

# Michigan PowerSchool Users Group

## “Microsoft Excel Tips and Tricks”

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### Absolute Positioning

1. Use dollar signs before the row and column portions of a cell address (i.e., instead of A5, enter \$A\$5).

### AutoComplete

Excel will attempt to complete your data entries based on previous entries made.

1. Begin entering text or a value.
2. If Excel recognizes your entry, it automatically completes it.
3. If Excel guesses correctly, press ENTER to accept it. If you want to enter something else, just continue typing and ignore Excel's guess.

### AutoFill for Dates or Numbers

1. In consecutive cells, type in the first two values of the list.
2. Select the two cells
3. Click-drag the dot in the lower-right corner of the range down for the desired number of cells.

### AutoFill for Days/Months

1. Type in the first day (or month) [ENTER]
2. Click back on the cell
3. Click-drag the dot in the lower-right corner of the cell for the desired number of cells.

### AutoSum

- Clicking AutoSum twice will sum the values either directly above or to the left of the current cell.
- Clicking AutoSum once will identify which cells it assumes you would like summed. You may change the cell range and click the AutoSum button a second time to confirm the range.
- Pressing the Alt+= (equal sign) will identify which cells it assumes you would like summed. You may change the cell range and press ENTER with the desired range to sum.

### Carriage Return within a Cell

To force a return within a cell, press Alt-Enter.

### Copy Formats

1. Click on the cell that has the desired formatting.
2. Click on the Paintbrush tool on the button bar.
3. Click-drag the cells to be formatted.

## COUNT Function

1. =COUNT(range) to get a count of cells that contain numeric values.

## COUNTA Function

1. =COUNTA(range) to get a count of cells that contain text or numeric values.

## Date calculation

To calculate the difference—in days—between two dates:

1. Type in the two dates in separate cells.
2. Click on desired cell for resulting answer.
3. =(location of first cell date) - (location of second cell date) [ENTER].

## Date—Today's

Press Ctrl+: (Control key and the colon) to have today's date entered into the current cell.

## End Cell

To move to the last cell in a spreadsheet, press Ctrl-End.

## ENTER—Changing Default Direction of Entry of Data

1. Click on the 'Options' button (icon in the top left of screen).
2. Click on 'Excel Options' button.
3. Click on 'Advanced' found in the menu on the left of Options screen.
4. The top option allows you to choose which direction you want the selection to move after pressing enter.
5. Click 'OK'.

## Fill Down

To fill cells BELOW the entry with the same entry:

1. Select a range that includes the cell containing the entry AND as many cells below the entry as you want to fill.
2. Press Ctrl + D.

## Fractions—Displaying

1. Click on the cells you wish to have formatted as having fractions displayed.
2. Click the Format Menu.
3. Click Cells.
4. Click the Number tab.
5. Click the Fraction category.
6. Select the desired fraction display.
7. Click OK button.

## Graphics on a Chart

To use your own graphics in place of Excel's built-in bars, follow these steps:

1. Create your bar chart as usual.
2. Right click on one of the data series bars in the chart. Excel displays a Context menu.
3. Choose Format Data Series from the Context menu. Excel displays the Format Data Series dialog box.
4. Make sure the Patterns tab is selected.
5. Click on Fill Effects. Excel displays the Fill Effects dialog box.
6. Make sure the Picture tab is selected.
7. Click on Select Picture. Excel displays the Select Picture dialog box, which is very similar to a standard Open dialog box.
8. Use the controls in the dialog box to locate and select the picture you want to use.
9. Click on Insert. Excel closes the Select Picture dialog box and redisplay the Fill Effects dialog box.
10. In the Format section of the Picture tab, choose how you want the graphic to be applied to the bar. (I like to choose Stack And Scale To and then specify how to many units each picture represents.)
11. Click on OK in each open dialog box to close them.

## Home Cell

To move to the first cell in a spreadsheet, press Ctrl-Home.

## Loan (PMT) Functions

The PMT function returns the periodic payment for an annuity (such as a loan). There are a few things that we must know in order for this function to work. To calculate the loan we must know a combination of the following

PMT function is then entered as follows: =PMT(rate, NPER, PV, FV, type)

## Merge and Center

1. Select the cells over the columns.
2. Click the Merge and Center button on the Formatting toolbar.
3. Type in the title you wish to have above the headings.

## Moving Cells

1. Select the cells to be moved.
2. Move the mouse toward the right-edge of the cells until a 4-headed arrow appears.
3. Click-drag to desired location.

## Parse Data

Takes data from one cell and allows you to split it up either in fixed or delimited fashion.

1. Click the data to be parsed.
2. Click the Data menu.
3. Click Text to Columns option.
4. Make desired selections from the Wizard dialog boxes.
5. Select a destination for the data.
6. Click Finish button.

## Proper Case

If text was placed all in uppercase or lowercase letters, you can change the text to "proper case".

1. =PROPER(range) where range is the group of cells to be changed.

## Random Numbers

=ROUND(RAND()\*xxx,0) ENTER will return a random number between 0 and xxx.

To generate random numbers between two numbers use the following formula:

=RAND()\*(b-a)+a ENTER where a is the low end range and b is the high end range

## Ranking Cells

To rank values within cells

1. Enter data into cells (for example, cells B1 through B4)
2. Use the formula =RANK(cell to rank, range of cells for ranking, 0)  
For example, =RANK(B1,B1:B4,0)

This will compare the number in cell B1 against the values in cells B1-B4, ranking from highest to lowest.

## Recently Used Files—Controlling the Number of Files Displayed

1. Click the 'Options' button (icon in the top left screen).
2. Click the 'Excel Options' button.
3. Click 'Advanced' from the new menu.
4. Scroll down to 'Display' options.
5. 'Show this number of Recent Documents:' appears.
6. Type in desired number of files you wish to appear.

7. Click 'OK'.

### Roman Numerals

1. =ROMAN("yyyy",0) where yyyy is a four-digit year

### Shading Alternate Rows

1. Select the first row to be shaded.
2. Shade the row with the desired color.
3. Select the shaded row and one row below it.
4. Select the Format Painter brush.
5. Select the first row and a large number of rows below it.



### Special formats

1. Select the cell or column of cells for the special format.
2. Right-click the cells/column and choose Format Cells from the shortcut menu.
3. Click the Number tab.
4. Select the desired Category and format.

leading 0's



### Text Wrapping

1. Select the cell(s) to be aligned.
2. Right-click the cell(s).
3. Click on Format Cells.
4. Click the Alignment tab.
5. Under Text Control, selected Wrap Text.
6. Click OK.

Note: Press Alt-ENTER to force a carriage return within a wrapped cell.

### Time

1. Press Ctrl-Shift-: (colon)  
or
2. =NOW()-TODAY() ENTER (you will need to format the cell for Time)

### TODAY function

1. =TODAY() will put today's date into the cell.

Shortcut for entry of today's date: press Ctrl-; (semi-colon) for the date or Ctrl-: (colon) for the time

Sl# Name locker# locker Combo year  
=vlookup(cell value, array)