**Learning Excel**

**Getting Started**

Turn off the gallery

Make sure the preferred view is normal

Quit Excel

Start again and make sure Excel defaults to a blank spreadsheet when opened.

**Using Excel**

Almost every action in Excel can be done in a variety of ways.

Learning to use Excel is learning what version of an action works best for you

*And*

No one knows everything Excel will do

Finding out answers to questions is a necessary skill in learning Excel—making Google your friend

**What is Excel**

Think of it like a huge card catalog

Open any drawer and put whatever you want in it (well almost).

All the containers (drawers) have names

Column by Row

(You can use Row Number Column Number if you want but don’t)

Cell names also include sheet (tab) names but they do not show if you are always on the same sheet.

You can name a cell whatever you want (kind of)

You would probably only want to do this if you were writing formulas

Now you can say things like:

I stored the number 4 in cell C2.

I stored the text Jim Carroll in cell D20.

**Entering Data**

Type what you want to go in a cell and hit control + return.

If you want to move to an adjacent cell when you enter data, which you would usually want to do:

Down one cell: return

Up one cell: shift + return

Right one cell: tab

Left one cell: shift + tab

If you are entering row data (type in the data then hit tab), when you hit return after the last cell in the row the highlighted cell will become the first column in the next row. If you go back to correct something this will not work anymore. Then highlight the range into which you wish to enter data and start typing. Data will go into the upper left cell. Hit tab. As you keep going across, when you get to the right-hand most column in the highlighted area hitting tab again will take you back to the left-hand column in the next row.

**Deleting Data**

Backspace

Once data have been entered in a cell, double lick in the cell to reinsert the cursor. Then use backspace.

1. If this doesn’t work go to Preferences/Edit and make sure that Edit Directly in Cells is checked
2. If you want you can edit in the formula bar. Highlight the cell you want to edit and then move the cursor to wherever you want in the formula bar.

Learn the keyboard command for undo

Highlight data and hit the delete key

A safer approach is to highlight data and control + click anywhere in the highlighted area. Select clear contents.

**Moving Data**

You can move the contents of cells by dragging.

Highlight what you want to move

Drag the cursor over the border of the highlighted area until it turns into a hand

Click and drag (option + click drag if you want to move a copy)

If you prefer the keyboard, use cut (or copy) and paste

To move an entire row or column:

Highlight the row or column

Drag the cursor over the border of the highlighted area until it turns into a hand

Click and drag the column or row to a column or row that has nothing in it. If you accidently drag to place that has data it will ask if you want to overwrite the data.

To place a row or column in between existing rows or columns, hold down the shift key while you drag.

**Practice Entering Data**

For our purposes, individuals are in rows and variables are in columns.

Variable names go in row 1.

**Using Text to Columns**

Splitting the names (Data ribbon or menu)

**AutoFill**

Rather than entering information in cells one at a time, Excel facilitates auto-filling cells under certain circumstances.

There are two basic motions to autofill cells:

1. Enter data into the first cell. With the first cell highlighted click on the small handle on the bottom right of the cell and drag in the desired direction.
2. Enter data into the first cell. With the first cell highlighted shift + click on the cell at the end of the autofill. Select Edit/Fill/[the direction you want to fill].

To auto fill a series, use either 1 above and hold down the option key while dragging or use 2 above but select Edit/Fill/Series. When the fill dialog box opens, you can select the type of series and the increments of the autofill.

**Formulas**

Excel can take information from 1 or more cells, change it in some way that you tell it to, and then place the changed result in another cell. To do this you have to put a formula in a cell, in the cell where the changed information will appear.

Telling Excel to do something with the data in cells uses a formula. All formulas start with an equal (=) sign.

There are no spaces in formulas.

The equal sign is followed by the name of the function you wish to use.

Following the function will be the parameters for the function. These are enclosed in parentheses.

=sum(number1,number2,number3…)

When you enter a function, it looks like the result of the function was put in the cell but it was not. What was put into cell was the formula and Excel conveniently showed us the result on the screen but the result is not stored in the cell. It is like Excel pasted a picture of the result on the front of the drawer but the formula is what is in the drawer.

If you want the result permanently in the drawer you have to copy the result and then paste the result into the cell. This is done by highlighting a cell. Selecting copy. Then select Paste Special and then Value when the dialog box opens.

**Moving data between programs**

All Office applications play well with each other.

Typical uses of this are:

1. Building tables in Excel and pasting them into Word or PowerPoint
2. Entering data in word and then moving it to Excel for analysis
3. Converting PDFs to Word documents and then moving the data to Excel
4. Building tables in PowerPoint and then editing by opening the table in Excel

Some functions work better in one program than another. Experiment.