note

Why are you calling the pound sign a hash?

In the USA and Canada, the hash symbol is called the **pound sign** or the **number sign**.

In different USA/Canada regions the single symbol has different names because it can be used to denote a number (as in contestant #5) or as a weight (as in 3# of butter).

Throughout this book I will refer to the # as a *hash* because that is the term used in most other English-speaking countries.

note

Excel column widths are expressed in characters and pixels

In this lesson Excel displays the default column width as:

Width: 8.43 (64 pixels)
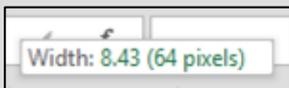
8.43 *characters* is Excel's default column size (meaning that 8.43 characters can be displayed in each cell using the default *Calibri* font).

Pixels are the tiny dots that make up a computer display.

With 64 pixels to each column, a computer screen with a resolution of 1680X1050 (the norm for a 22 inch display) should display about 1680/64=26.25 Excel columns.

Row heights are displayed in points (a point is approximately 1/72 inch or 0.035cm).

First Quarter Sales and Profit-4

Lesson 2-9: Re-size rows and columns

1 Open *First Quarter Sales and Profit-4* from your sample files folder.

Notice that columns B, C, D and E are far too wide for their contents. It would be useful to make them narrower to keep the worksheet compact.

2 Re-size column B so that it is just wide enough to contain the January sales figures.

1. Hover the mouse cursor over the line separating the letters B and C until you see the *re-size* cursor shape:
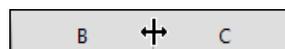
2. When you see the *re-size* cursor shape, keep the mouse still and then click and drag to the left. Column B will re-size as you drag. Make it narrower so that the values just fit in the column. Notice that the column width is displayed in characters and pixels (see sidebar) as you drag.

3 Re-size column B so that it is too narrow to contain the January sales figures.

Notice that when the column isn't wide enough to contain the contents, hash signs are shown instead of values (if you're used to hashes being called **pound signs** or **number signs** see the sidebar).

4 Automatically re-size column B so that it is a perfect fit for the widest cell in the column.

1. Hover over the line separating the letters B and C until you see the re-size cursor shape:

2. When you see this shape, double-click to automatically re-size column B.

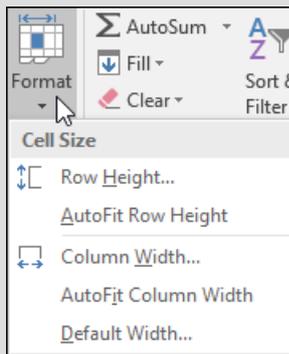5 Automatically re-size every column in the worksheet in one operation.

1. Select every cell in the worksheet by clicking the *Select All* button in the top left corner of the worksheet (you can also do this by clicking in any blank cell and then pressing **<Ctrl>+<A>**).

2. Hover over the intersection of any two columns until you see the re-size cursor shape and then double-click.

    Every column is now perfectly sized.

    Notice that AutoFit has done its job rather too well. Column A is now wide enough to accommodate all of the text in cell A1.

6   Automatically re-size column A so that it is only wide enough to contain the longest city name (Los Angeles).

1. Select cells A4:A9.

2. Click: Home➞Cells➞Format➞AutoFit Column Width.

    This time the column is automatically sized so that it is wide enough to contain all of the text in the selected cells.

	A	B	C	D	E
1	Sales and Profit Report - First Quarter 2016				
2					
3		Jan	Feb	Mar	Total
4	New York	22,000	29,000	19,000	70,000
5	Los Angeles	42,000	39,000	43,000	

Notice that the text has spilled over from cell A1 into the adjoining columns B, C, D and E. This always happens when a cell contains text and the adjacent cells are empty.

7   Manually re-size row 3 so that it is about twice as tall as the other rows.

Do this in the same way you re-sized the column but, this time, hover between the intersection of rows 3 and 4 until you see the re-size cursor shape, and then click and drag downwards.

8   Auto-resize row 3 so that it is the same size as the other rows again.

1. Hover over the line separating the numbers 3 and 4 until you see the re-size cursor shape.

2. When you see this shape, double-click to automatically re-size row 3.

9   Close Excel without saving.

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note

Other ways to re-size rows and columns

You can also re-size rows and columns using the Ribbon.

Click: Home➞Cells➞Format.

A drop-down menu appears.

You can use the *Row Height* and *Column Width* options to set the row or column to a specific number of characters (for column widths) or points (for row height).

You can also use the *AutoFit Row Height* and *AutoFit Column Width* options to automatically re-size the row or column (you achieved this more efficiently with a double-click in the lesson).

Default Width… allows you to set a new width for all columns but will not affect columns that have already been manually resized.

note

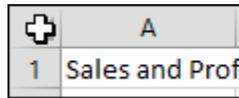### Making several columns or rows the same size

Select the columns that you want to resize and then click and drag the intersection of any of the selected columns.

When the mouse button is released, this will make each of the selected columns exactly the same width.