# Selection techniques

Why are selection techniques important?

- Often when you want to do something within Excel you need to select an item first. This could involve selecting a cell or multiple cells. It many need you to select a row, a column or even the entire table.

Selecting a cell

- Open a workbook called **Selection techniques**. To select a cell simply click on that cell. Thus to select cell **B3**, click on cell **B3**.
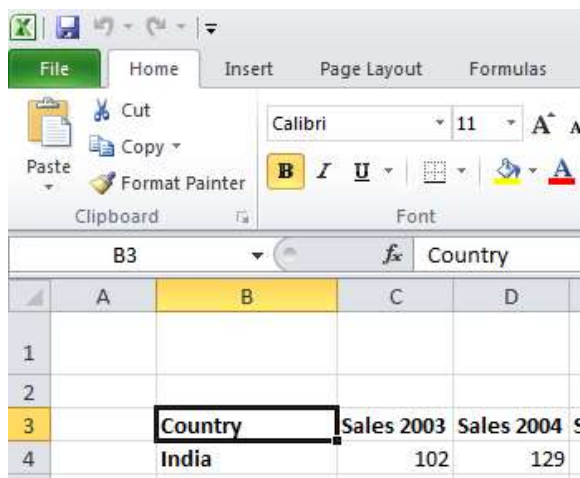
Selecting a range of connecting cells

- We want to select the cells from **C3** to **G3**. To do this click on the first cell within the range, i.e. **C3**. Then press down the **Shift** key (and keep it held down). Click on cell **G3**. When you release the **Shift** key the cell range will remain selected, as illustrated.

## Selecting a range of non-connecting cells

- Sometimes we need to select multiple cells that are not next to each other, as in the example below, where **C3**, **E3** and **G3** have been selected.

To do this click on the first cell, i.e. **C3**. Then while keeping the **Ctrl** key pressed click on the cells **E3** and **G3**. When you release the **Ctrl** key the cells will remain selected.

Selecting the entire worksheet

- To select the entire worksheet, click on the intersection between the column and row referencing numbers.
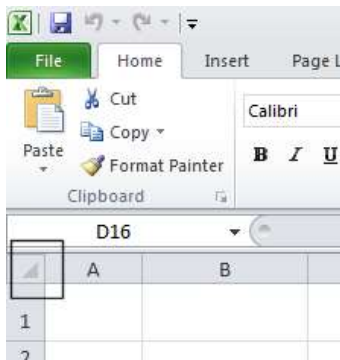
Selecting a row

- To select a row, say the row relating to **Canada**, click on the relevant row number displayed down the left side of the worksheet.
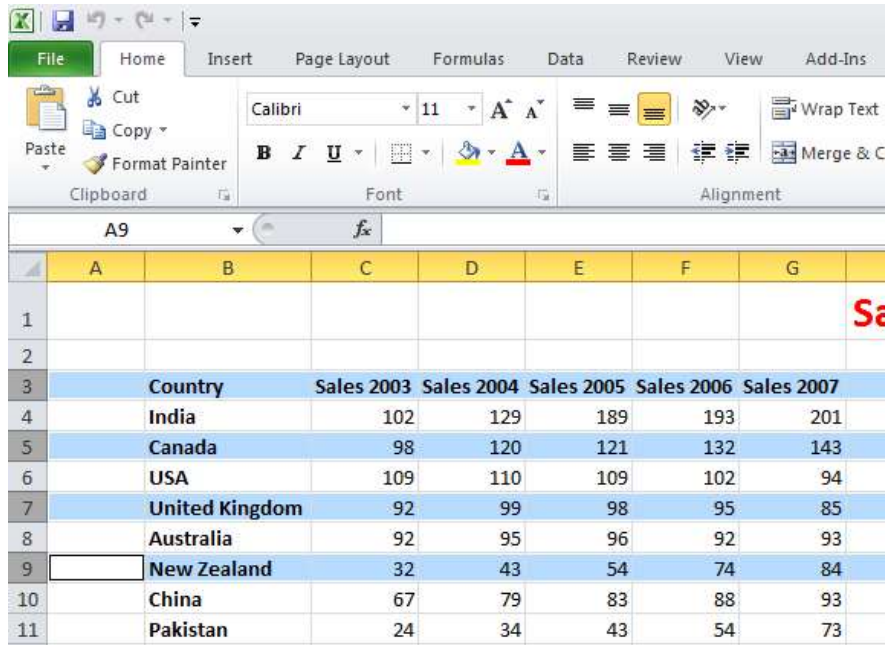
- The selected row will look like this.

Selecting a range of connecting rows

- To select the rows relating to Canada, USA, UK and Australia. First click on the row number next to **Canada** (i.e. **5**). Press down the **Shift** key and keep it pressed. Click on the row number relating to **Australia** (i.e. **8**). When you release the **Shift** key the multiple rows remain selected.
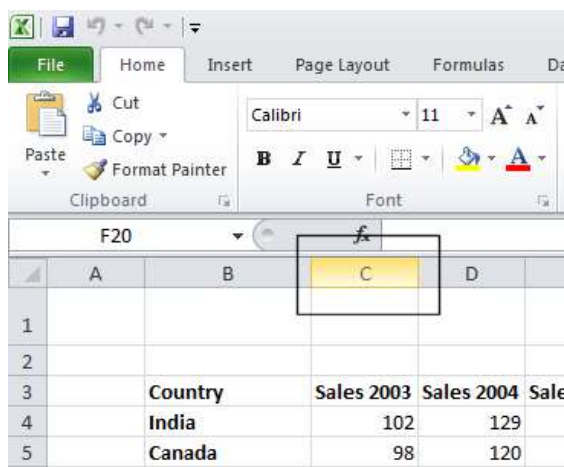
Selecting a range of non-connected rows

- Click on the row number **3** and press down the **Ctrl** key. Click on row number **5**, then row number **7** and finally number **9**. Release the **Ctrl** key and the rows will remain selected.

Selecting a column

- To select the column containing data relating to **2003**, click on the column header C, as illustrated.

- The selected column will look like this.

Selecting a range of connecting columns

- To select the columns relating to the sales figures for **2003-2006**, first select column **C**. Press the **Shift** key and while keeping it pressed select column **F**. When you release the **Shift** key the columns will remain selected.

Selecting a range of non-connecting columns

- To select the columns relating to **2003**, **2005** and **2007**, first select the column **C**. Press the **Ctrl** key and keep it pressed. Select column **E** and then select column **G**. Release the **Ctrl** key and the columns remain selected.

- Close the workbook without saving any changes you may have made.

Recommended techniques when creating or editing lists

- Each cell should contain the smallest data element. For instance if you are storing a person's name, use one cell for the first name and another cell for the second name. This means that at a later date you could manipulate the data to sort by the second name. For the same reason split the details of an address into as many smaller parts as possible so that later you could search by state/region , by post code/zip code or even by country if you are maintaining an international list.

- The top row of your data will often contain the headers of each column. These are called field names.

- List should not contain blank rows or columns within the data. This can cause problems when later sorting your data.

- Ensure that cells bordering your list are blank.

- If your data has a bottom row which contains totals, it is often a good idea to insert a blank line above the row of totals.