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

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 once 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:

note

You can also delete cell contents using the mouse.

Pressing the **<Delete>** key is the fastest way to delete cell contents.

You can also delete the contents of a cell using the mouse. To do this:

1.   Right-click the cell

2.   Click *Clear Contents* from the shortcut menu.

3   Delete the contents of cell B9.

Press the **<Delete>** key on your keyboard.

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

The cursor moves to cell B9.

5   Select cells B4:B5 with your mouse.

When the mouse cursor is hovered over a selected cell there are three possible cursor shapes:

Cursor	What it does
	The white cross (Select) cursor appears when you hover over the center of the active 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 the active 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).

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. If necessary, use the scroll bars to make the bottom right corner of the required range visible.

3. Hold down the **<Shift>** key.

4. Click in the bottom right corner of the required range.

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

Position the mouse at the center 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 terminology we say that you have selected the *range* B4:B5).

	A	B
3		Jan
4	New York	22,000
5	Los Angeles	✛ 42,000

6   Display total USA sales in cell B9.

Because you have selected only the cells containing USA sales, (cells B4:B5), AutoSum can be used to show the value of the selected cells.

Click the AutoSum button Σ to display the total value of the selected cells.

USA sales are shown in cell B9.

9	USA Sales	64,000

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

7   Inspect a potential error using a Smart Tag.

1. Click once on cell B9 to make it the active cell.

    An *Exclamation Mark* icon appears ⚠. This is called a *Smart Tag*.

2. Hover the mouse cursor 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 to total just the USA sales – but the Smart Tag is mistaken!

USA Sale ⚠ ▾	64,000

The formula in this cell refers to a range that has additional numbers adjacent to it.

⚠ ▾	64,000
Formula Omits Adjacent Cells	
Update Formula to Include Cells	
Help on this error	
Ignore Error	
Edit in Formula Bar	
Error Checking Options...	

8   Examine the remedial actions suggested by the Smart Tag.

1. Hover the mouse cursor over the Smart Tag icon ⚠.

2. Click the drop-down arrow that appears.

    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.*