Lesson 2-4: Select a range of cells and understand Smart Tags

Sometimes you don't want to add all of the values in a column. You only want to add a selection of cells that you define yourself.

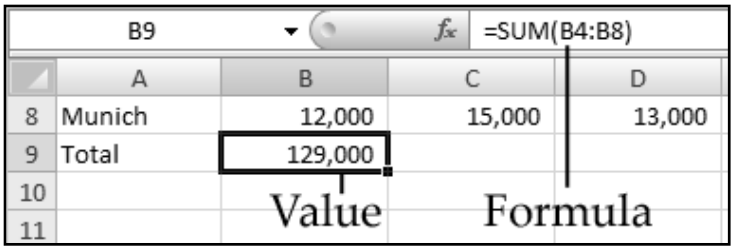
This lesson shows you how to do this with a different AutoSum technique.

1 Open *First Quarter Sales and Profit-3* from your sample files folder (if it isn't already open).

2 Observe the formula behind the value in cell B9.

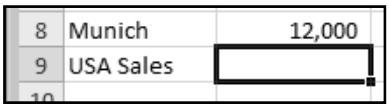
Click on cell B9 or move to it with the arrow keys on your keyboard.

Look at the *formula bar* at the top of the screen. Notice that the cell displays the *value* of a calculation and the formula bar shows the *formula* used to calculate the value:



3 Delete the contents of cell B9.

The easiest way to delete the contents of a cell is to press the **<Delete>** key on your keyboard but you can also right-click the cell and then click *Clear Contents* from the shortcut menu.



4 Change the word *Total* in cell A9 to *USA Sales* and press the **<Tab>** key once.

You don't have to delete the word *Total* before typing *USA Sales*. When you click in a cell and immediately begin to type, the existing cell contents are replaced.

The cursor moves to cell B9.

5 Select cells B4:B5 with your mouse.

When the mouse cursor hovers over a cell there are three possible cursor shapes:

First Quarter Sales and Profit-3

note

Selecting cells with the keyboard

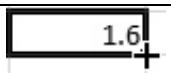
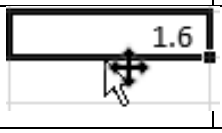
To select cells with the keyboard hold down the <Shift> key and then use the <Arrow> keys to select the range needed.

note

Selecting a large range of cells with the <Shift>-click technique

If you need to select a very large range of cells it is sometimes useful to use this technique:

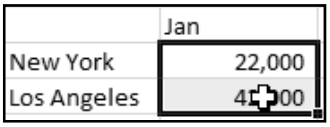
1. Click the cell in the top left corner of the required range.
2. Use the scroll bars to move to the bottom right corner of the required range.
3. Hold down the **<Shift>** key.
4. Click in the bottom right corner of the required range.

Cursor	What it does
	The white cross (Select) cursor appears when you hover over the centre of the cell. You can then click and drag to select a range of cells.
	The black cross (AutoFill) cursor appears when you hover over the bottom right-hand corner of a cell. We'll be covering AutoFill later in this session.
	The four headed arrow (Move) cursor appears when you hover over one of the black edges of the cell (but not the bottom right corner).

Beginners often have difficulty selecting cells and end up moving them or AutoFilling them by mistake.

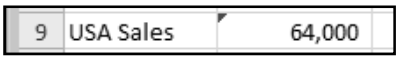
Position the mouse at the centre of cell B4 so that you see the White Cross (select) cursor. When you see the white cross, hold down the left mouse button and drag down to cell B5.

You have now selected cells B4 and B5 (in Excel speak we say that you have selected the *range* B4:B5).



6 Click the Autosum button. Σ

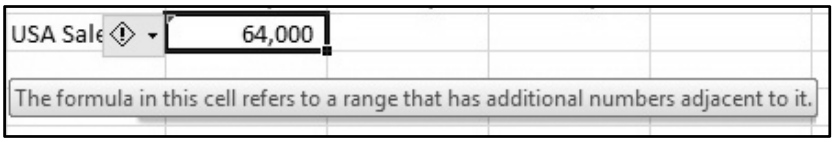
USA sales are shown in cell B9. Notice the small green triangle at the top left of B9. This is Excel's way of saying: "I think you may have made a mistake".

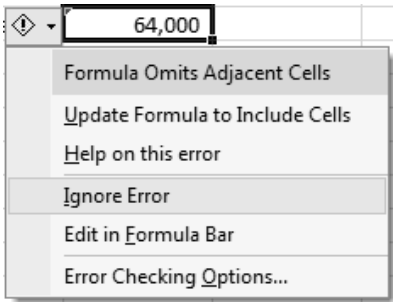


Select cell B9 and you will see an Exclamation Mark icon. This is called a *Smart Tag.*

7 Hover over the Smart Tag.

A tip box pops up telling you what Excel thinks you may have done wrong (see below). Of course, in this case, everything is fine. The Smart Tag thinks that perhaps we didn't want just the USA sales – but the Smart Tag is mistaken!





8 Examine the remedial actions suggested by the Smart Tag.

Click the drop-down arrow next to the exclamation mark icon. A list of possible remedial actions is displayed. In this case you can choose *Ignore Error* to remove the green triangle from the corner of the cell.

9 Save your work as First Quarter Sales and Profit-4.