

# Excel 2019 (Part 4): Cell Basics

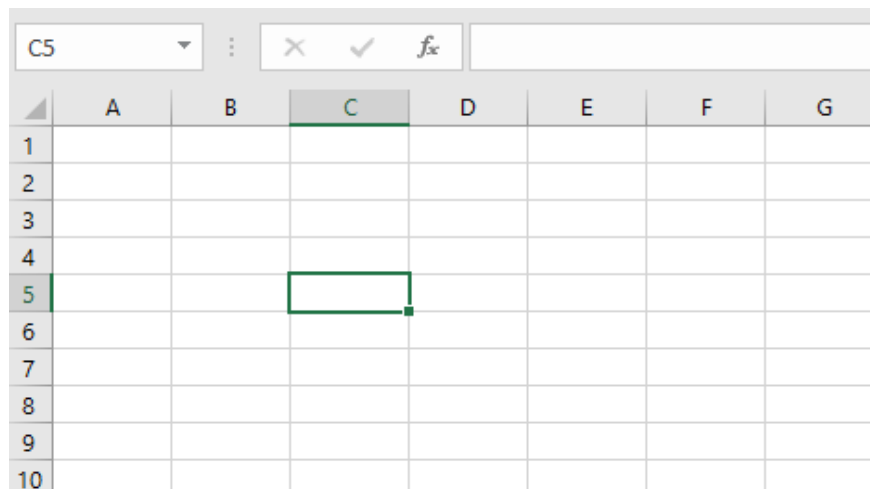
You will need to understand the basics of cells and cell contents to calculate, analyze, and organize data in Microsoft Excel.

Whenever you work with Excel, you'll enter information or content into cells. Cells are the basic building blocks of a spreadsheet. You'll need to understand the basics of cells and cell content to calculate, analyze, and organize data in Microsoft Excel .

## Learn about cells

Each spreadsheet is made up of thousands of rectangles, called cells. A cell is the intersection of a row and a column. In other words, it's where the row and column meet.

Columns are identified by letters (A, B, C), while rows are identified by numbers (1, 2, 3). Each cell has its own name, also known as a cell address, based on its column and row. In the example below, the selected cell is the intersection of column **C** and row **5** , so the cell address is **C5**.



Note that the cell address also appears in the **Name** box in the upper left corner, and the cell's column and row headers are highlighted when the cell is selected.

You can also select multiple cells at once. A group of cells is called a cell range. Instead of a single cell address, you would refer to a range of cells using the address of the first and last cells in that range, separated by colons. For example, a range including cells **A1**, **A2**, **A3**, **A4** , and **A5** would be written as **A1:A5**. See other cell ranges below:

**Cell range A1:A8**

An Excel spreadsheet interface showing a grid with columns A through G and rows 1 through 10. The cell range A1:A8 is selected, indicated by a green border around the cells in column A from row 1 to row 8. The formula bar at the top shows 'A1' and a dropdown arrow. To the right of the formula bar are icons for 'Cancel' (X), 'Accept' (checkmark), and 'Insert Function' (fx).

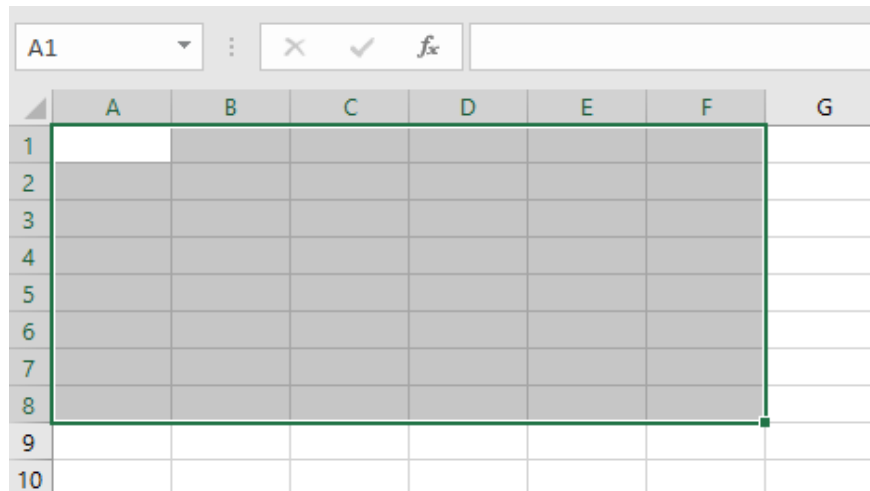
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							
9							
10							

**Cell range A1:F1**

An Excel spreadsheet interface showing a grid with columns A through G and rows 1 through 10. The cell range A1:F1 is selected, indicated by a green border around the cells in row 1 from column A to column F. The formula bar at the top shows 'A1' and a dropdown arrow. To the right of the formula bar are icons for 'Cancel' (X), 'Accept' (checkmark), and 'Insert Function' (fx).

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							
9							
10							

**Cell range A1:F8**



If the columns in your spreadsheet are labeled with numbers instead of letters, you'll need to change the default reference style for Excel.

## How to select a cell

To enter or edit cell content, you first need to select the cell.

1. Click on a cell to select it. For example, we will select cell **D9**.
2. A border will appear around the selected cell, and the column and row headers will be highlighted. The cell will remain selected until you click another cell in the worksheet.

1	VESTA Leadership Training					
2	6-Part Series					
3	INSURANCE GROUP					
4	Department	First Name	Last Name	User Name	Part 1	Part 2
5	Sales	Walter	Rivera	wrivera	X	X
6	Sales	Heidi	Lee		X	X
7	Claims	Josie	Gates		X	X
8	Accounting	Wendy	Crocker		X	X
9	Accounting	Loretta	Johnson		X	
10	Sales	Walter	Rivera		X	
11	Claims	Misty	Whitfield		X	
12	Marketing	Matilda	Lewis		X	
13	Accounting	Elizabeth	Hicks		X	
14	HR	Alvin	Rios		X	
15	HR	Brian	Gaines		X	
16	Sales	Megan	Bosworth		X	
17	Claims	Maria	Menzies		X	
18	Claims	Micheal	Russell		X	
19						

You can also select cells using the arrow keys on your keyboard.

## How to select a range of cells

Sometimes you might want to choose a larger group of cells or a range of cells.

1. Click and drag your mouse until all adjacent cells you want to select are highlighted. For example, this will select the range of cells **B5:C18**.
2. Release the mouse button to select the desired range of cells. The cells will remain selected until you click on another cell in the worksheet.

The screenshot shows an Excel spreadsheet with the following data:

Department	First Name	Last Name	User Name	Part 1	Part 2
Sales	Walter	Rivera	wrivera	X	X
Sales	Heidi	Lee		X	X
Claims	Josie	Gates		X	X
Accounting	Wendy	Crocker		X	X
Accounting	Loretta	Johnson		X	
Sales	Walter	Rivera		X	
Claims	Misty	Whitfield		X	
Marketing	Matilda	Lewis		X	
Accounting	Elizabeth	Hicks		X	
HR	Alvin	Rios		X	
HR	Brian	Gaines		X	
Sales	Megan	Bosworth		X	
Claims	Maria	Menzies		X	
Claims	Micheal	Russell		X	

## Cell contents

All the information you enter into a spreadsheet will be stored in a cell. Each cell can contain different types of content, including text, formatting, formulas, and functions.

**Text** : Cells can contain text, such as letters, numbers, and dates.

	A	B	C	D	E
1	Date	Sales	Percentage of Total		
2	4/4/16	93	0.71		
3	4/5/16	42	0.78		
4	4/6/16	46	0.86		
5	4/7/16	73	0.28		
6	4/8/16	12	0.49		
7	4/9/16	24	0.65		
8	4/10/16	19	0.57		
9					
10					

**Formatting properties** : Cells can contain formatting properties that change how letters, numbers, and dates are displayed. For example, percentages might appear as 0.15 or 15%. You can even change the text or background color of the cell.

	A	B	C	D	E
1	Date	Sales	Percentage of Total		
2	April 4, 2016	\$93.00	71%		
3	April 5, 2016	\$42.00	78%		
4	April 6, 2016	\$46.00	86%		
5	April 7, 2016	\$73.00	28%		
6	April 8, 2016	\$12.00	49%		
7	April 9, 2016	\$24.00	65%		
8	April 10, 2016	\$19.00	57%		
9					
10					

**Formulas and functions** : Cells can contain formulas and functions that calculate cell values. In the example, **SUM(B2:B8)** calculates the sum of the values of each cell in the range **B2:B8** and displays the result in cell **B9**.

	A	B	C	D	E
1	Date	Sales	Percentage of Total		
2	April 4, 2016	\$93.00	71%		
3	April 5, 2016	\$42.00	78%		
4	April 6, 2016	\$46.00	86%		
5	April 7, 2016	\$73.00	28%		
6	April 8, 2016	\$12.00	49%		
7	April 9, 2016	\$24.00	65%		
8	April 10, 2016	\$19.00	57%		
9	Weekly Sales	\$309.00			
10					

## How to insert content

1. Click on a cell to select it. For example, we would select cell **F9**.

Department	First Name	Last Name	User Name	Part 1	Part 2		Part 3
Sales	Walter	Rivera	wrivera	X	X	On hold	X
Sales	Heidi	Lee		X	X	On hold	
Claims	Josie	Gates		X	X		X
Accounting	Wendy	Crocker		X	X		
Accounting	Loretta	Johnson		X	X		X
Sales	Walter	Rivera		X			X
Claims	Misty	Whitfield		X			

2. Enter something into the selected cell, then press Enter on your keyboard. The content will appear in the cell and the formula bar. You can also enter and edit cell content in the formula bar.

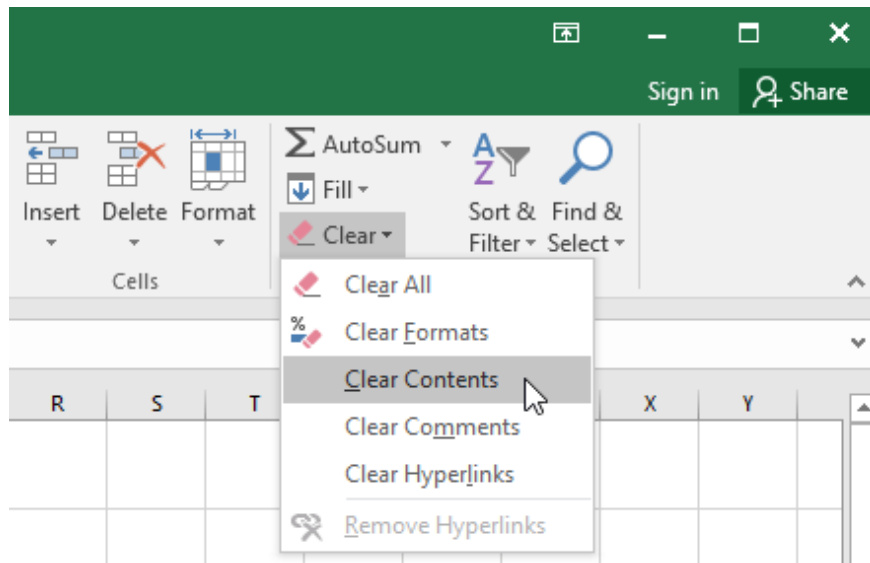
Department	First Name	Last Name	User Name	Part 1	Part 2		Part 3
Sales	Walter	Rivera	wrivera	X	X	On hold	X
Sales	Heidi	Lee		X	X	On hold	
Claims	Josie	Gates		X	X		X
Accounting	Wendy	Crocker		X	X		
Accounting	Loretta	Johnson		X	X		X
Sales	Walter	Rivera		X			X
Claims	Misty	Whitfield		X			

## How to delete cell contents

1. Select the cell(s) containing the content you want to delete. For example, we would select the range of cells **A10:H10**.

Department	First Name	Last Name	User Name	Part 1	Part 2		Part 3
Sales	Walter	Rivera	wrivera	X	X	On hold	X
Sales	Heidi	Lee		X	X	On hold	
Claims	Josie	Gates		X	X		X
Accounting	Wendy	Crocker		X	X		
Accounting	Loretta	Johnson		X	X		X
Sales	Walter	Rivera		X			X
Claims	Misty	Whitfield		X			
Marketing	Matilda	Lewis		X			
Accounting	Elizabeth	Hicks		X			X
HR	Alvin	Rios		X			

2. Select the **Clear** command on the **Home** tab , then click **Clear Contents**.



3. The cell content will be deleted.

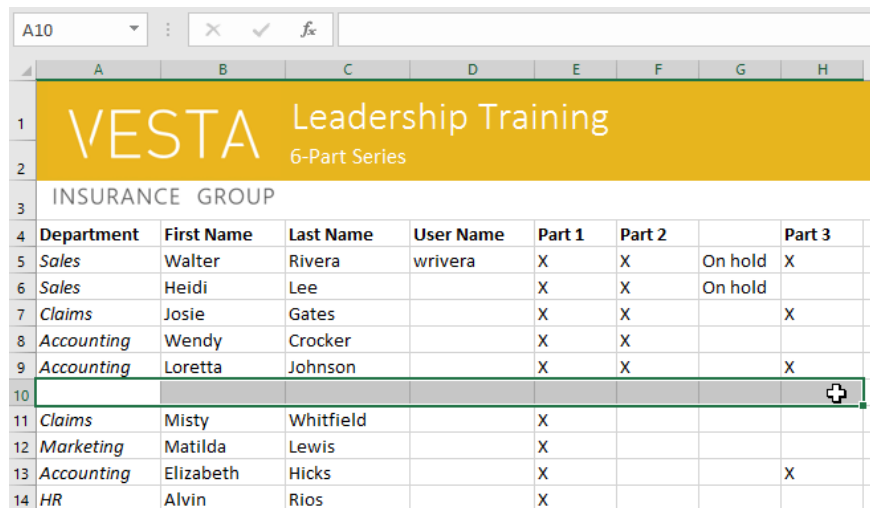
Department	First Name	Last Name	User Name	Part 1	Part 2		Part 3
Sales	Walter	Rivera	wrivera	X	X	On hold	X
Sales	Heidi	Lee		X	X	On hold	
Claims	Josie	Gates		X	X		X
Accounting	Wendy	Crocker		X	X		
Accounting	Loretta	Johnson		X	X		X
Claims	Misty	Whitfield		X			
Marketing	Matilda	Lewis		X			
Accounting	Elizabeth	Hicks		X			X
HR	Alvin	Rios		X			

You can also use the **Delete** key on your keyboard to delete content from multiple cells at once. The **Backspace** key will only delete content from one cell at a time.

## How to delete cells

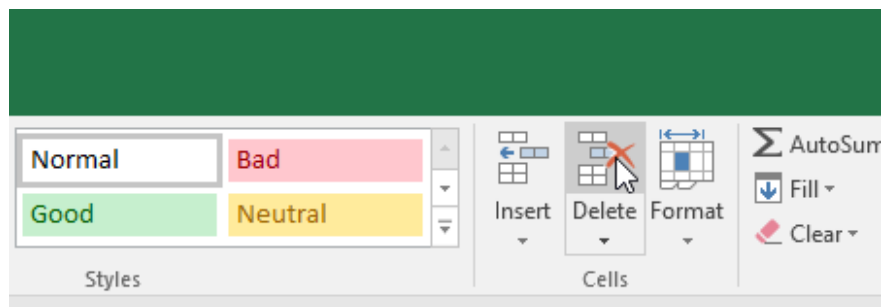
There's a key difference between deleting the contents of a cell and deleting the cell itself. If you delete the entire cell, the cells below will move up to fill the space and replace the deleted cells.

1. Select the cell(s) you want to delete. For example, you would select **A10:H10**.



Department	First Name	Last Name	User Name	Part 1	Part 2		Part 3
Sales	Walter	Rivera	wrivera	X	X	On hold	X
Sales	Heidi	Lee		X	X	On hold	
Claims	Josie	Gates		X	X		X
Accounting	Wendy	Crocker		X	X		
Accounting	Loretta	Johnson		X	X		X
Claims	Misty	Whitfield		X			
Marketing	Matilda	Lewis		X			
Accounting	Elizabeth	Hicks		X			X
HR	Alvin	Rios		X			

2. Select the **Delete** command from the **Home** tab on the Ribbon.



3. The cells below will move up and fill the gap.

Department	First Name	Last Name	User Name	Part 1	Part 2	Part 3
Sales	Walter	Rivera	wrivera	X	X	On hold X
Sales	Heidi	Lee		X	X	On hold
Claims	Josie	Gates		X	X	X
Accounting	Wendy	Crocker		X	X	
Accounting	Loretta	Johnson		X	X	X
Claims	Misty	Whitfield		X		
Marketing	Matilda	Lewis		X		
Accounting	Elizabeth	Hicks		X		X
HR	Alvin	Rios		X		
HR	Brian	Gaines		X		

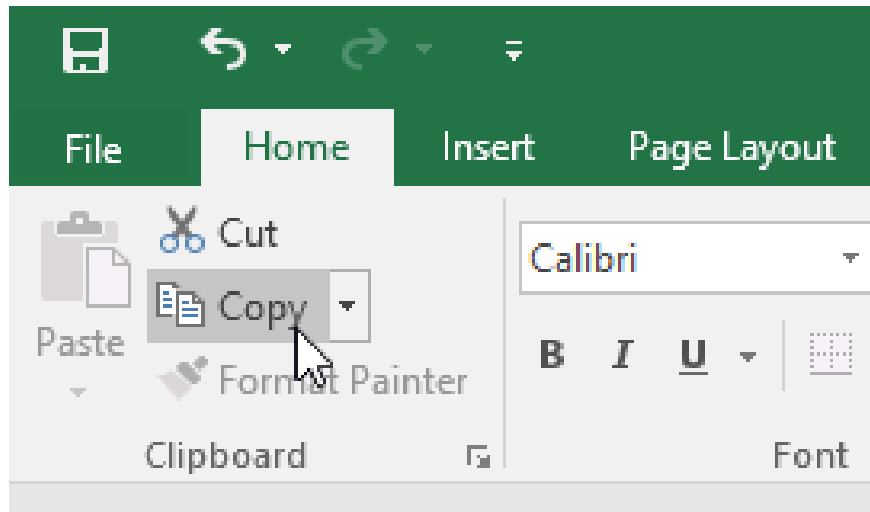
## How to copy and paste cell content

Excel allows you to copy content already entered into a spreadsheet and paste it into other cells, which can save you time and effort.

1. Select the cell(s) you want to copy. For example, select **F9**.

Department	First Name	Last Name	User Name	Part 1	Part 2	Part 3
Sales	Walter	Rivera	wrivera	X	X	On hold X
Sales	Heidi	Lee		X	X	On hold
Claims	Josie	Gates		X	X	X
Accounting	Wendy	Crocker		X	X	
Accounting	Loretta	Johnson		X	X	X
Claims	Misty	Whitfield		X		
Marketing	Matilda	Lewis		X		
Accounting	Elizabeth	Hicks		X		X
HR	Alvin	Rios		X		
HR	Brian	Gaines		X		
Sales	Megan	Bosworth		X		
Claims	Maria	Menzies		X		
Claims	Micheal	Russell		X		

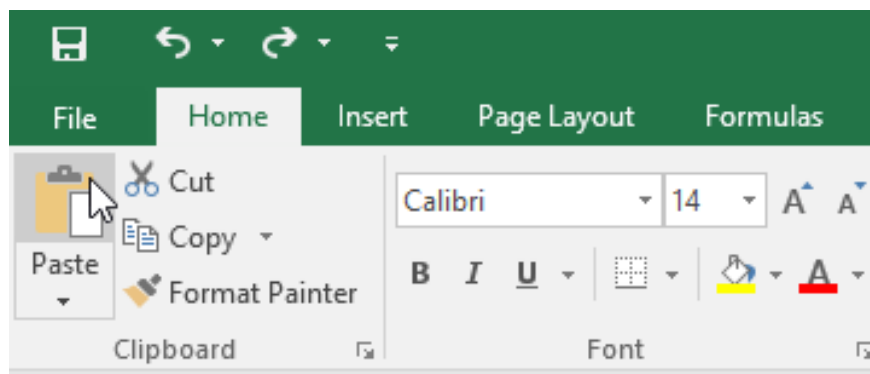
2. Click the **Copy** command on the **Home** tab or press **Ctrl + C** on your keyboard.



3. Select the cell(s) where you want to paste the content. For example, select **F12:F17**. The copied cell(s) will have a dashed line around them.

Department	First Name	Last Name	User Name	Part 1	Part 2	Part 3
Sales	Walter	Rivera	wrivera	X	X	On hold
Sales	Heidi	Lee		X	X	On hold
Claims	Josie	Gates		X	X	
Accounting	Wendy	Crocker		X	X	
Accounting	Loretta	Johnson		X	X	
Claims	Misty	Whitfield		X		
Marketing	Matilda	Lewis		X		
Accounting	Elizabeth	Hicks		X		
HR	Alvin	Rios		X		
HR	Brian	Gaines		X		
Sales	Megan	Bosworth		X		
Claims	Maria	Menzies		X		
Claims	Micheal	Russell		X		

4. Click the **Paste** command on the **Home** tab or press **Ctrl + V** on your keyboard.

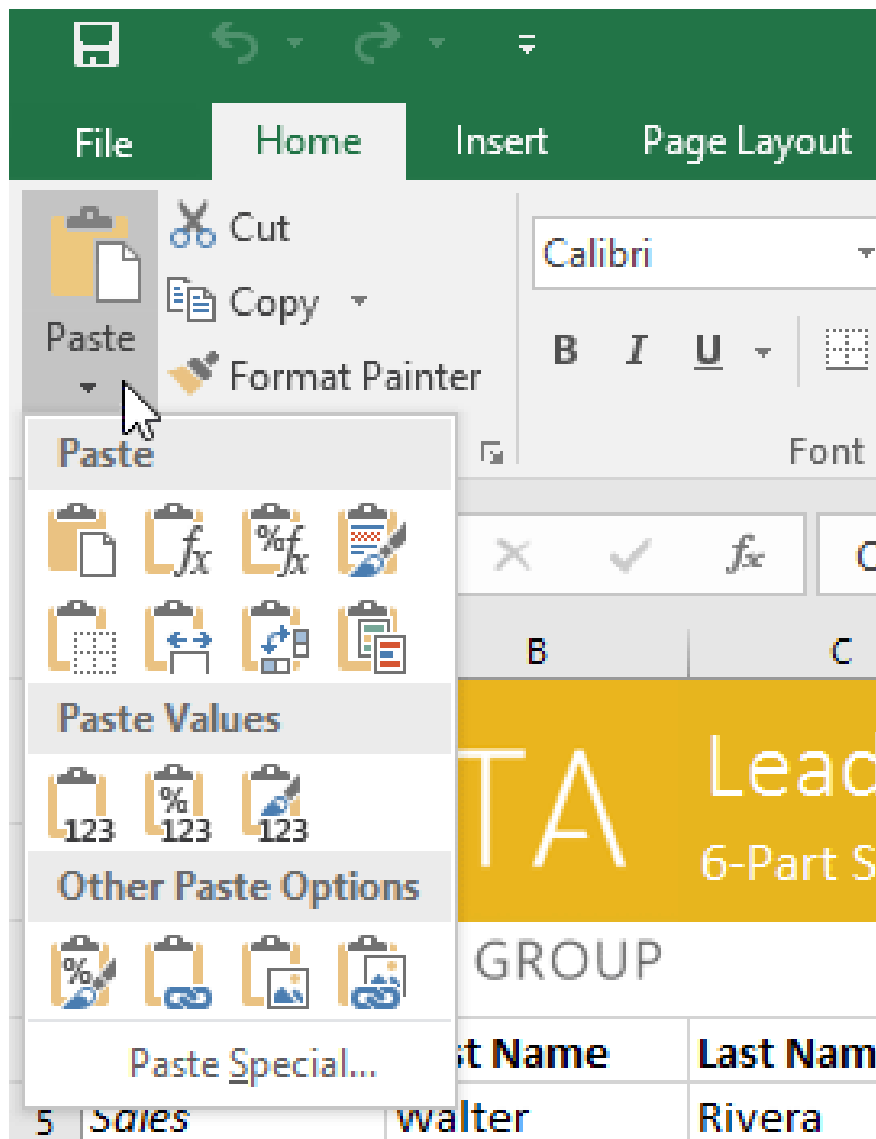


5. The content will be pasted into the selected cells.

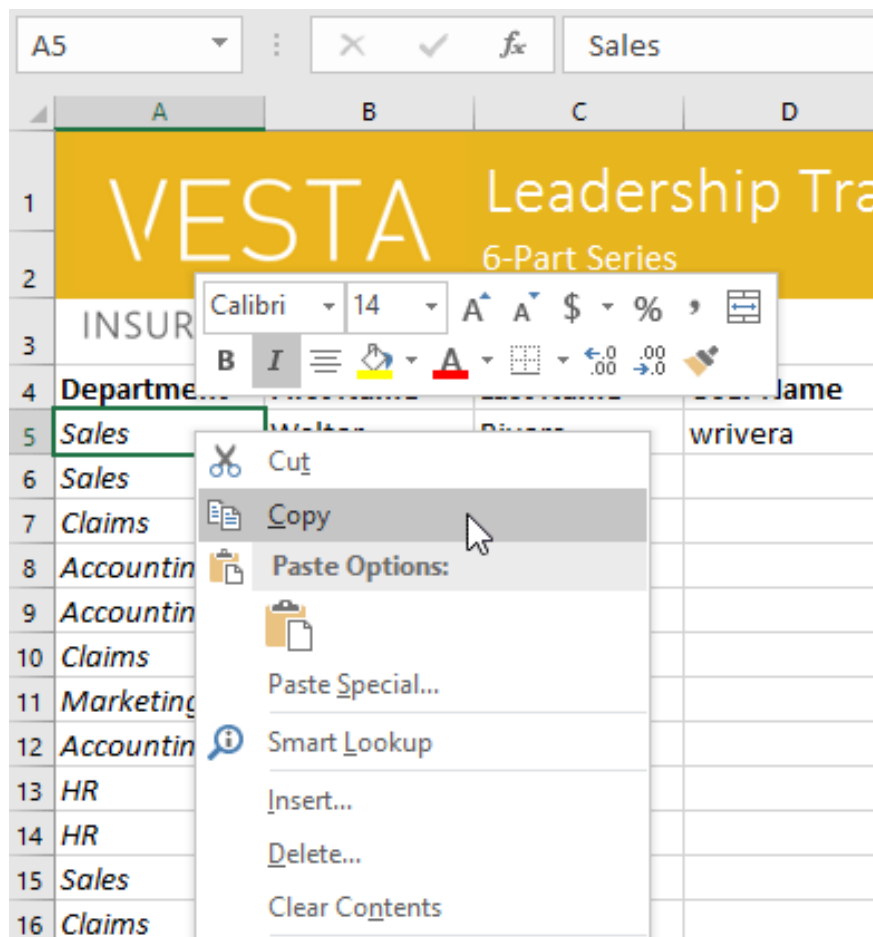
Department	First Name	Last Name	User Name	Part 1	Part 2	Part 3
Sales	Walter	Rivera	wrivera	X	X	On hold X
Sales	Heidi	Lee		X	X	On hold
Claims	Josie	Gates		X	X	X
Accounting	Wendy	Crocker		X	X	
Accounting	Loretta	Johnson		X	X	X
Claims	Misty	Whitfield		X		
Marketing	Matilda	Lewis		X		
Accounting	Elizabeth	Hicks		X	X	X
HR	Alvin	Rios		X	X	
HR	Brian	Gaines		X	X	
Sales	Megan	Bosworth		X	X	
Claims	Maria	Menzies		X	X	
Claims	Micheal	Russell		X	X	

## How to access additional paste options

You can also access additional paste options, which are especially convenient when working with cells containing formulas or formatting. Simply click the drop-down arrow on the **Paste** command to see these options.



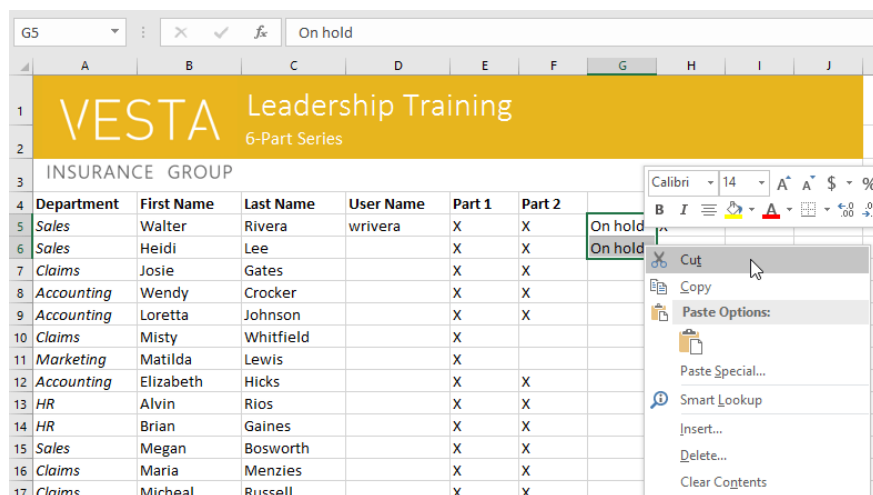
Instead of selecting commands from the Ribbon, you can access commands quickly by right-clicking. Simply select the cell(s) you want to format, then right-click. A drop-down menu will appear where you'll find several commands that are also located on the Ribbon.



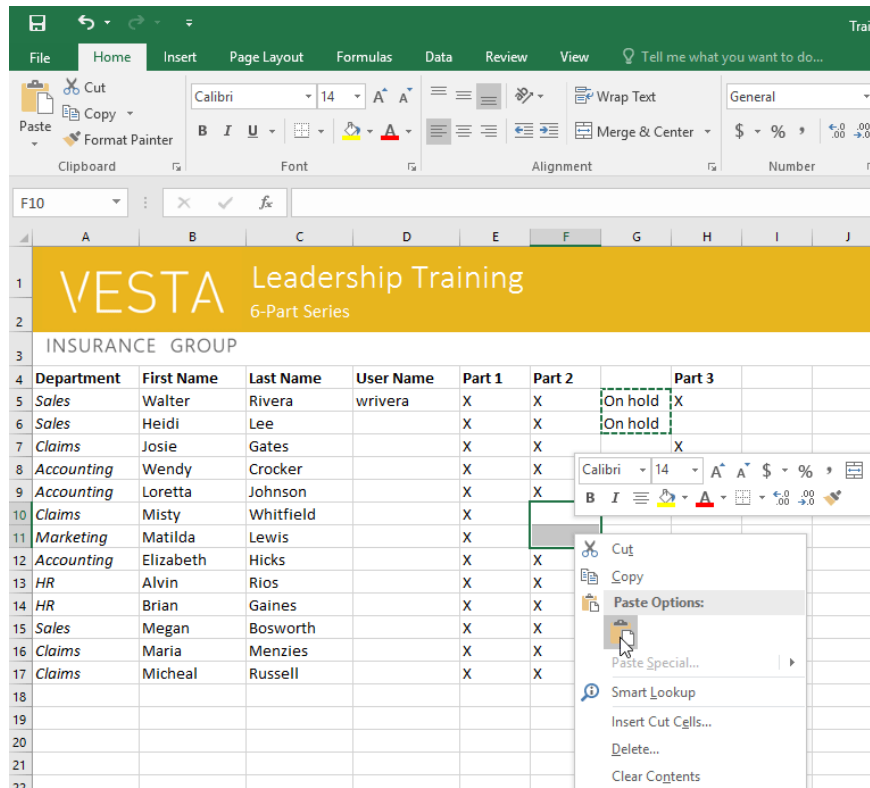
## How to cut and paste cell content

Unlike copy and paste, the cropping feature allows you to move content between cells.

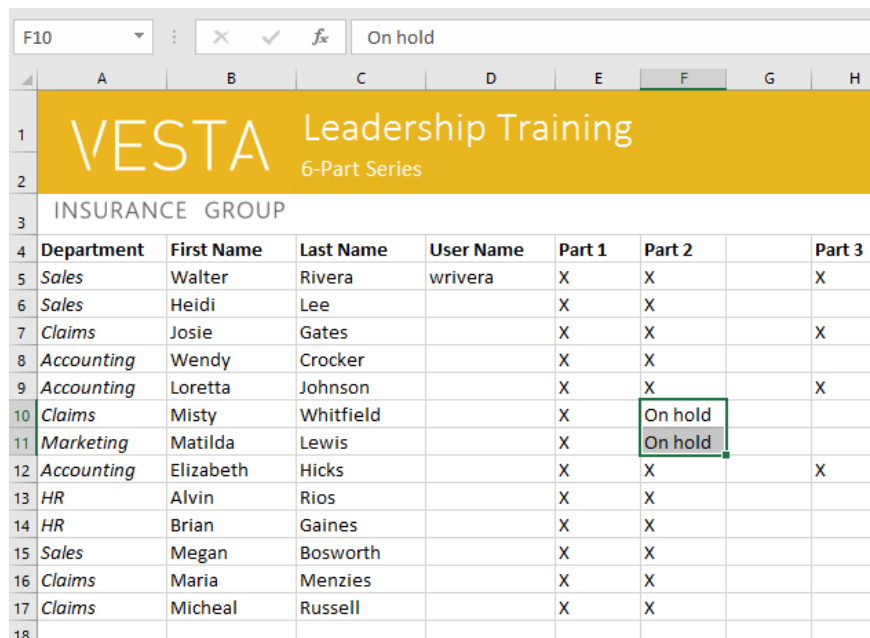
1. Select the cell(s) you want to cut. For example, we would select **G5:G6**.
2. Right-click and select the **Cut command**. You can also use the command on the **Home** tab or press **Ctrl + X** on your keyboard.



- Select the cells where you want to paste the content. For example, select **F10:F11**. The cells that are cut will now have a dashed line around them.
- Right-click and select **Paste**. You can also use the command on the **Home** tab or press **Ctrl + V** on your keyboard.



- The cropped content will be removed from the original cells and pasted into the selected cells.



# How to drag and drop cells

Instead of cutting, copying, and pasting, you can drag and drop cells to move their contents.

1. Select the cell(s) you want to move. For example, select **H4:H12**.
2. Hover your mouse over the border of the selected cell(s) until the mouse cursor changes to a four-arrow cursor.

Department	First Name	Last Name	User Name	Part 1	Part 2	Part 3
Sales	Walter	Rivera	wrivera	X	X	X
Sales	Heidi	Lee		X	X	
Claims	Josie	Gates		X	X	X
Accounting	Wendy	Crocker		X	X	
Accounting	Loretta	Johnson		X	X	X
Claims	Misty	Whitfield		X	On hold	
Marketing	Matilda	Lewis		X	On hold	
Accounting	Elizabeth	Hicks		X	X	X
HR	Alvin	Rios		X	X	
HR	Brian	Gaines		X	X	
Sales	Megan	Bosworth		X	X	
Claims	Maria	Menzies		X	X	
Claims	Micheal	Russell		X	X	

3. Click and drag the cells to the desired position. For example, this will move them to **G4:G12**.

Department	First Name	Last Name	User Name	Part 1	Part 2		Part 3
Sales	Walter	Rivera	wrivera	X	X		X
Sales	Heidi	Lee		X	X		
Claims	Josie	Gates		X	X		X
Accounting	Wendy	Crocker		X	X		X
Accounting	Loretta	Johnson		X	X		X
Claims	Misty	Whitfield		X	On hold		
Marketing	Matilda	Lewis		X	On hold		
Accounting	Elizabeth	Hicks		X	X		X
HR	Alvin	Rios		X	X		
HR	Brian	Gaines		X	X		
Sales	Megan	Bosworth		X	X		
Claims	Maria	Menzies		X	X		
Claims	Micheal	Russell		X	X		

4. Release the mouse button. The cells will be dropped in the selected positions.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	VESTA Leadership Training								
2	6-Part Series								
3	INSURANCE GROUP								
4	Department	First Name	Last Name	User Name	Part 1	Part 2	Part 3		
5	Sales	Walter	Rivera	wrivera	X	X	X		
6	Sales	Heidi	Lee		X	X			
7	Claims	Josie	Gates		X	X	X		
8	Accounting	Wendy	Crocker		X	X			
9	Accounting	Loretta	Johnson		X	X	X		
10	Claims	Misty	Whitfield		X	On hold			
11	Marketing	Matilda	Lewis		X	On hold			
12	Accounting	Elizabeth	Hicks		X	X	X		
13	HR	Alvin	Rios		X	X			
14	HR	Brian	Gaines		X	X			
15	Sales	Megan	Bosworth		X	X			
16	Claims	Maria	Menzies		X	X			
17	Claims	Micheal	Russell		X	X			
18									

## How to use the Fill Handle

If you are copying cell contents to adjacent cells in the same row or column, fill handle is a good alternative to copy and paste commands.

1. Select the cell(s) containing the content you want to use, then hover your mouse over the bottom-right corner of the cell to make the fill handle appear.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	VESTA Leadership Training							
2	6-Part Series							
3	INSURANCE GROUP							
4	Department	First Name	Last Name	User Name	Part 1	Part 2	Part 3	
5	Sales	Walter	Rivera	wrivera	X	X	X	
6	Sales	Heidi	Lee		X	X		
7	Claims	Josie	Gates		X	X	X	
8	Accounting	Wendy	Crocker		X	X		
9	Accounting	Loretta	Johnson		X	X	X	
10	Claims	Misty	Whitfield		X	On hold		
11	Marketing	Matilda	Lewis		X	On hold		
12	Accounting	Elizabeth	Hicks		X	X	X	
13	HR	Alvin	Rios		X	X		
14	HR	Brian	Gaines		X	X		
15	Sales	Megan	Bosworth		X	X		
16	Claims	Maria	Menzies		X	X		
17	Claims	Micheal	Russell		X	X		
18								

2. Click and drag the fill handle until all the cells you want are selected. For example, this would select **G13:G17**.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	VESTA Leadership Training							
2	6-Part Series							
3	INSURANCE GROUP							
4	Department	First Name	Last Name	User Name	Part 1	Part 2	Part 3	
5	Sales	Walter	Rivera	wrivera	X	X	X	
6	Sales	Heidi	Lee		X	X		
7	Claims	Josie	Gates		X	X	X	
8	Accounting	Wendy	Crocker		X	X		
9	Accounting	Loretta	Johnson		X	X	X	
10	Claims	Misty	Whitfield		X	On hold		
11	Marketing	Matilda	Lewis		X	On hold		
12	Accounting	Elizabeth	Hicks		X	X	X	
13	HR	Alvin	Rios		X	X		
14	HR	Brian	Gaines		X	X		
15	Sales	Megan	Bosworth		X	X		
16	Claims	Maria	Menzies		X	X		
17	Claims	Micheal	Russell		X	X		
18								
19								

3. Release the mouse button to select the desired cells.

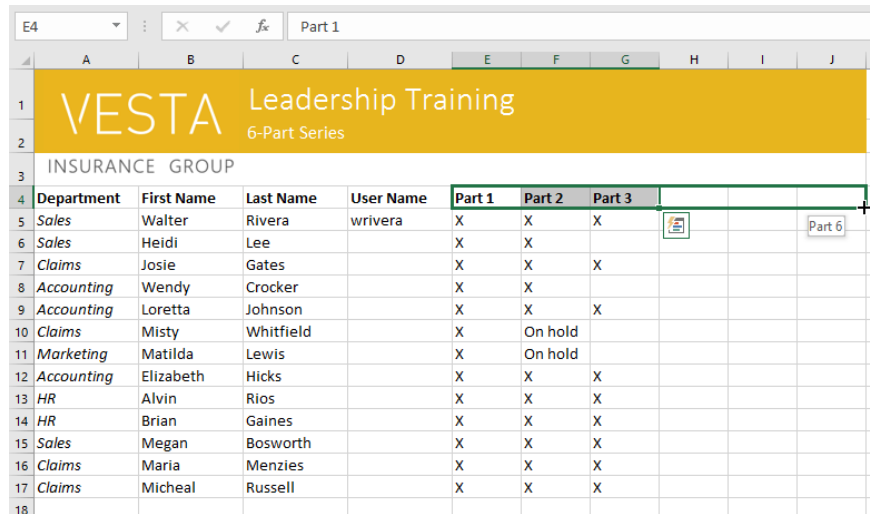
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	VESTA Leadership Training							
2	6-Part Series							
3	INSURANCE GROUP							
4	Department	First Name	Last Name	User Name	Part 1	Part 2	Part 3	
5	Sales	Walter	Rivera	wrivera	X	X	X	
6	Sales	Heidi	Lee		X	X		
7	Claims	Josie	Gates		X	X	X	
8	Accounting	Wendy	Crocker		X	X		
9	Accounting	Loretta	Johnson		X	X	X	
10	Claims	Misty	Whitfield		X	On hold		
11	Marketing	Matilda	Lewis		X	On hold		
12	Accounting	Elizabeth	Hicks		X	X	X	
13	HR	Alvin	Rios		X	X	X	
14	HR	Brian	Gaines		X	X	X	
15	Sales	Megan	Bosworth		X	X	X	
16	Claims	Maria	Menzies		X	X	X	
17	Claims	Micheal	Russell		X	X	X	
18								
19								

## How to continue a chain with a fill handle

Fill handles can also be used to continue a sequence. Whenever the contents of a row or column follow a sequential order, such as numbers (1, 2, 3) or dates (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday), the fill handle can predict what will happen next in the sequence. In most cases, you will need to select multiple cells before using the fill handle to help Excel determine the sequence order. Let's look at an example:

1. Select the range of cells containing the string you want to continue. For example, select **E4:G4**.

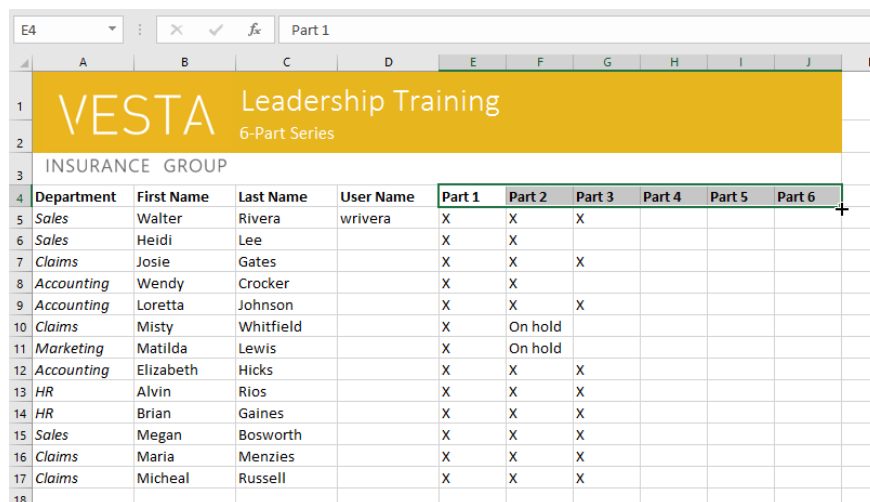
2. Click and drag the fill handle to continue the chain.



The screenshot shows an Excel spreadsheet with a yellow header row containing "VESTA Leadership Training" and "6-Part Series". Below this is a section titled "INSURANCE GROUP" with a table. The table has columns for Department, First Name, Last Name, User Name, and three parts (Part 1, Part 2, Part 3). A green selection box is around the Part 1, 2, and 3 columns, and a fill handle is being dragged to the right, extending to Part 6.

Department	First Name	Last Name	User Name	Part 1	Part 2	Part 3			
Sales	Walter	Rivera	wrivera	X	X	X			Part 6
Sales	Heidi	Lee		X	X				
Claims	Josie	Gates		X	X	X			
Accounting	Wendy	Crocker		X	X				
Accounting	Loretta	Johnson		X	X	X			
Claims	Misty	Whitfield		X	On hold				
Marketing	Matilda	Lewis		X	On hold				
Accounting	Elizabeth	Hicks		X	X	X			
HR	Alvin	Rios		X	X	X			
HR	Brian	Gaines		X	X	X			
Sales	Megan	Bosworth		X	X	X			
Claims	Maria	Menzies		X	X	X			
Claims	Micheal	Russell		X	X	X			

3. Release the mouse button. If Excel understands this string, it will continue in the selected cells. In the example, Excel added **Part 4**, **Part 5**, and **Part 6** to **H4:J4**.



The screenshot shows the same Excel spreadsheet as before, but now the table has been extended to include Part 4, Part 5, and Part 6. The fill handle is no longer visible, and the data is complete.

Department	First Name	Last Name	User Name	Part 1	Part 2	Part 3	Part 4	Part 5	Part 6
Sales	Walter	Rivera	wrivera	X	X	X			
Sales	Heidi	Lee		X	X				
Claims	Josie	Gates		X	X	X			
Accounting	Wendy	Crocker		X	X				
Accounting	Loretta	Johnson		X	X	X			
Claims	Misty	Whitfield		X	On hold				
Marketing	Matilda	Lewis		X	On hold				
Accounting	Elizabeth	Hicks		X	X	X			
HR	Alvin	Rios		X	X	X			
HR	Brian	Gaines		X	X	X			
Sales	Megan	Bosworth		X	X	X			
Claims	Maria	Menzies		X	X	X			
Claims	Micheal	Russell		X	X	X			

You can also double-click the fill handle instead of clicking and dragging. This can be useful with larger spreadsheets where clicking and dragging might be difficult.

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