Lesson 7-11: Restrict the cells users are allowed to change

1. Open Human Resources-3 from your sample files folder (if it isn’t already open).
2. Display the Hours Worked custom view.
   
   This was covered in: Lesson 7-8: Create custom views.
3. Hide the Headcount and Salaries worksheet.
   
   This was covered in: Lesson 7-7: Hide and unhide worksheets, columns and rows.
4. Re-size columns B:O so that they are just wide enough to display their contents:

   ![Screenshot of a worksheet with columns B:O re-sized]

   The challenge this time will be to prevent the user from changing any value other than those in the yellow shaded cells (cells B12:O16).

   You will solve this problem by unlocking these cells and then protecting the worksheet. This will only allow the user to enter values into the unlocked cells.


   All cells on a worksheet are (by default) locked. You are able to type values into them because the worksheet is not yet protected.

   In order to prevent the user from changing any cell except cells B12:O16 you need to do two things:
   
   • Unlock the cells that you want the user to be able to change.
   • Protect the worksheet.

   Here’s how to unlock the cells:

   2. Right click anywhere in the selected area.

**tip**

Use cell locking to make forms more user-friendly

Excel is often used to create forms (such as booking forms). The form is sent to the user by e-mail and the user completes and returns it.

This type of form becomes much easier to use if you do the following:

1. Unlock the cells that the user should type data into.
2. Protect the worksheet making sure that only the Select unlocked cells option is checked.

When this is done, the user can use the Tab key to navigate through all of the cells in the form that need to be completed.
3. Click **Format Cells**… from the shortcut menu.
4. Click the **Protection** tab.
5. Uncheck the **Locked** check box.

6. **Protect the Payroll worksheet so that the user is unable to change or select any of the locked cells.**

   When you protect a worksheet, it is no longer possible to change the contents of a locked cell.

   1. Click: Review → Changes → Protect Sheet.

      The **Protect Sheet** dialog appears.

      The default settings allow the user to select (but not change) the contents of locked cells. This normally makes sense as you want the user to be able to copy and paste any part of the worksheet.

      In this case, however, it creates a huge security problem as the user can easily copy the entire worksheet, paste it into a new worksheet, and then unhide the hidden rows.

      For this reason, you want to prevent the user from selecting locked cells.

   2. Uncheck the **Select locked cells** check box.

      Notice that by default, the user is prevented from doing many more things to the worksheet (such as formatting cells). You can selectively allow these actions by checking the appropriate check box.

   3. Enter a password.

   4. Click the OK button, Confirm the password and then click the OK button once more.

7. **Test the protected worksheet.**

   You are unable to change (or even select) any of the locked cells but you can select and change any of the unlocked cells.

8. **Unprotect the worksheet.**

   1. Click: Review → Changes → Unprotect Sheet.

   2. If you set a password, enter it, and then click OK.

9. **Lock cells B12:O16.**

   Do this in the same way that you unlocked the cells, but this time check the **Locked** check box (instead of un-checking it).

10. **Save your work as Human Resources-4.**