Excel Time Savers



In this document we have summarised a few useful tasks and actions that can be real time savers when doing a lot of work in Excel.

The first section introduces a few <u>keyboard shortcuts</u> and some links to full keyboard shortcut references.

The second section covers a couple of time saving features using Excel shortcut features.

- * Generating number and date sequences
- * Copying a formula down a column
- * <u>De-Duplicate Data</u> (strip out duplicate rows)
- * Transpose Columns & Rows (make rows columns and columns rows)
- * Table Formatting
- * Create a Pivot Table

Excel Keyboard Shortcuts

* Is there a quick way of switching between worksheets in an Excel spreadsheet?

CTRL><PageUp> (Hold the Ctrl key and the Page Up key down at the same time) and **CTL><PageDown>** enable you to cycle through the worksheets in your Excel workbook.

* How can I add the current date and time to a cell in Excel?

<CTRL>; (Hold the control key and the semicolon down at the same time) to insert into the current cell the current date in *dd/mm/yyyy* format.

* Is there a quick way of apply bold and underline formats to cell contents in Excel?

<CTRL>B can be used to toggle bold on and off for a selected range of cells.

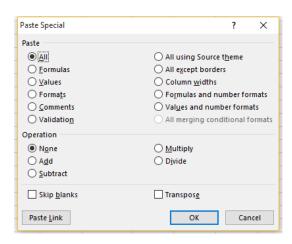
<CTRL>U can be used to toggle underline on and off

<CTRL>I can be used to toggle italic on and off

* I often have to use the paste special feature. I know I can use **<CTRL>V** as a shortcut for a default paste, but is there a shortcut for Paste Special?

<CTRL><ALT>V can be used to invoke a Paste Special. It will open the

Paste Special dialog:



There are many shortcuts for Excel and you can find a complete list here:

Excel Keyboard Shortcut Article

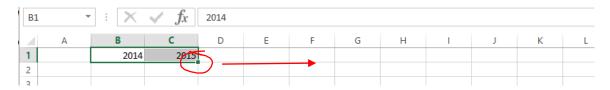
Alternatively Microsoft provide a PDF for all Excel shortcuts here:

Excel Keyboard Shortcut PDF Reference

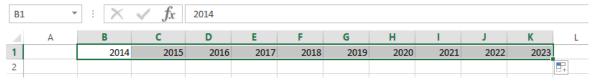
Excel Shortcut Features

Generating sequences

When entering a **sequence of numbers** into an excel column or row instead of having to manually create the sequence you can quickly generate them by entering the first two or three numbers, selecting the filled cells (cells B1 and B2 in the following example) and then dragging the bottom right hand corner of the end cell as far down or as far right as required (right in this example).



Now we have a completed sequence:



The same method can be used to generate a sequence of dates and months, but with dates and months we only need to enter the first value in the sequence.





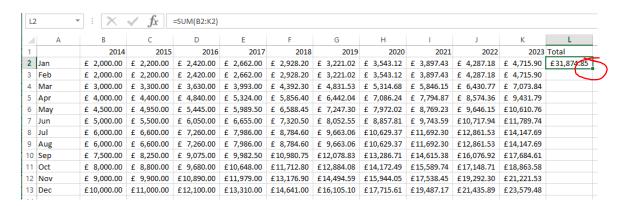
You can generate any uniform sequence using this bottom corner drag method. Simply fill in enough cells for the sequence to be recognised and then drag to the end of the range of cells you wish to populate.

For example:

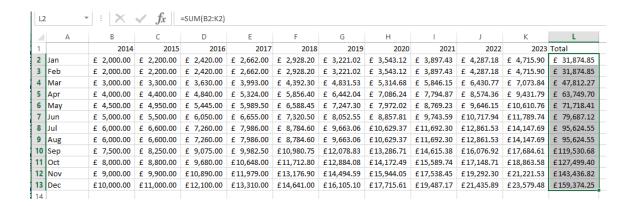
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1,3,5,7,9,.... (odd numbers)
Jan, Mar, May, Jul, Sep,..... (alternate months)
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Copying a Formula down a column

In the following example we have a Total column containing a SUM that needs to be copied down for all the month rows.



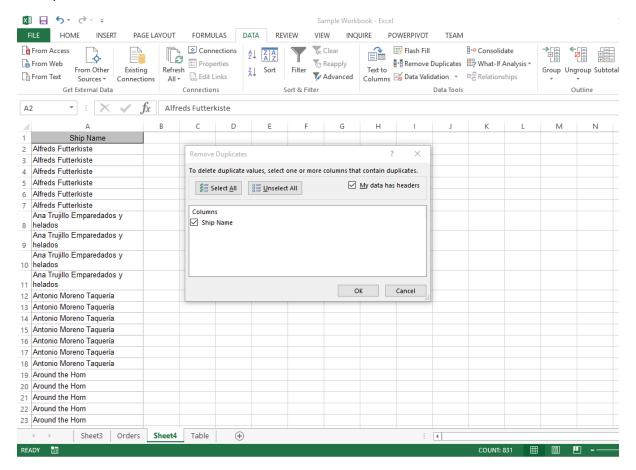
Using the bottom left corner of the selected cell again we can do this very quickly. This time instead of dragging the bottom right corner simply double click on it.



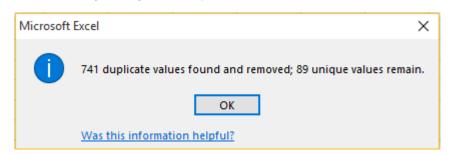
Strip out duplicate rows

Excel offers a quick and easy way to strip out duplicate rows. On the data ribbon is a Remove Duplicates option.

Highlight your data range and then click on this button to strip duplicate rows. In the following example we start with 831 rows of data.

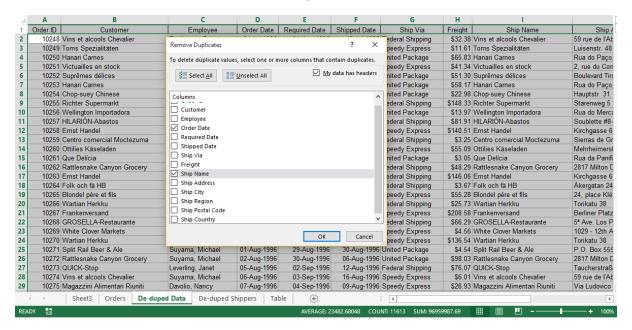


The following dialog is displayed:

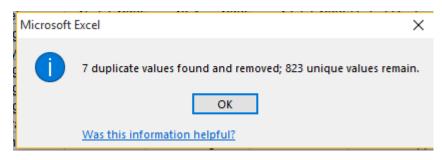


Clicking on OK will remove the duplicates leaving just 89 rows.

In the next example we have a whole worksheet of data that we wish to de-duplicate based on the shipper name and the order date being the same.



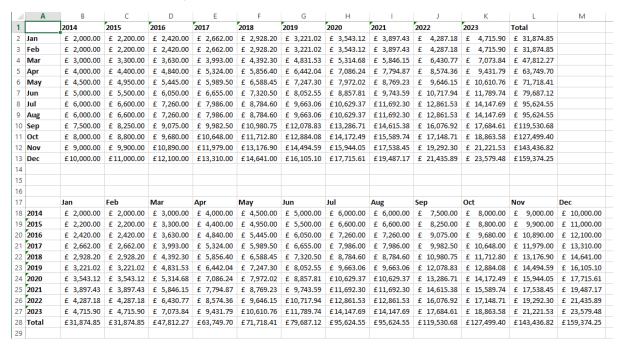
Only 7 duplicate are found with this criteria:



Transpose rows and columns

How often do you get data with the columns and rows round the wrong way for what you want to do?

In the following we can see two tables. The first has years on the columns and months on the rows. The second has years on the rows and months on the columns.



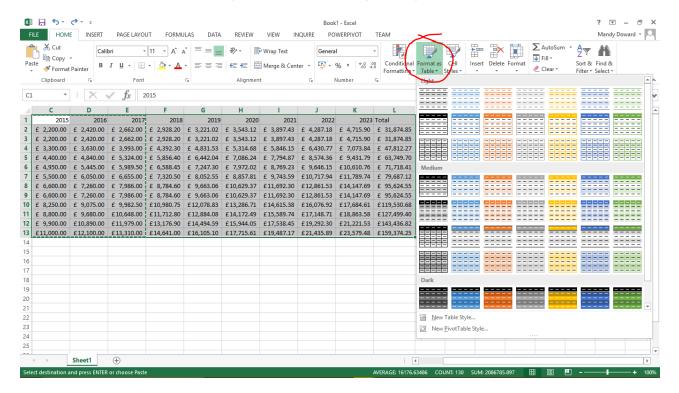
Excel provides a very simple way to transpose the columns and rows:

- Select the data region to be transposed.
- * Copy the data to the clipboard (<CTRL>C)
- Select the cell location you wish to paste the transposed data to
- * Paste Special (<CTRL><ALT>V)
- * Select Transpose

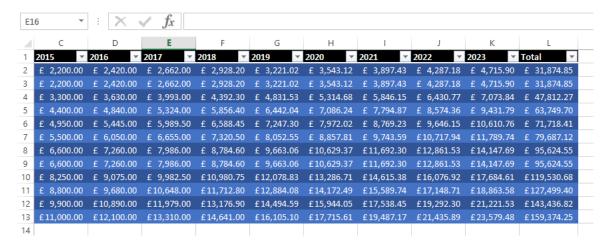
And that is it! You will now have a transposed set of data, rows on the columns, columns on the rows.

Table formatting

Excel provides a **Format as Table** utility on the Home ribbon which enables you to turn a table of numbers into a beautifully formatted table very quickly.



In the following example the Dark blue theme has been selected:

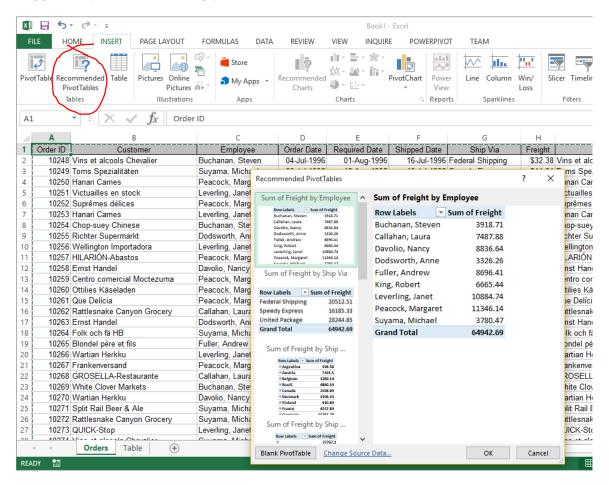


Not only is the table now colourful, there are filters on the table column headings as well to make it easier to locate and analyse data in the table.

Creating a Pivot Table

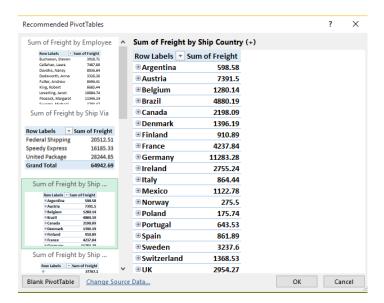
A Pivot Table provides a great way to summarise rows of data in a more useful way. For example being able to view shipping data with freight costs totalled by country shipped to.

Excel provides a **Recommended PivotTables** button on the Home ribbon which can suggest ways of summarising your raw data.

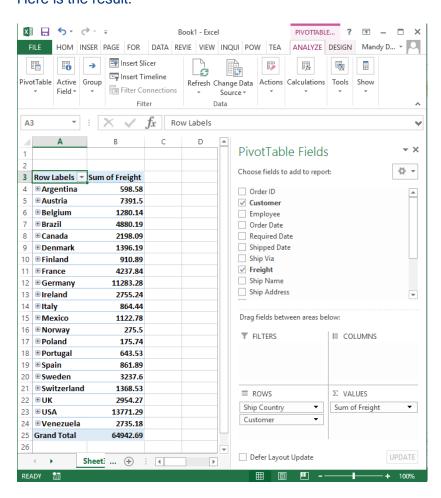


You can scroll down the offered list of potential pivot tables until you find the grouping of interest.

In this example we select the following offering:



Here is the result:



You can learn more about basic and advanced Excel techniques from the following PTR training courses:

http://www.ptr.co.uk/microsoft-excel-courses.htm

You can also follow us on **Efficient** for more useful tips and info.

If you would like to be included on our Top Tip Tuesday mailing list you can <u>subscribe</u> here.

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