Microsoft Excel Basics at the Deerfield Public Library

Microsoft Excel is a spreadsheet is the computer equivalent of a paper ledger sheet. It consists of a grid made from columns and rows. It is an environment that can make number manipulation easy and somewhat painless.

It is part of the Microsoft Office Suite.
Understanding What You See on the Home tab

**Ribbon and Tabs:** The Ribbon/Tab presentation style is pretty standard across all of your Microsoft Office Suite programs. Microsoft Word has tried to streamline the appearance of its options by hiding away extra menus. This is called **back staging** and occurs inside each Tab. There are a few popular buttons up front on the Ribbon to help with certain tasks, but there are many more options behind the scenes. You can get to the extra options by clicking the grey arrows in the lower right hand corner of each grouping.

**Multiple Sheets:** Spreadsheets can use multiple sheets, and you can move from one sheet to another. There are even functions that are built into Excel (under the Formulas tab) that will make your sheets automatically coordinate.

**Row vs. Column:** Rows are the lines that move HORIZONTALLY across the paper and have a number at the beginning. COLUMNS are the divisions that run VERTICALLY across the paper and have a letter at the top. When you are identifying a cell, it will be done with the Letter:Number (Column:Row).

**Formula Bar:** The long bar across the top is a place for you to see how your text will appear as you are entering it. The text can also be entered directly into the cell, but it is a bit easier to edit the text in the larger line. The box to the left of this viewer is called the Identifier box and gives you “the cell’s address.”
How Tos:

**Cell Content**

Each cell can contain its own text, formatting, comments, formulas, and functions.

- **Text:** Cells can contain letters, numbers, and dates.
- **Formatting attributes:** Cells can contain formatting attributes that change the way letters, numbers, and dates are displayed. For example, dates can be formatted as MM/DD/YYYY or Month/D/YYYY.
- **Comments:** Cells can contain comments from multiple reviewers.
- **Formulas and Functions:** Cells can contain formulas and functions that calculate cell values. For example, \( \text{SUM(cell 1, cell 2...)} \) is a formula that can add the values in multiple cells.

**To Insert Content:**

1. Click on a cell to select it.
2. Enter content into the selected cell using your keyboard. The content appears in the cell and in the formula bar. You also can enter or edit cell content from the formula bar.

**To Delete Content Within Cells:**

1. Select the cells which contain content you want to delete.
2. Click the **Clear** command on the ribbon. A dialog box will appear.
3. Select **Clear Contents**.
4. You can also use your keyboard's **Backspace** key to delete content from a single cell or **Delete** key to delete content from multiple cells.
DELETE CELLS:

1. Select the cells that you want to delete.
2. Choose the **Delete** command from the ribbon.
3. There is an important difference between **deleting the content of a cell** and **deleting the cell itself**. If you delete the cell, by default the cells underneath it will shift up and replace the deleted cell.

![Delete Cells Dialog Box](image1.png)

CUT, COPY AND PASTE:

1. Select the cells you want to format.
2. **Right-click** on the selected cells. A **dialog box** will appear where you can easily access many commands that are on the ribbon. The area of cells you selected will have a blinking border.

![Right-Click on Selected Cells](image2.png)

**To Access More Paste Options:**

There are more Paste options that you can access from the drop-down menu on the Paste command. These options may be convenient to advanced users who are working with cells that contain formulas or formatting.
To Drag and Drop Cells:

1. Select the cells that you wish to move.
2. Position your mouse on one of the outside edges of the selected cells. The mouse changes from a white cross to a black four pointed arrow.
3. Click and drag the cells to the new location.
4. Release your mouse and the cells will be dropped there.

To Use the Fill Handle to Fill Cells:

1. Select the cell or cells containing the content you want to use. You can fill cell content either vertically or horizontally.
2. Position your mouse over the fill handle so that the white cross becomes a black cross.
3. Click and drag the fill handle until all the cells you want are highlighted.
4. Release the mouse and your cells will be filled. (This is a great tool when you’re doing a multi-add!)
Modifying Columns, Rows and Cells

When you open a new, blank workbook, the cells are set to a default size. You do have the ability to modify cells, and to insert and delete columns, rows, and cells, as needed. In this lesson, you will learn how to change row height and column width; insert and delete rows and columns; wrap text in a cell; and merge cells.

1. Position your mouse over the column line in the column heading so that the white cross becomes a double arrow.
2. Drag your double arrow in the direction that you want to stretch or shorten the cells. The process will modify the entire row or column, but not ALL of them.

To Set Column Width with a Specific Measurement:

1. Select the columns you want to modify.
2. Click the Format command on the Home tab. The format drop-down menu appears.
3. Select Column Width.
4. The Column Width dialog box appears. Enter a specific measurement (this is measured in pixels).
5. Click OK. The width of each selected column will be changed in your worksheet.

**Select AutoFit Column Width from the format drop-down menu and Excel will automatically adjust each selected column so that all the text will fit.**

You can do the same process with your ROWS, too. They will just be called ROW width instead!
**To Insert a Row or a Column:**

1. Select the row BELOW where you would like the new row/column to appear.
2. Hover over the header for your column or row.
3. Right Click to bring up your menu.
4. Select Insert, and the new row will appear above the one you selected.

The Paintbrush that appears will allow you to edit the formatting of the row you’ve just inserted. By default, it will have the formatting of the other rows.

**You follow the same process for adding a column, but the new column will appear to the LEFT of what you’ve selected.**

**Deleting Rows or Columns is similar!**

1. Select the row/column you want deleted by clicking on the header.
2. Right click to bring up your menu and select Delete.
3. The information for the whole row will disappear.
**Wrap Text and Merge Cells:**

If a cell contains more text than can be displayed, you can choose to wrap the text within the cell or merge the cell with empty, adjoining cells. **Wrap text** to make it display on multiple lines of the cell. **Merge cells** to combine adjoining cells into one larger cell.

1. Select the cells you want to wrap.

![Excel screenshot showing wrapped text](image)

2. Select Wrap Text on the Home Tab.

3. The text in your selected is now wrapped.

![Excel screenshot showing wrapped text](image)
**Merge Your Cells:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HPAS North Carolina Board of Directors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashberry, Jane</td>
<td>78-A Meadowview Lane Raleigh, NC 27589</td>
<td>919-882-6561</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ashberryj@hpasnc.org">ashberryj@hpasnc.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davis, Garrett</td>
<td>29 North Luke Court Raleigh, NC 27576</td>
<td>919-576-4562</td>
<td><a href="mailto:davisg@hpasnc.org">davisg@hpasnc.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eberhardt, Elizabeth</td>
<td>63-C Chapel Court Louisberg, NC 27079</td>
<td>252-985-3558</td>
<td><a href="mailto:eberhardte@hpasnc.org">eberhardte@hpasnc.org</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Select the cells you want to Merge together.
2. Select the Merge and Center option on the Home Tab to bring the cells together.
3. In the drop down arrow next to Merge and Center, there are other options than Center. You can change the alignment here.

**Simple Formulas:**

A formula is an equation that performs a calculation. Like a calculator, Excel can execute formulas that add, subtract, multiply, and divide. One of the most useful features of Excel is its ability to calculate using a cell address to represent the value in a cell. This is called using a cell reference. In order to maximize the capabilities of Excel, it is important to understand how to create simple formulas and use cell references.

Excel uses standard operators for equations, such as a **plus sign** for addition (+), a **minus sign** for subtraction (-), an **asterisk** for multiplication (*), a **forward slash** for division (/), and a **caret** (^) for exponents.

The key thing to remember when writing formulas for Excel is that all formulas must begin with an equal sign (=). This is because the cell contains, or is equal to, the formula and its value.
To Create a Simple Formula in Excel:

1. Select the cell where the answer will appear (B4, for example).
2. Type the Equal Sign (=).
3. Type the formula you want Excel to calculate.
4. Press enter. The formula will be calculated and only the value will display inside the cell.

To Create formulas that span cells:

1. Select the cell where the answer will appear (B4, for example).
2. Type the Equal Sign (=).
3. Type the cell address that contains the first number in your equation. Type the operator you need for your numbers (+, -, /, * etc).
4. Type in the address of the cell that will be the last number in your equation. Press enter. A blue line will appear around the cells.
5. If you change a number in the sequence, your new total will automatically be calculated.