

Lesson 2-14: Use AutoFill for text and numeric series

1 Open *First Quarter Sales and Profit-8* from your sample files folder (if it isn't already open).

2 Delete the text **Feb** and **Mar** from cells C3:D3.

Select cells C3:D3 and then press the <Delete> key on your keyboard.




3 Make B3 the active cell.

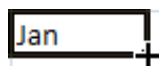
Notice that there is a green border around the cell and a spot on the bottom right-hand corner. This is the AutoFill handle. If you don't see it, refer to the sidebar.



4 Hover over the AutoFill handle with your mouse until the cursor shape changes to a black cross.

Many of my students have great difficulty with this when they try it for the first time.

- You don't want the four-headed arrow:  – that would move the cell.
- You don't want the white cross:  – that would select the cell.
- You want the black cross:  – the AutoFill cursor.



5 When the black cross cursor is visible, hold down the mouse button and drag your mouse to the right to AutoFill the other months: **Feb** and **Mar**.

| | | | |
|--------|--------|-----|--------|
| Jan | | | |
| 22,000 | 29,000 | Mar | 19,000 |
| 13,000 | 20,000 | | 13,000 |

Notice the tip that appears as you drag, previewing the month that will appear in each cell.

When you release the mouse button, the name of each month appears in cells C3 and D3.

| | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-----|
| | B | C | D |
| 3 | Jan | Feb | Mar |

6 Type: **Monday** into cell A18 and AutoFill down to cell A24 to show the days of the week.

(If you are not using an English language version of Excel you will need to type **Monday** in your own language).

note

If you don't see the AutoFill handle somebody has disabled AutoFill

It's almost certain that AutoFill will be enabled on any computer that you work on. It is such a useful feature that you wouldn't want to disable it.

If you don't see the AutoFill handle (the black spot on the bottom right hand corner of the active cell) it's because somebody has switched AutoFill off.

To bring it back click:

File→Options→Advanced

In the first section (*Editing Options*) check the box next to *Enable fill handle and cell drag and drop*.

First Quarter Sales and Profit-8

tip

You don't have to enter two numbers if you want to create a numeric range.

If you simply type a number into a cell and then AutoFill while holding down the <Ctrl> key, you will automatically generate sequential numbers.

- 7 In cell B18 type the number **1** and in cell B19 type the number **2**.

- 8 Select cells B18 and B19.



- 9 AutoFill down to B24 to create sequential numbers:

| | A | B |
|----|-----------|---|
| 18 | Monday | 1 |
| 19 | Tuesday | 2 |
| 20 | Wednesday | 3 |

- 10 In cell C18 type **9** and in cell C19 type **18**.

- 11 Select cells C18 and C19.



- 12 AutoFill down to B24 to create the nine times table.

| | A | B | C |
|----|-----------|---|----|
| 18 | Monday | 1 | 9 |
| 19 | Tuesday | 2 | 18 |
| 20 | Wednesday | 3 | 27 |

- 13 Use AutoFill to create sequential dates.

1. Type 01-Jan-08 into cell D18.
2. Type 02-Jan-08 into cell D19.
3. Select Cells D18:D19.
4. AutoFill down to D24 to create sequential dates.

- 14 Use AutoFill to quickly copy text.

Sometimes you will want to duplicate the value from one cell into many others to the right of, left of, beneath, or above the active cell.

When a cell containing text is the active cell and it isn't defined as a *fill series* (the built-in fill series are days of the week and months of the year), AutoFill will simply duplicate the contents of the cell.

Type the text **Adjusted** into cell E18 and then AutoFill it down as far as cell E24.

The same text is now shown in each of the cells:

| | A | B | C | D | E |
|----|-----------|---|----|-----------|----------|
| 18 | Monday | 1 | 9 | 01-Jan-08 | Adjusted |
| 19 | Tuesday | 2 | 18 | 02-Jan-08 | Adjusted |
| 20 | Wednesday | 3 | 27 | 03-Jan-08 | Adjusted |
| 21 | Thursday | 4 | 36 | 04-Jan-08 | Adjusted |
| 22 | Friday | 5 | 45 | 05-Jan-08 | Adjusted |
| 23 | Saturday | 6 | 54 | 06-Jan-08 | Adjusted |
| 24 | Sunday | 7 | 63 | 07-Jan-08 | Adjusted |

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