

# 19 Excel

## Quick Tips & Settings

To Save Time & Fix Hassles



SCOTT HARTSHORN

## Welcome!

This document has the best quick settings, hot keys, and utilities that I have found in Excel. These are all easy to use, and hopefully they will save you some hassle in Excel.

If you have your own favorite Excel functions and settings, I'd love to hear about them. Let me know at

**ImFairlyNerdy (at) gmail (dot) com**

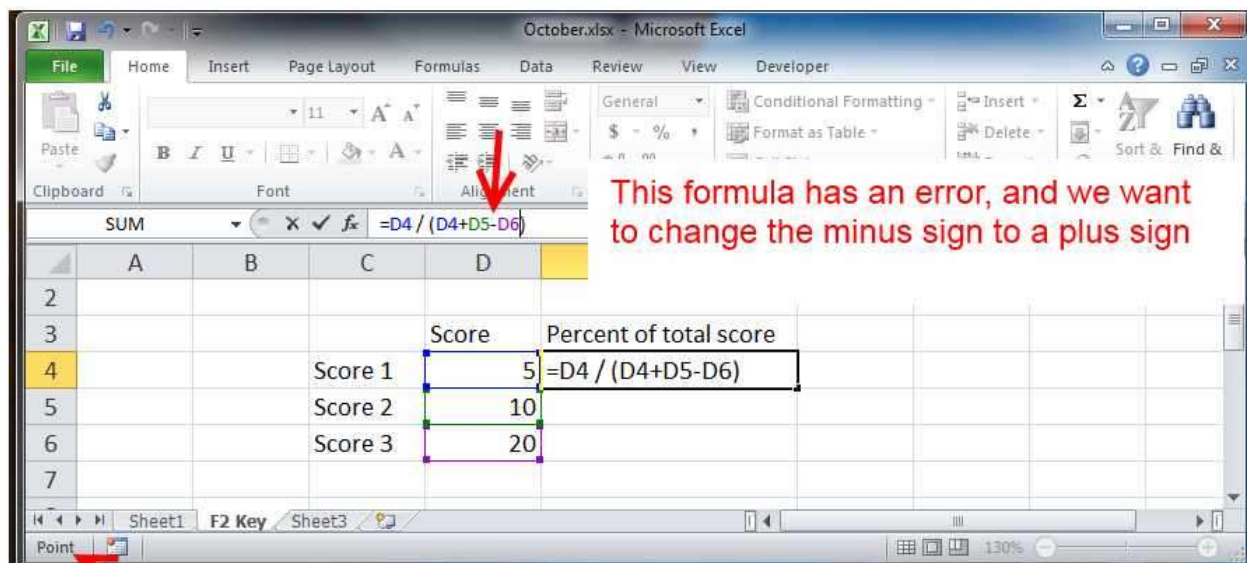
## Table Of Contents

Welcome! .....	1
The Best Function Keys .....	3
The Magical F2 Key .....	3
F4 Key for \$ signs .....	6
Formatting Tricks .....	8
Keep Source Formatting.....	8
Format Painter .....	9
Sizing Columns .....	11
Alt + Enter .....	12
Managing Formulas .....	13
See The Equations.....	13
Don't Evaluate The Row .....	15
Get Rid Of The Formula, Keeping Only The Value .....	16
Pull Down Formula Bar .....	17
Copy Formula Down The Whole Column .....	18
Sequential Numbers.....	19
Tabs .....	20
Recolor Tabs.....	20
Reorder Tabs.....	20
Hide Tabs .....	21
Scroll Through Tabs.....	21
Miscellaneous Useful Tips.....	22
Insert Columns / Rows .....	22
Arrow Keys Acting Weird .....	25
Hot Keys .....	25
Thank You .....	26

## The Best Function Keys

### The Magical F2 Key

Of all the tips in this document, this is my favorite because it solves a major annoyance for me in Excel, and it is so quick and easy. I frequently run into problems when I use the arrow keys in Excel. I will click on cells to enter a formula only to realize something in the formula is wrong. My natural inclination is to use the arrow keys to move the cursor over and edit the cell.



This formula has an error, and we want to change the minus sign to a plus sign

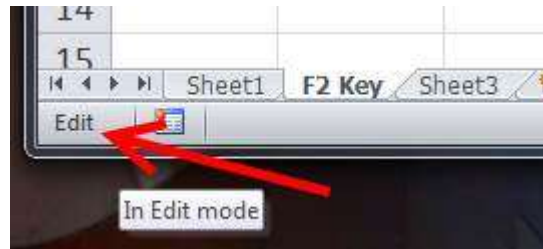
Because we are in "Point" mode, pressing an arrow key will change the cell D6 reference

But as soon as you do that, the contents of the formula change. Because excel thinks you are trying to change the cell references with the arrow keys, not trying to move the cursor.

The solution: The **F2 key**.

Excel defaults to "Point" mode. In this mode the arrow keys change key references.

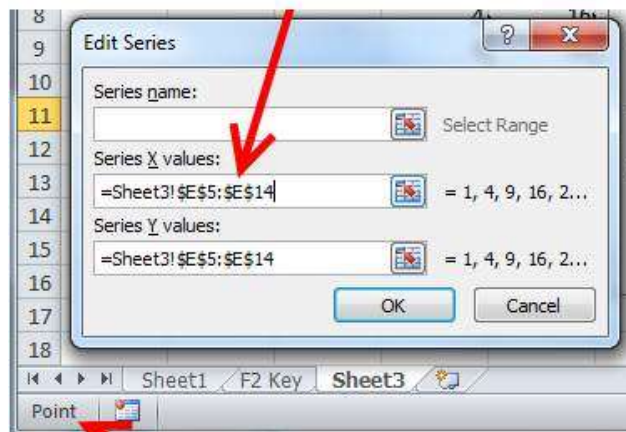
Pressing F2 switches to “edit” mode. Then you can change your cursor position with the arrow keys.



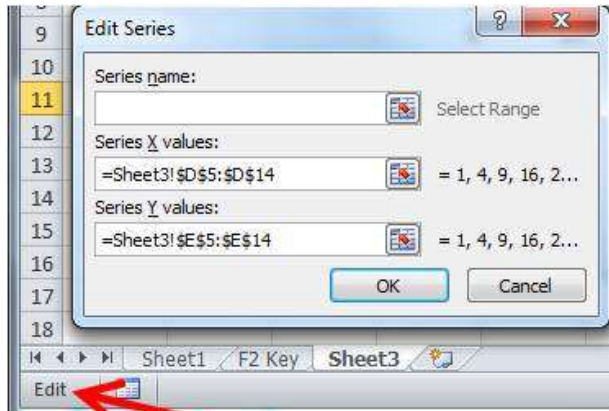
If you are on a cell, F2 automatically takes you to the end of the cell, which is great for adding extra information to it.

The F2 key works really, really well for editing graph input. The graph input also defaults to point mode, but if you want to edit the input, for instance reference column D instead of E, you either need to use the mouse to select the new column, use the mouse to position your cursor so you can backspace & enter a new input, or use the F2 key to switch to edit mode.

I want to change the X axis from column E to column D



Because I am in "Point Mode" the arrow keys won't work, and I need to use the mouse



Pressing F2 switches to Edit Mode, making it easy to use the arrow keys and backspace to fix the input

Unfortunately, I know of no way to make edit mode the global default whenever excel opens.

## F4 Key for \$ signs

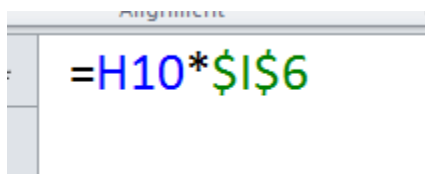
If you want to drag a formula through multiple cells, and you don't want the cell reference for some parts of the formula to change, then dollar signs in front of the row or column are crucial.

The screenshot shows an Excel spreadsheet with the following data:

	G	H	I
		Interest Rate	0.05
		Money In Account	Interest
		252.87	10*\$I\$6
		415.25	
		389.18	
		209.19	
		174.15	
		369.00	
		456.09	
		302.34	
		266.59	
		331.67	
		154.32	
		121.52	

The easiest way to add dollar signs is to use the F4 key. If you use the F4 key then whatever cell the cursor is on in the formula bar will cycle through the four different options for dollar signs

1 - Dollar signs on both row and column reference



2- Dollar signs on row reference

=H10\*I\$6

3 - Dollar signs on column reference

=H10\*\$I6

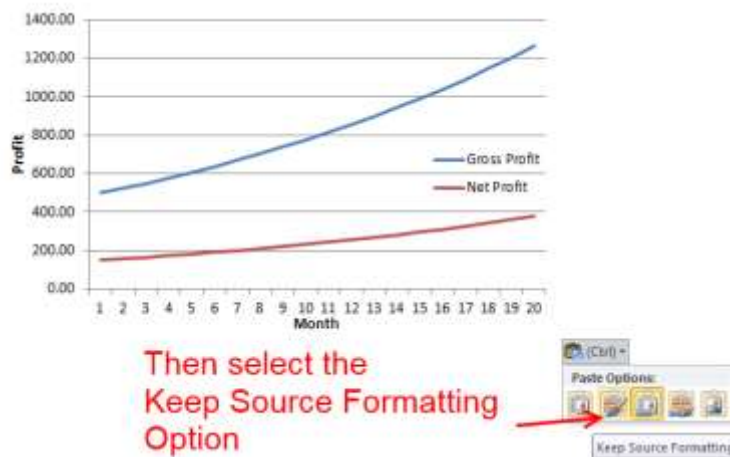
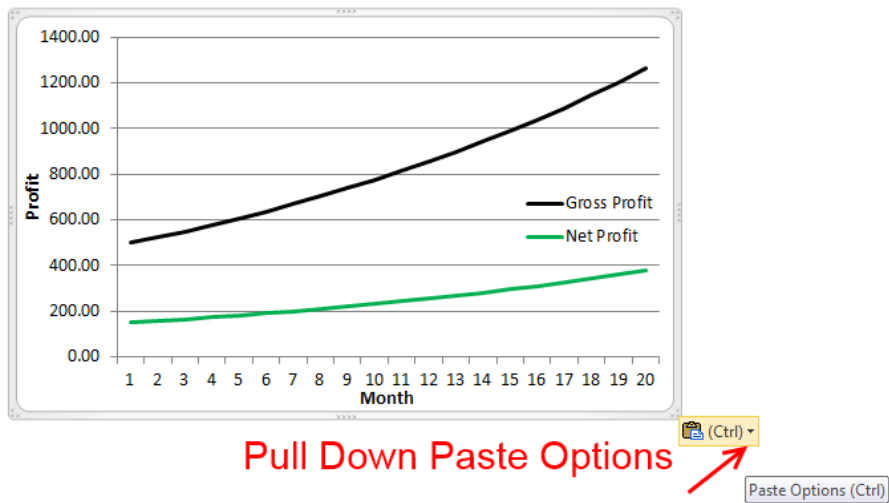
4 - No dollar signs

=H10\*I6

# Formatting Tricks

## Keep Source Formatting

Excel and PowerPoint are frequently used together. But if you copy a graph from excel into PowerPoint, it will often change the colors and formatting, especially if you are using some kind of template in the PowerPoint file. The way to fix this is to paste the graph in, and then to immediately use the pull down box that says “Keep Source Formatting”. This will make the PowerPoint colors match the excel colors. You need to select the “Keep Source Formatting” the first thing after pasting the graph in, because it will go away and not be available again without recopying from Excel. This also works when pasting into Word.

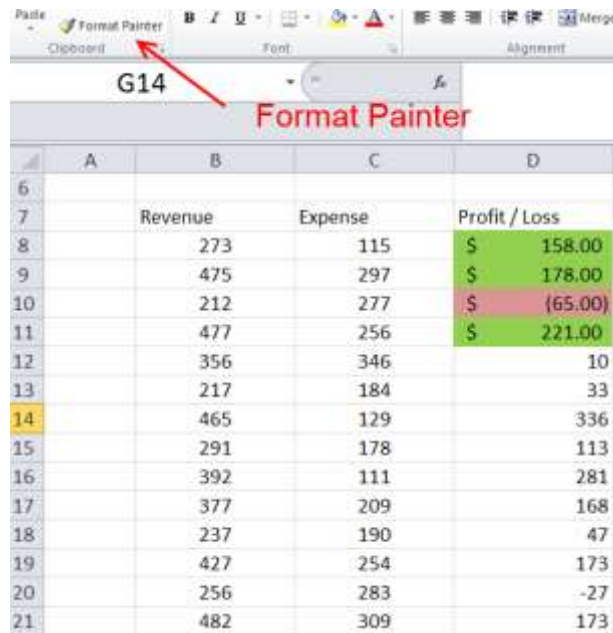


I don't know of any way to make "Keep source formatting" the global default



## Format Painter

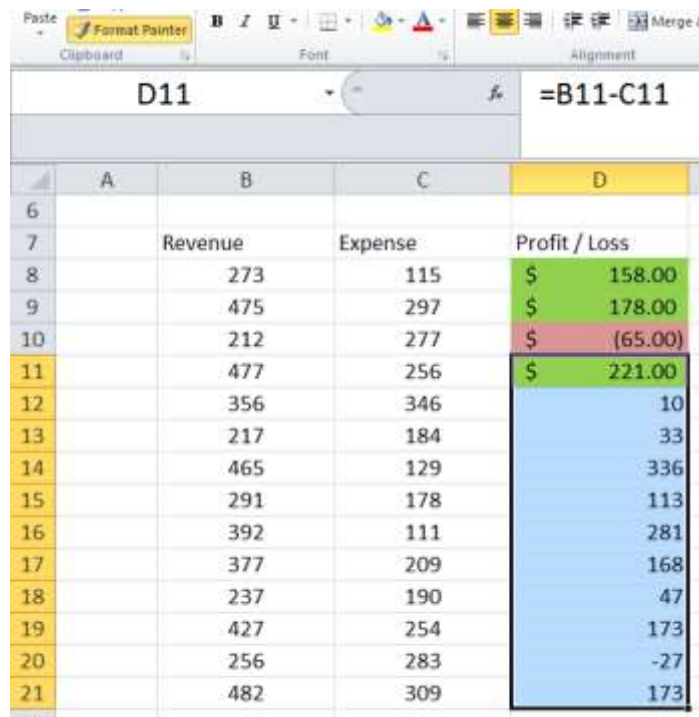
The format painter is very useful, but often overlooked tool.



The screenshot shows the Excel ribbon with the 'Format Painter' button highlighted in the 'Clipboard' group. A red arrow points from the button to the cell G14. Below the ribbon is a table with columns A, B, C, and D. The table contains data for Revenue, Expense, and Profit / Loss. The Profit / Loss column has some cells highlighted in green and red.

	A	B	C	D
6				
7		Revenue	Expense	Profit / Loss
8		273	115	\$ 158.00
9		475	297	\$ 178.00
10		212	277	\$ (65.00)
11		477	256	\$ 221.00
12		356	346	10
13		217	184	33
14		465	129	336
15		291	178	113
16		392	111	281
17		377	209	168
18		237	190	47
19		427	254	173
20		256	283	-27
21		482	309	173

If you are in a cell and click the format painter button, you can drag that formatting into multiple other cells, which will include font, background, border and conditional formatting.



The screenshot shows the Excel ribbon with the 'Format Painter' button highlighted in the 'Clipboard' group. A red arrow points from the button to the cell D11. Below the ribbon is a table with columns A, B, C, and D. The table contains data for Revenue, Expense, and Profit / Loss. The Profit / Loss column has some cells highlighted in green and red. A large range of cells in the Profit / Loss column is highlighted in blue.

	A	B	C	D
6				
7		Revenue	Expense	Profit / Loss
8		273	115	\$ 158.00
9		475	297	\$ 178.00
10		212	277	\$ (65.00)
11		477	256	\$ 221.00
12		356	346	10
13		217	184	33
14		465	129	336
15		291	178	113
16		392	111	281
17		377	209	168
18		237	190	47
19		427	254	173
20		256	283	-27
21		482	309	173

The result on this column from using the format painter is

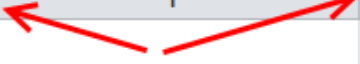
	A	B	C	D	
6					
7		Revenue	Expense	Profit / Loss	
8		273	115	\$ 158.00	
9		475	297	\$ 178.00	
10		212	277	\$ (65.00)	
11		477	256	\$ 221.00	
12		356	346	\$ 10.00	
13		217	184	\$ 33.00	
14		465	129	\$ 336.00	
15		291	178	\$ 113.00	
16		392	111	\$ 281.00	
17		377	209	\$ 168.00	
18		237	190	\$ 47.00	
19		427	254	\$ 173.00	
20		256	283	\$ (27.00)	
21		482	309	\$ 173.00	

If you start with multiple cells selected when you hit the format painter key, it will paste formats in that pattern.

For instance, if A2 is red and B2 is green, and you paint a wide swath you'll get alternating red and green backgrounds.

## Sizing Columns

If you double click on the top of a column, excel will automatically size that column to be just wide enough to show everything in it.

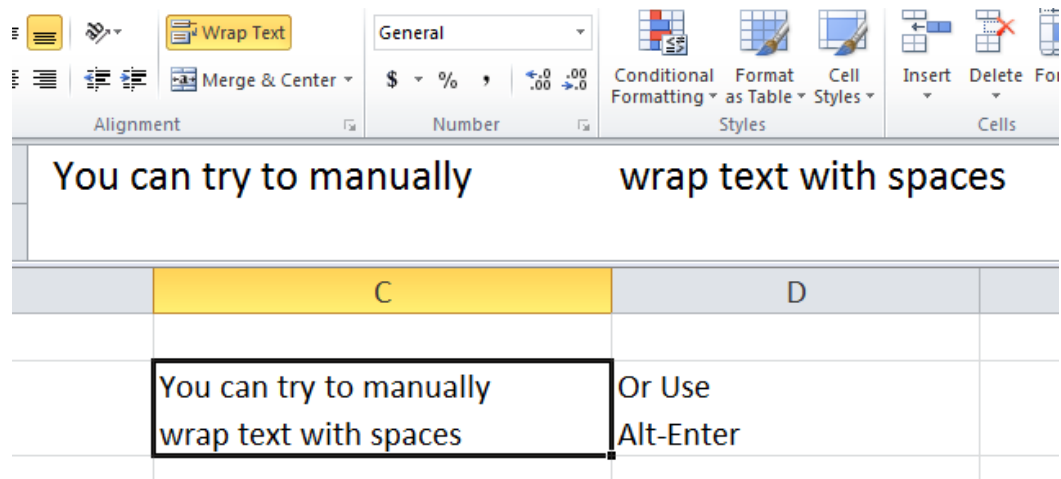
D	E	F	G
			
<b>Double Click</b>			
this column is not wide enough			
		Too Wide!	

D	E	F	
<b>Columns are now correctly spaced</b>			
this column is not wide enough			
		Too Wide!	

## Alt + Enter

If you want to put multiple lines of data in the same cell, say for a column header, one way of doing it would be to wrap the text, and then use the space bar to position the lower lines

A better way is to enter the first line of text, and then press Alt + Enter to go to the next line within the same cell.



## Managing Formulas

### See The Equations

Press Control and ` (under the tilde ~ key) to change from seeing results to seeing equations in the entire worksheet.

	F	G	H	I	
3		<b>See Results</b>			
4					
5		Month	Revenue	Profit	
6		1	200.00	20.00	
7		2	220.00	22.00	
8		3	242.00	24.20	
9		4	266.20	26.62	
10		5	292.82	29.28	
11		6	322.10	32.21	
12		7	354.31	35.43	
13		8	389.74	38.97	
14		9	428.72	42.87	
15		10	471.59	47.16	
16		11	518.75	51.87	
17		12	570.62	57.06	
18		13	627.69	62.77	
19		14	690.45	69.05	

	F	G	H	I
3		<b>See Equations</b>		
4				
5		Month	Revenue	Profit
6		1	200	=H6*0.1
7		=G6+1	=H6*1.1	=H7*0.1
8		=G7+1	=H7*1.1	=H8*0.1
9		=G8+1	=H8*1.1	=H9*0.1
10		=G9+1	=H9*1.1	=H10*0.1
11		=G10+1	=H10*1.1	=H11*0.1
12		=G11+1	=H11*1.1	=H12*0.1
13		=G12+1	=H12*1.1	=H13*0.1
14		=G13+1	=H13*1.1	=H14*0.1
15		=G14+1	=H14*1.1	=H15*0.1
16		=G15+1	=H15*1.1	=H16*0.1
17		=G16+1	=H16*1.1	=H17*0.1
18		=G17+1	=H17*1.1	=H18*0.1
19		=G18+1	=H18*1.1	=H19*0.1

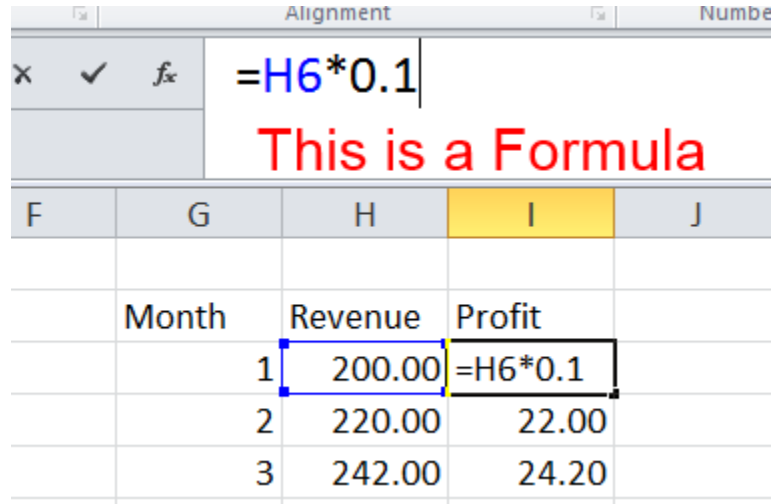
## Don't Evaluate The Row

If you want to enter data, but don't want excel to evaluate it, for instance you want a cell to start with a "-" sign or a "=" sign, then you can tell excel you are entering it as text by starting the cell with an apostrophe '

fx	<b>'= 10 + 20    Use Apostrophe To Not Evaluate Equations</b>					
	<b>i.e. show = 10 + 20    instead of 30</b>					
	F	G	H	I	J	K
	<b>= 10 + 20</b>					

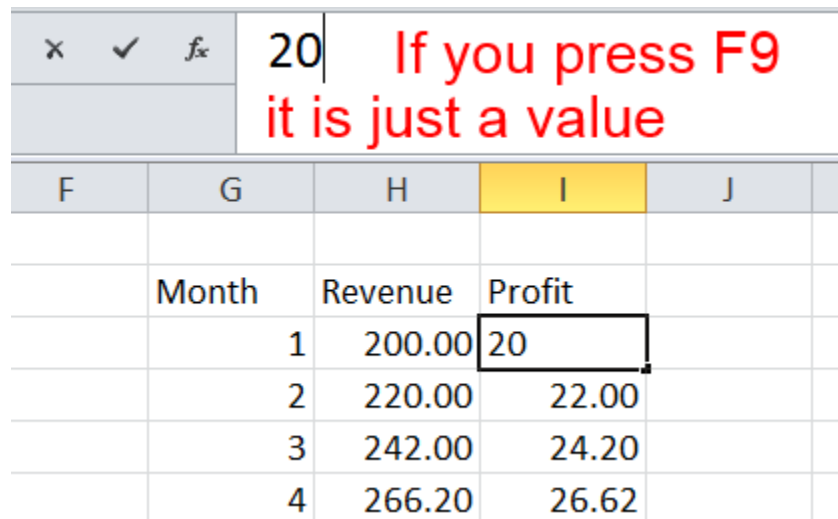
## Get Rid Of The Formula, Keeping Only The Value

When you are in a cell, and you want to get rid of a formula and just keep the results instead, press F9. But you need to be in the formula editing section, i.e. not just click on a cell but in the formula bar. Alternatively you can copy and paste special as values.



The screenshot shows the Excel formula bar with the formula  $=H6*0.1$  entered. A red text overlay reads "This is a Formula". Below the formula bar is a spreadsheet grid with columns F through J and rows 1 through 3. The grid contains the following data:

	F	G	H	I	J
		Month	Revenue	Profit	
		1	200.00	$=H6*0.1$	
		2	220.00	22.00	
		3	242.00	24.20	



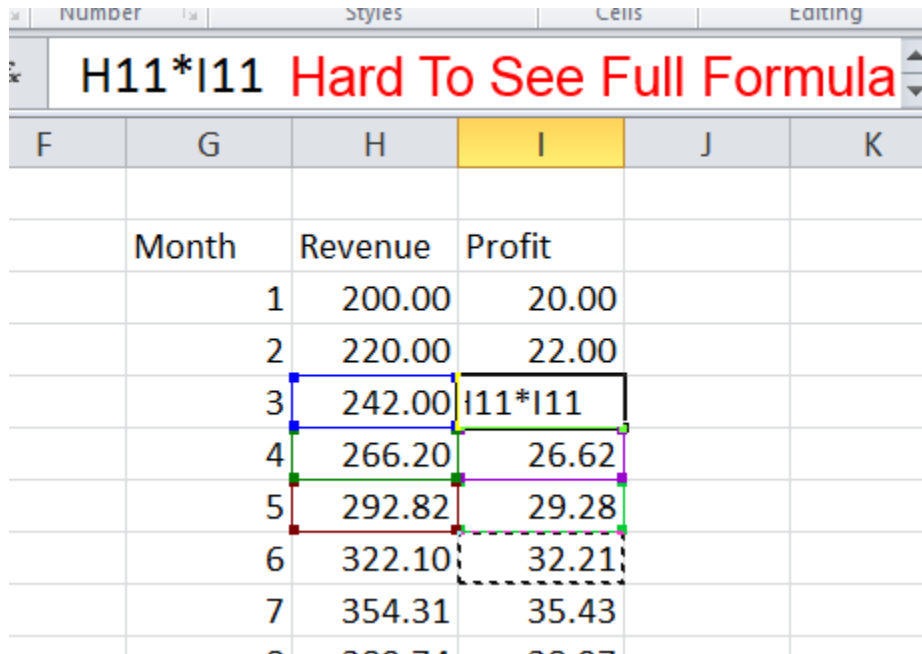
The screenshot shows the Excel formula bar with the value 20 entered. A red text overlay reads "If you press F9 it is just a value". Below the formula bar is a spreadsheet grid with columns F through J and rows 1 through 4. The grid contains the following data:

	F	G	H	I	J
		Month	Revenue	Profit	
		1	200.00	20	
		2	220.00	22.00	
		3	242.00	24.20	
		4	266.20	26.62	



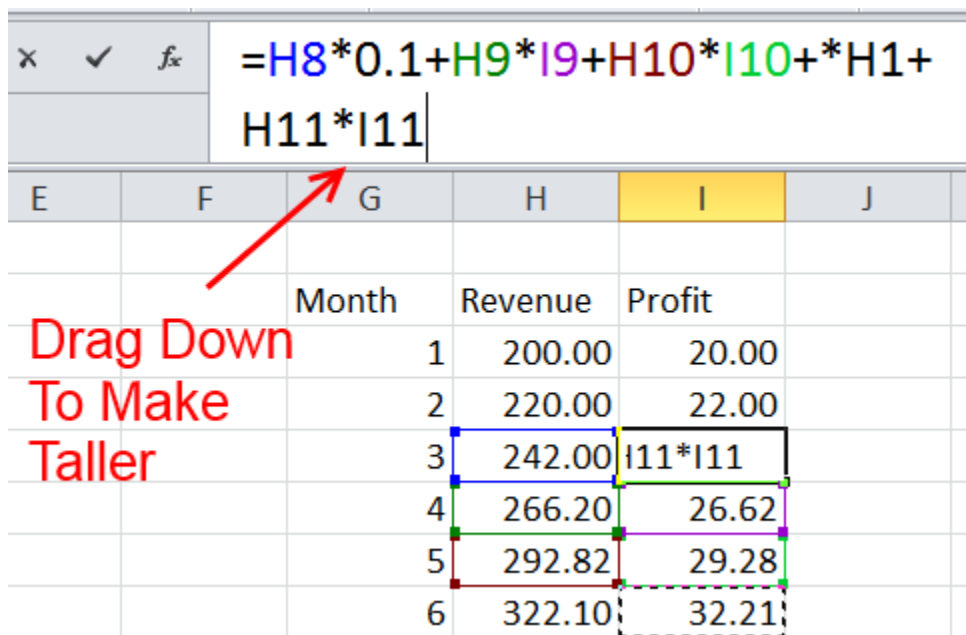
## Pull Down Formula Bar

You can pull down the formula entry window to make it taller if you want to see multiple lines at the same time



The screenshot shows the Excel interface with the formula bar expanded. The formula bar contains the text "H11\*I11" followed by "Hard To See Full Formula" in red. Below the formula bar is a table with columns labeled "Month", "Revenue", and "Profit". The table contains data for months 1 through 7. The formula "H11\*I11" is visible in cell I3, and the profit values are calculated based on the revenue and a constant multiplier of 0.1.

Month	Revenue	Profit
1	200.00	20.00
2	220.00	22.00
3	242.00	24.20
4	266.20	26.62
5	292.82	29.28
6	322.10	32.21
7	354.31	35.43



The screenshot shows the Excel interface with the formula bar pulled down. The formula bar contains the full formula: "=H8\*0.1+H9\*I9+H10\*I10+\*H1+H11\*I11". A red arrow points from the text "Drag Down To Make Taller" to the formula bar. Below the formula bar is a table with columns labeled "Month", "Revenue", and "Profit". The table contains data for months 1 through 6. The formula "H11\*I11" is visible in cell I3, and the profit values are calculated based on the revenue and a constant multiplier of 0.1.

**Drag Down To Make Taller**


Month	Revenue	Profit
1	200.00	20.00
2	220.00	22.00
3	242.00	24.20
4	266.20	26.62
5	292.82	29.28
6	322.10	32.21

## Copy Formula Down The Whole Column

If you have a really long column of data, it can be tedious to drag a formula column down to fill the data beside it. That is true even though excel slows down scrolling when you get close to the end of an adjacent column.

The fastest way to make the new column go the entire length of the adjacent column is to double click the little square at the bottom when you select data in a new column.

	1	1	
	2	4	
	3	9	
	4	16	
	5	25	
	6	36	
	7	49	
	8	64	
	9	81	
	10	100	
	11	121	
	12		
	13		
	14		
	15		
	16		
	17		
	18		
	19		
	20		
	21		

  
Double click  
this small box  
instead of  
dragging down  
to auto fill  
column

## Sequential Numbers

If you want to populate a column with sequential numbers, simply enter the numbers in cells, such as

1  
2

Then you pull down the column and excel will automatically iterate the count. You don't have to start with 1, or iterate by 1. If you want to iterate by 2, and start at 10, enter

10  
12

And then pull down until you have reached the desired number.

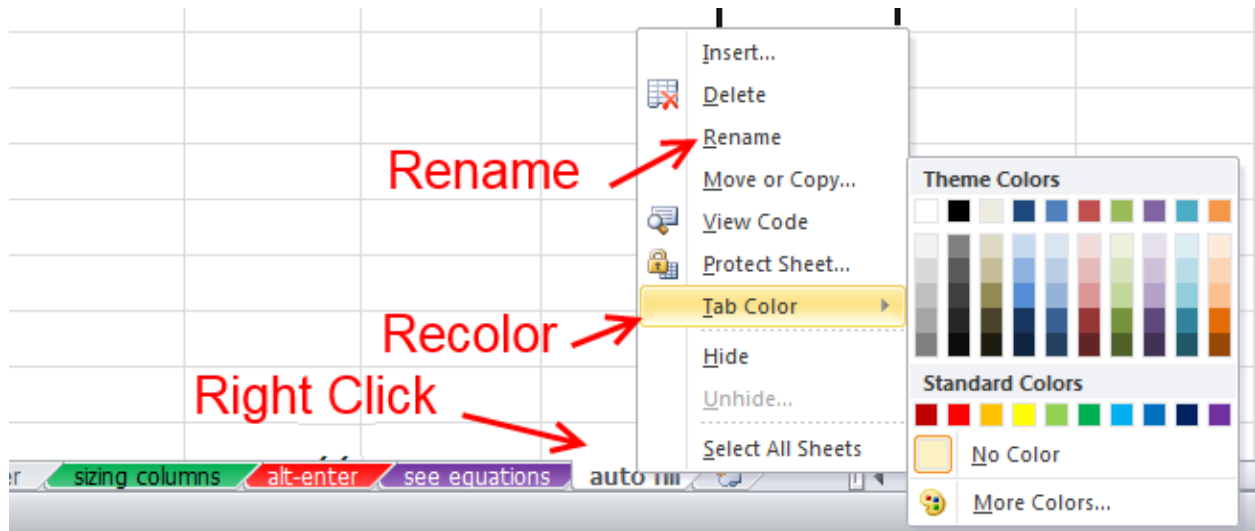
This also works with dates

This is faster than explicitly entering data that a cell is 1 more than the row above, like  $B5 = B4 + 1$ , and then pulling that down

## Tabs

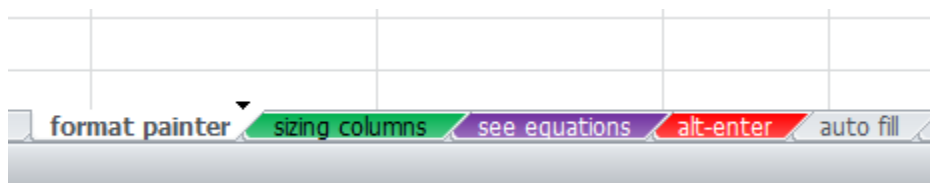
### Recolor Tabs

If you have a lot of different worksheets, it can be useful to rename and recolor them. You can do both by right clicking on the tab at the bottom



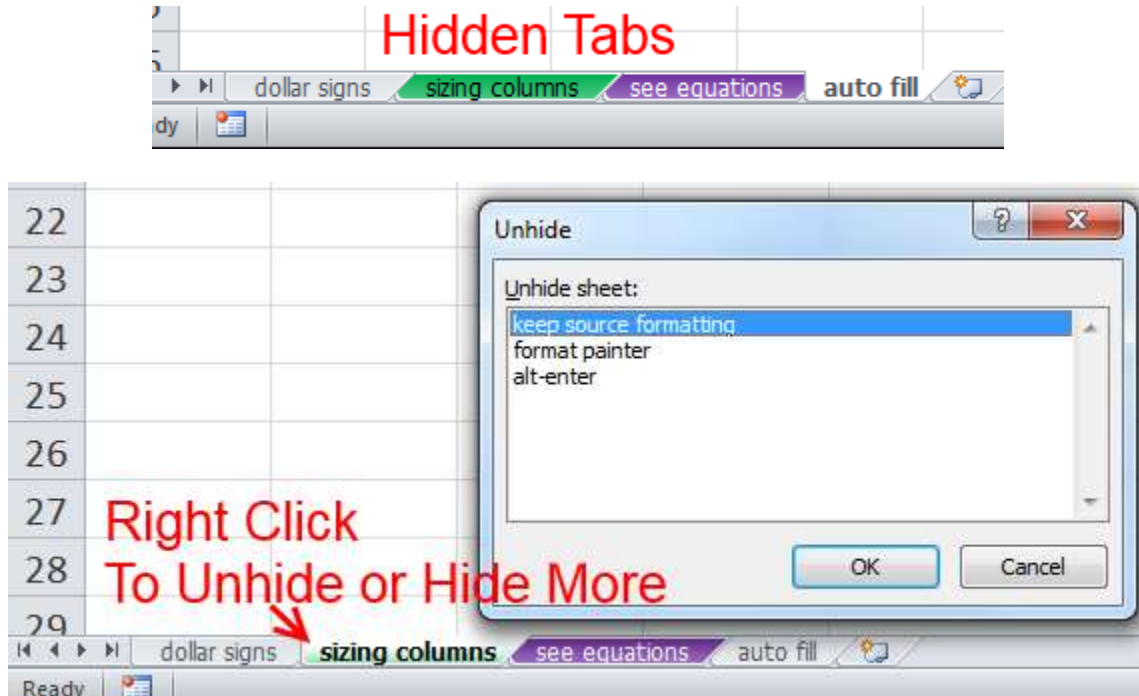
### Reorder Tabs

The easiest way to reorder tabs is just to drag and drop them in the new location



## Hide Tabs

You can hide or unhide tabs by right clicking and hiding or un-hiding. This is one of the most common ways people accidentally transmit data that they don't intend, so be wary when you send spreadsheets if you might have hidden tabs.



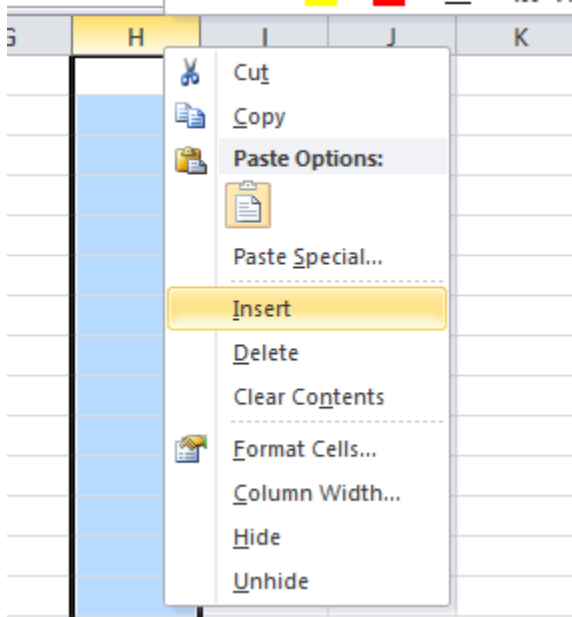
## Scroll Through Tabs

You can quickly scroll through multiple tabs by hitting **CTRL + Page Up** or **CTRL + Page Down**

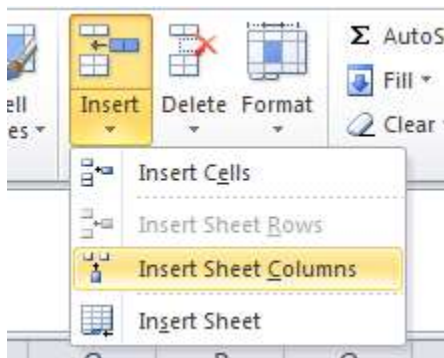
## Miscellaneous Useful Tips

### Insert Columns / Rows

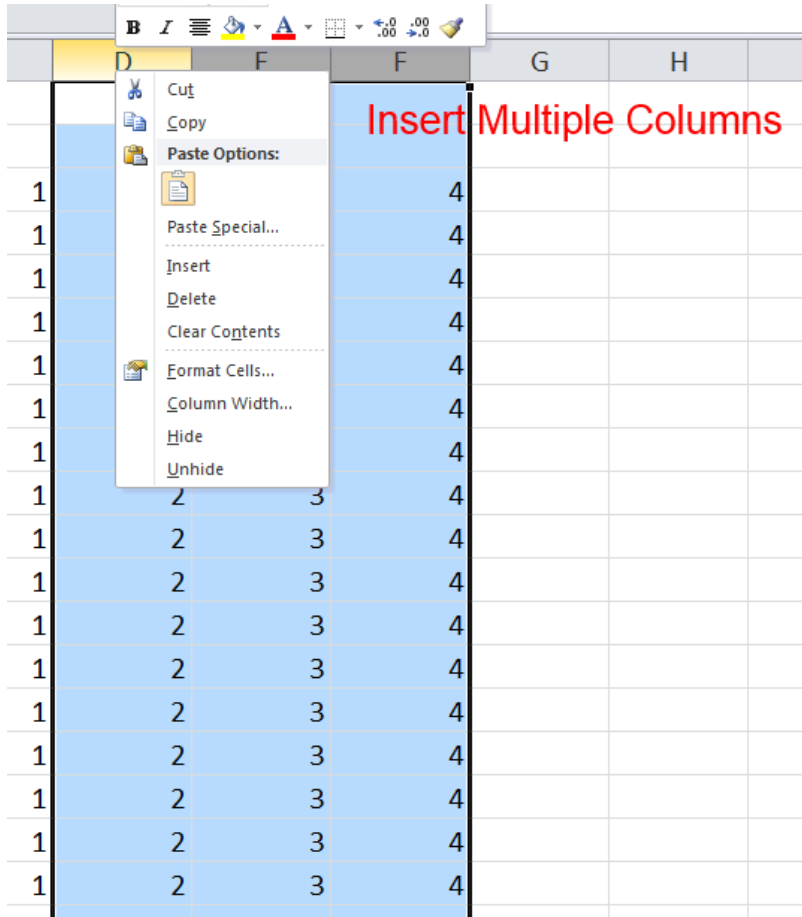
To insert columns, first high-light a column, then right click & click insert.



Or go to the Home tab, and use the insert button.

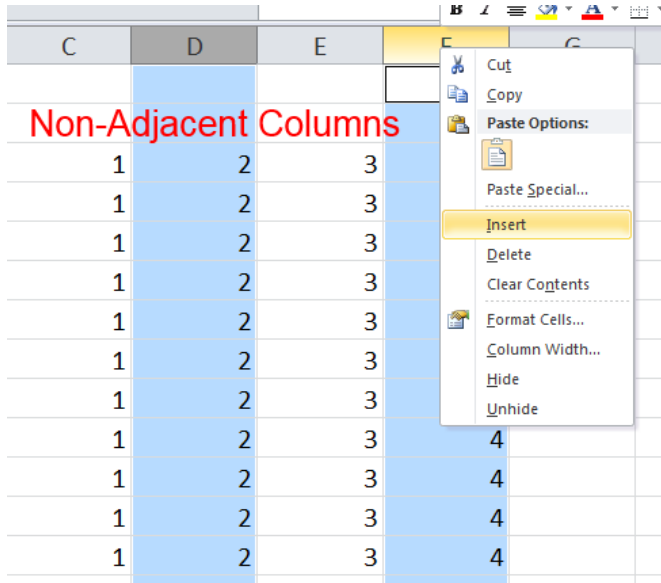


You can also insert multiple columns at a time by highlight multiple columns and right clicking and inserting. In this case, all of the new columns will be before the first column



	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1		Result			2	3	4
1					2	3	4
1					2	3	4
1					2	3	4
1					2	3	4
1					2	3	4
1					2	3	4
1					2	3	4
1					2	3	4
1					2	3	4
1					2	3	4
1					2	3	4
1					2	3	4
1					2	3	4
1					2	3	4
1					2	3	4
1					2	3	4
1					2	3	4
1					2	3	4
1					2	3	4
1					2	3	4
1					2	3	4
1					2	3	4

This also works with non-adjacent columns, in which case the inserted column will be in front of each block. You do need to make sure that the selected columns are far enough away that there will be no overlap.



C	D	E	F	G	H
1		2	3		4
1		2	3		4
1		2	3		4
1		2	3		4
1		2	3		4
1		2	3		4
1		2	3		4
1		2	3		4
1		2	3		4
1		2	3		4

All of this also works with rows.



## Arrow Keys Acting Weird

If you have a problem that your arrow key movements are expanding the selection instead of moving the in focus cell, then you need to press F8, because you are in “Extend Selection” mode

If your arrow key movements are causing the screen to scroll instead of moving the in focus cell, then you have the “Scroll Lock” key selected

## Hot Keys

Select and entire column with CTRL + Space Bar

Select and entire row with Shift + Space bar

Control + Shift + O (the letter O) - select all cells with comments

## Thank You

Thanks for reading this! To get more tips from FairlyNerdy.com, visit

<http://www.fairlynerdy.com/our-books/>

Let us know what topics you found especially helpful or not useful at

ImFairlyNerdy (at) gmail (dot) com