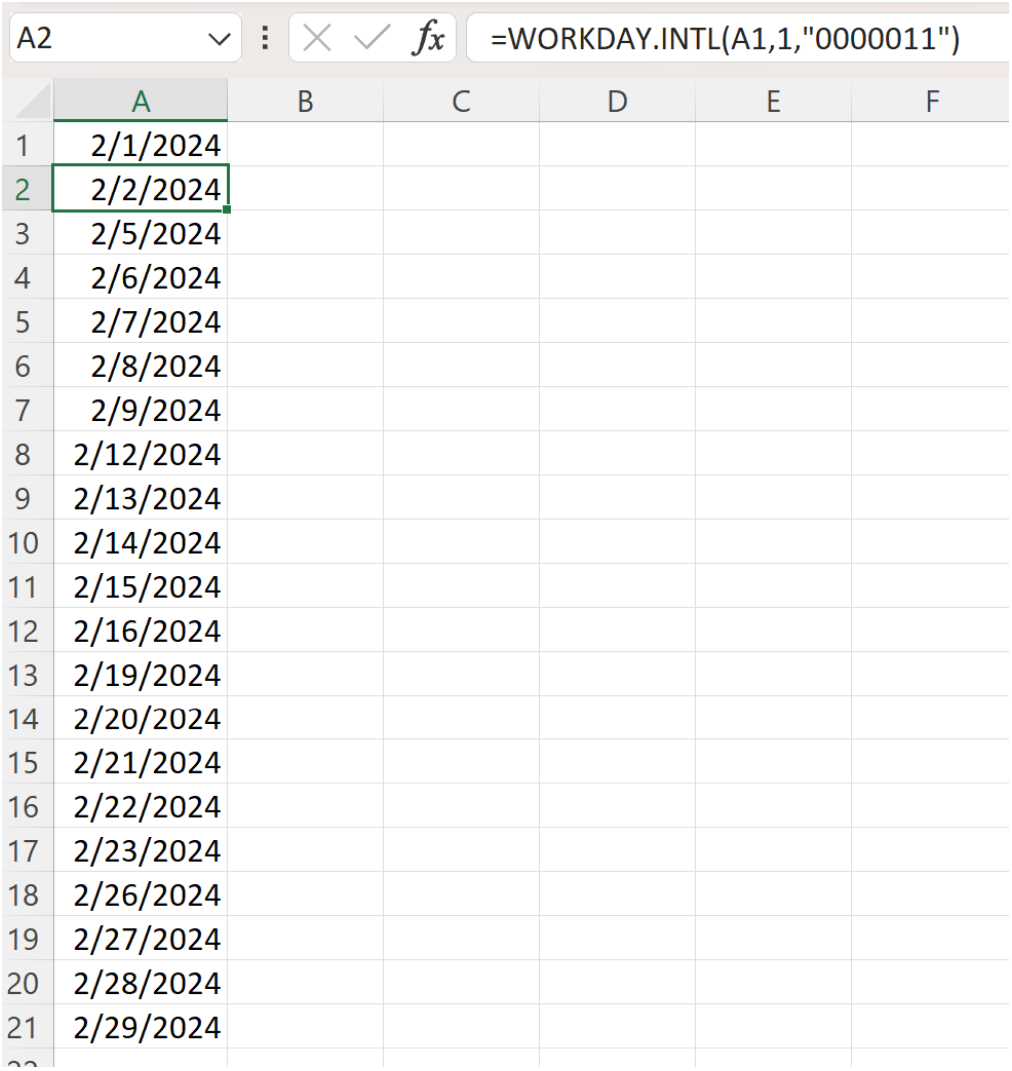



Next, in cell **A2**, enter the core formula that initiates the weekday sequence. This formula references the date in A1 and instructs Excel to calculate the next sequential working day while adhering to specific weekend rules. For standard Monday-Friday workweeks, the formula is structured as follows:

**=WORKDAY.INTL(A1,1,"0000011")**

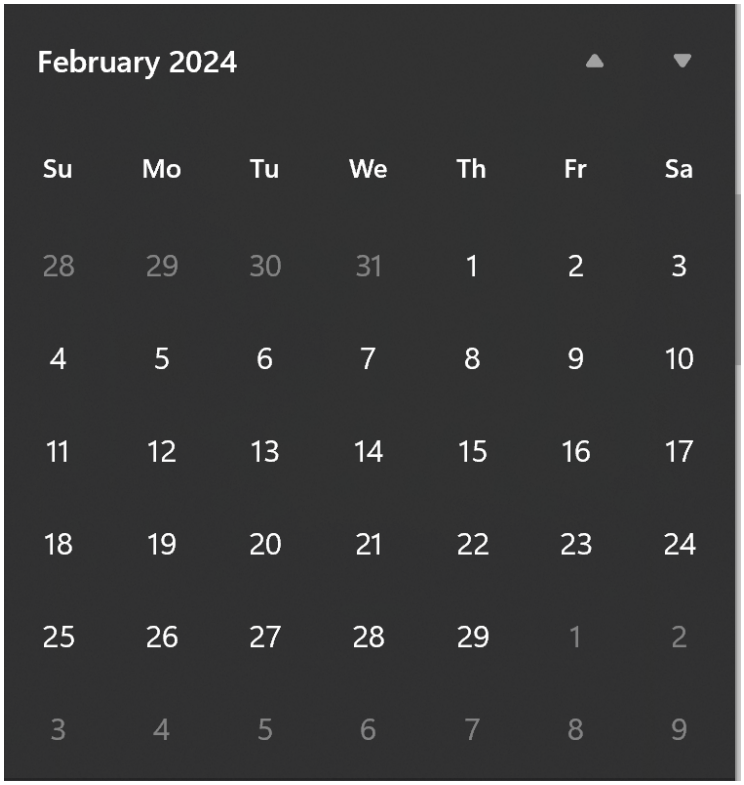
The structure of this function is critical. **A1** is the starting date; **1** signifies that we are moving forward by one working day; and the string **"0000011"** defines which days of the week constitute the weekend, where '0' is a working day and '1' is a weekend day (starting the count from Monday). Therefore, "0000011" means Monday through Friday are working days, and Saturday and Sunday are skipped.

Once the formula is correctly entered into cell **A2**, simply click and drag the fill handle down column A. Because the formula in A2 references A1, and subsequent cells (A3, A4, etc.) will automatically reference the cell immediately above them, the formula iterates, calculating the next valid working date sequentially. If a Saturday or Sunday is encountered, the function automatically jumps forward to the following Monday.




| | A | B | C | D | E | F |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2/1/2024 | | | | | |
| 2 | 2/2/2024 | | | | | |
| 3 | 2/5/2024 | | | | | |
| 4 | 2/6/2024 | | | | | |
| 5 | 2/7/2024 | | | | | |
| 6 | 2/8/2024 | | | | | |
| 7 | 2/9/2024 | | | | | |
| 8 | 2/12/2024 | | | | | |
| 9 | 2/13/2024 | | | | | |
| 10 | 2/14/2024 | | | | | |
| 11 | 2/15/2024 | | | | | |
| 12 | 2/16/2024 | | | | | |
| 13 | 2/19/2024 | | | | | |
| 14 | 2/20/2024 | | | | | |
| 15 | 2/21/2024 | | | | | |
| 16 | 2/22/2024 | | | | | |
| 17 | 2/23/2024 | | | | | |
| 18 | 2/26/2024 | | | | | |
| 19 | 2/27/2024 | | | | | |
| 20 | 2/28/2024 | | | | | |
| 21 | 2/29/2024 | | | | | |

The resulting list of dates is entirely comprised of weekdays, offering a robust and dynamic solution for scheduling. This method is superior to simple manual dragging when working with dates because it is calendar-aware, ensuring absolute accuracy, which can be verified by cross-referencing the generated dates with a calendar. For complex international scheduling, the flexibility of the WORKDAY.INTL function is unmatched.




## Deep Dive into WORKDAY.INTL Parameters

The WORKDAY.INTL function is an advanced version of the standard WORKDAY function, offering crucial flexibility, particularly in defining non-standard weekend schedules. Understanding the three required arguments is key to harnessing its full power for generating custom date sequences in Excel.

The function syntax is `WORKDAY.INTL(start_date, days, , )`. In our autofill example, we focused on the first three arguments: `start_date`, `days`, and `weekend`. The `start_date` is simply the date from which the calculation should begin (e.g., the previous date in the sequence, **A1**). The `days` argument specifies how many working days to add or subtract; using **1** advances the date by one working day, which is essential for creating a sequential list.

The most powerful component is the optional argument. It can be defined in two ways: either by a numerical code or, as we used, by a seven-character binary string. Using the binary string **"0000011"** provides maximum control. This string represents the seven days of the week, starting with Monday (1st character) and ending with Sunday (7th character). A '0' indicates a working day, and a '1' indicates a non-working day. For example, if your workweek included Friday and Saturday as weekends, the string would be "0000110" (Monday to Thursday working, Friday and Saturday weekend, Sunday working). This flexibility allows for accurate scheduling across diverse global operations.

While we did not utilize the optional argument in the basic autofill, in a real-world scheduling context, this argument would allow you to reference a range of cells containing specific public holidays. The WORKDAY.INTL function would then automatically skip these dates in addition to the defined weekends, ensuring the final list reflects true working dates. This sophisticated capability transforms the simple date autofill into a comprehensive resource planning tool.

## Additional Resources for Excel Efficiency

Understanding how to efficiently manage date and time sequences is just one aspect of maximizing productivity in Excel. Continuous learning about keyboard shortcuts, advanced data validation, and complex array formulas will further streamline your analytical tasks.

The following tutorials and resources explain how to perform other common operations in Excel, providing pathways to increase your proficiency and automate repetitive tasks:

Explore tutorials on using conditional formatting to visually highlight weekend dates.
Learn about the NETWORKDAYS function, which calculates the number of working days between two dates.
Discover techniques for creating dynamic calendars that automatically update based on a selected month or year.

**Note**: You can find the complete documentation for the **WORKDAY.INTL** function in Excel by visiting the official Microsoft support pages, which offer detailed examples and explanations of all available weekend codes and arguments.