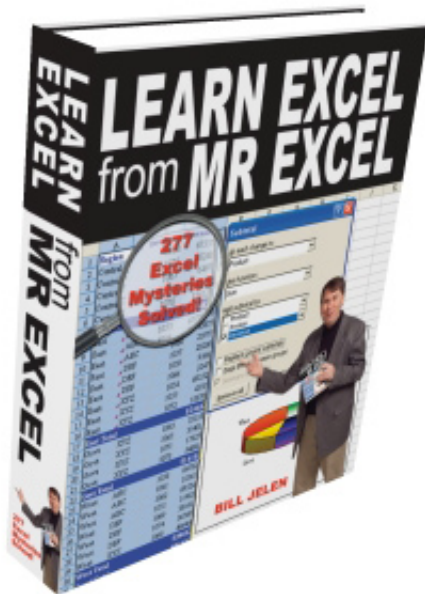




Learn Excel from MrExcel - Week 46

Learn Excel from Mr Excel

Copyright 2005 Bill Jelen

All Rights Reserved

Encourage your friends to sign up at

<http://www.mrexcel.com/learn-excel.html>

This week - 7 topics - including borders, tab color, format painter, and smart tags.

ORGANIZE YOUR WORKSHEET TABS WITH COLOR

Problem: As shown in Fig. 1269, you have a lot of tabs in the workbook. Can you highlight the frequently used tabs in red?



Fig. 1269

Strategy: Starting in Excel 2000, you can use Format – Sheet – Tab Color to assign a color to the tab of the current worksheet, as shown in Fig. 1270.



Fig. 1270

Summary: Organize your sheets visually by changing the color of the sheet tabs.

Commands Discussed: Format – Sheet – Tab Color

COPY CELL FORMATTING, INCLUDING COLUMN WIDTHS

Problem: You have one section of a report set up, including custom column widths, as shown in Fig. 1271.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1			Manufactured in Harrow				
2							
3			Model				
4			A		B		C
5	Display		12		42		42
6	Engine		0		0		112.5
7	PCB		18		22		41
8	RAM		8		56		56
9	Other Mat'l		11.17		18.15		21.45
10	Total Mat'l		49.17		138.15		272.95
11							
12	Labor		8.24		12.45		15.24
13							
14	Overhead		34.608		52.29		64.008
15							
16	Total MLO		92.018		202.89		352.198
17							
18	Target Price		368.07		811.56		1408.79

Fig. 1271

As shown in Fig. 1272, when you copy and paste to a new section of the workbook, the column widths do not get pasted.

I	J	K	L	M	N	O
		Manufactured in Trent				
		Model				
		A		B		C
Display		12		42		42
Engine		0		0		112.5
PCB		18		22		41
		-		--		--

Fig. 1272

Strategy: Use the Format Painter icon. This is a cool trick, but it is hard to use. Carefully follow these steps.

- 1) Select the columns with the original formatted data. Choose the Format Painter icon, which looks like a whiskbroom, as shown in Fig. 1273.

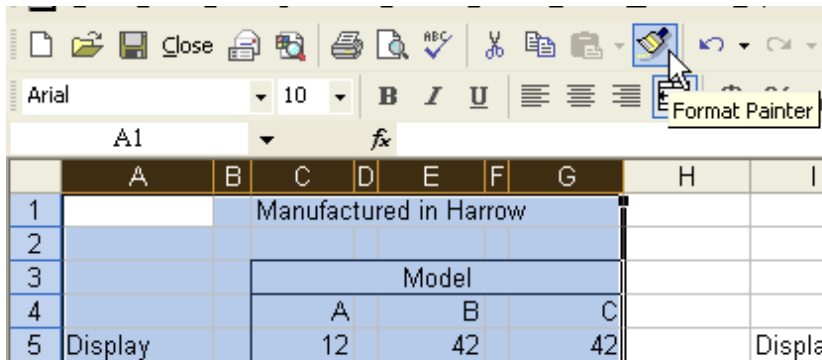


Fig. 1273

- 2) Use the scroll bars to move so that you can see all of the new range in the window. Even if it would be more convenient to navigate using the Arrow or Tab keys, you have to avoid selecting any cells or columns until the next step.
- 3) Click on the first new column and drag to select the same number of columns. As you are dragging, the mouse pointer changes to the whiskbroom icon, as shown in Fig. 1274.

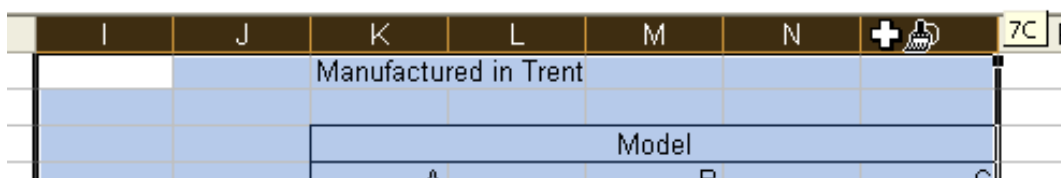


Fig. 1274

- 4) When you release the mouse button, the formats, including font, colors, borders, and cell height, will be copied, as shown in Fig. 1275.

I	J	K	L	M	N	O
		Manufactured in Trent				
		Model				
		A		B		C
Display		12		42		42
Engine		0		0		112.5
PCB		18		22		41

Fig. 1275

Summary: Use the Format Painter tool to copy formats, including column widths.

Commands Discussed: Format Painter tool

WHY DOES EXCEL MARK ALL MY TRUE CELLS WITH AN INDICATOR?

Problem: In Excel 2002, you start noticing crazy cells being marked with a purple indicator. As shown in Fig. 1276, why is every TRUE value marked?

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	Invoice	Product	Price	Qty	Total	Bonus
2	2010	Jacket	225	14	3150	TRUE
3	2011	Jacket	225	8	1800	TRUE
4	2012	Jacket	225	11	2475	TRUE
5	2013	Cap	25	6	150	FALSE
6	2014	Jacket	225	17	3825	TRUE
7	2015	Jacket	225	3	675	FALSE

Fig. 1276

Strategy: We’ve become used to red indicators for cell comments and green indicators for Excel errors. Why is Excel marking all of these seemingly innocent values?

Well, those are smart tags. If you enter a stock market ticker symbol in a cell, Excel adds a smart tag indicator, as shown in Fig. 1277.

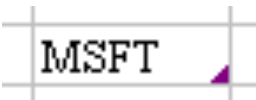


Fig. 1277

The smart tag lets you insert the stock price for the symbol, as shown in Fig. 1278.

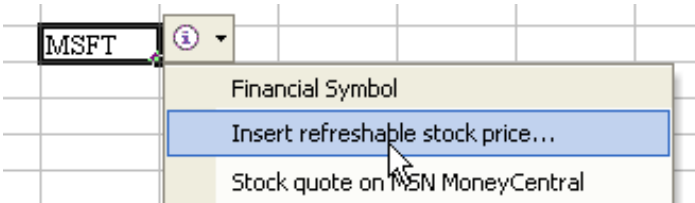


Fig. 1278

This is fine, but even cells that just look like ticker symbols are marked. The Truetime company went public in 1999 with the ticker symbol TRUE. Symmetricon bought them out in 2002. The TRUE ticker is no longer valid, yet everyone using Excel 2002 or 2003 has to put up with the annoying SmartTags on their logical formulas. No offense to the Truetime Company, but I really don't want to mark every TRUE cell with their stock price.

If you use many logical formulas, you will find that there are a lot of false positives in Smart Tags.

In Excel 2002, your only choice was to turn off the Financial Smart Tag. Use Tools – AutoCorrect Options – Smart Tags and uncheck the MSN MoneyCentral Financial Symbols, as shown in Fig. 1279.

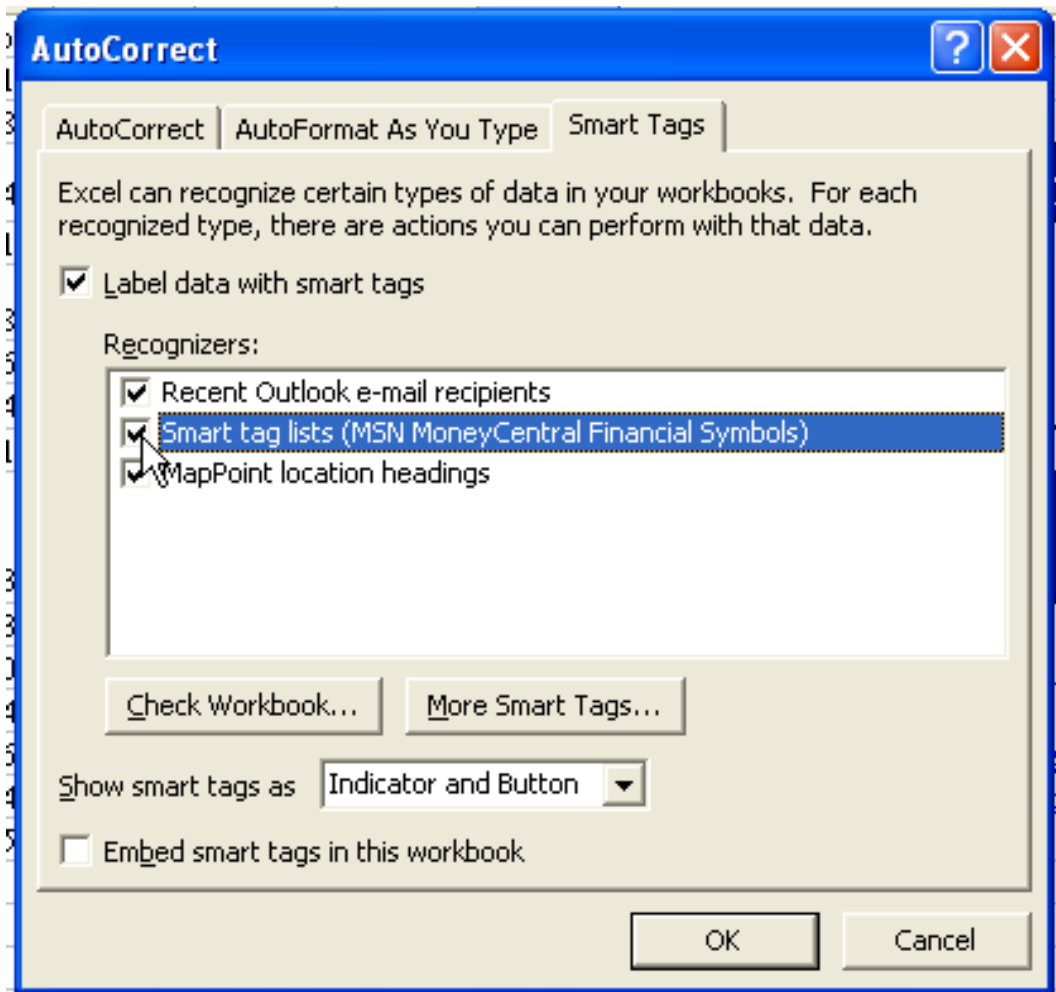


Fig. 1279

In Excel 2003, the smart tag itself now has an option to stop recognizing TRUE as a Smart Tag, as shown in Fig. 1280.

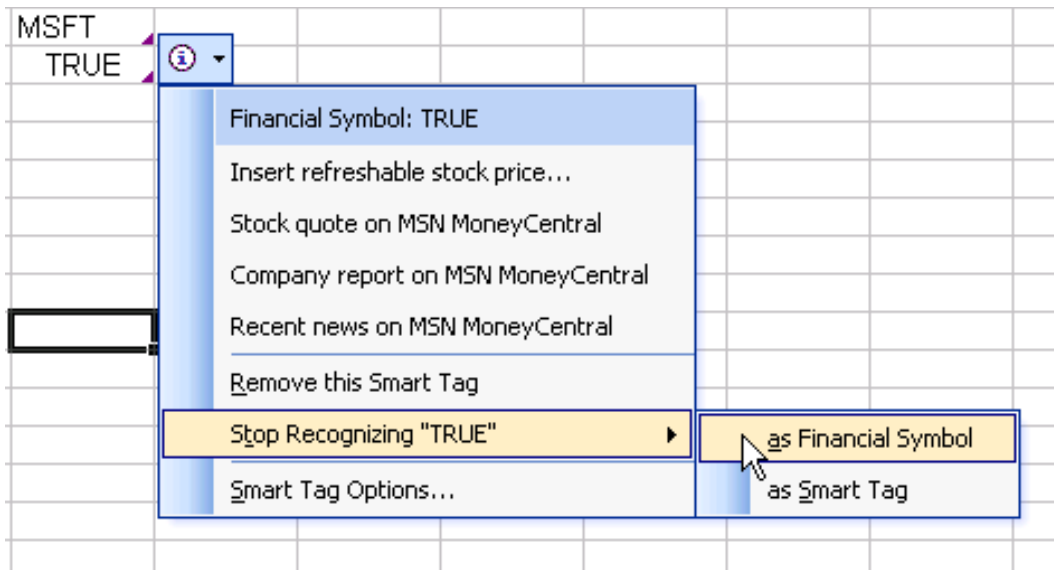


Fig. 1280

Summary: In Excel 2002, you can turn off the Financial Smart Tag. In Excel 2003 and later versions, you can turn off the Smart Tag for specific values.

Commands Discussed: Tools – Auto correct – Smart Tags

DEBUG FROM A PRINTED SPREADSHEET

Problem: You need to proofread cells in your spreadsheet. It would be easier to do this from a printed piece of paper but, at the same time, you need to see the row numbers and column letters in the printout.

Strategy: You can print row numbers and column letters. From the File menu, select File – Page Setup – Sheet – (Print) Row and Column Headings, as shown in Fig. 1281.

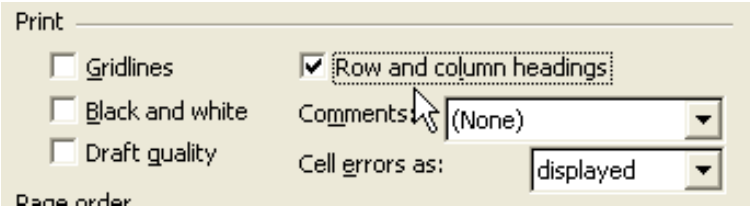


Fig. 1281

Result: As shown in Fig. 1282, the printed copy of the spreadsheet will show letters A, B, C, and D across the top and row numbers down the side.

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	Invoice	Product	Price	Qty	Total	Bonus
2	2010	Jacket	225	14	3150	TRUE
3	2011	Jacket	225	8	1800	TRUE
4	2012	Jacket	225	11	2475	TRUE
5	2013	Cap	25	6	150	FALSE
6	2014	Jacket	225	17	3825	TRUE

Fig. 1282

Summary: Debugging printed spreadsheets is easier if you temporarily turn on the printing of row and column headings.

Commands Discussed: File – Page Setup – Sheet – Row and Column Headings

COPIED FORMULA HAS STRANGE BORDERS

Problem: You copied a formula and the borders look out of place in the paste area. In the image below, you copied D4 and pasted to D5: D34. The top border from D4 was copied to every cell in the paste area, as shown in Fig. 1283.

	A	B	C	D
1				
2				
3	Date	Units	Dollars	Average
4	9/1/2006	84	312.48	3.72
5	9/2/2006	75	274.5	3.66
6	9/3/2006	0	0	0
7	9/4/2006	24	87.6	3.65
8	9/5/2006	63	236.25	3.75
9	9/6/2006	18	67.14	3.73
10	9/7/2006	18	65.52	3.64
11	9/8/2006	104	395.2	3.8
12	9/9/2006	49	175.42	3.58
13	9/10/2006	60	221.4	3.69
14	9/11/2006	92	348.68	3.79
15	9/12/2006	139	494.84	3.56

Fig. 1283

Strategy: After the fact, you need to clear the borders and start over again. Select the range with the unwanted formats. From the menu, select Edit – Clear – Formats, as shown in Fig. 1284.

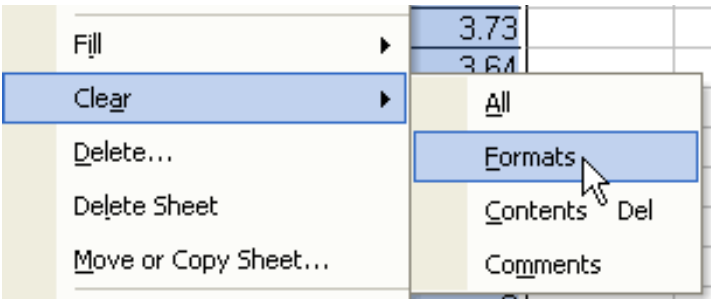


Fig. 1284

As shown in Fig. 1285, this will clear all of the borders, which is seldom what you want.

C	D
Dollars	Average
312.48	3.72
274.5	3.66
0	0
87.6	3.65
236.25	3.75
67.14	3.73
65.52	3.64
395.2	3.8

Additional Details: To prevent the problem in the first place, instead of pasting the cells, use either Edit – Paste Special – Formulas or Edit – Paste Special – All Except Borders to copy the formulas without the border or formatting, as shown in Fig. 1286.

Fig. 1285

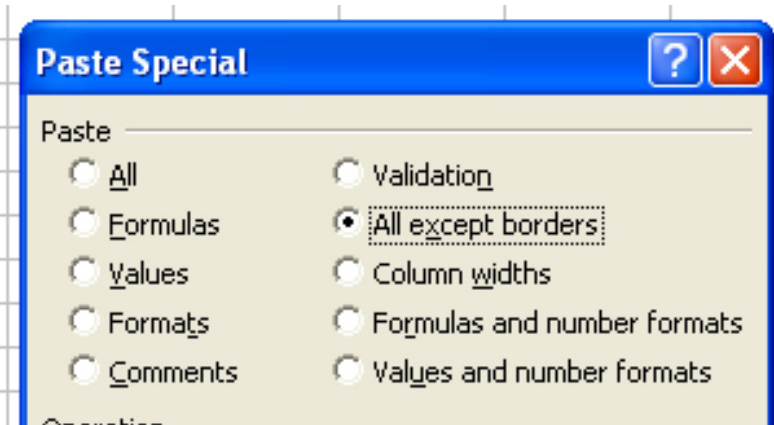


Fig. 1286

Summary: It is better to use Paste Special to prevent borders from getting copied into your data range. If you discover this too late, use Edit – Clear – Formats to get rid of unwanted borders.

Commands Discussed: Edit – Clear – Formats; Edit – Paste Special – All Except Borders; Edit – Paste Special – Formulas

DOUBLE UNDERLINE A GRAND TOTAL

Problem: Your boss is a CPA. He says you should double underline the grand total in a report. As the results show in Fig. 1287, you only have an underline icon on the Formatting toolbar.

8		
9	Product B	Total
10	England	8,301
11	N. Ireland	2,369
12	Scotland	2,411
13	Wales	<u>2,473</u>
14	Total B	15,554
15		
16	Product C	Total
17	England	5,031
18	N. Ireland	1,420
19	Scotland	1,413
20	Wales	<u>1,028</u>
21	Total C	8,892
22		
23	Grand Total	37,599

Fig. 1287

Strategy: Select the Grand Total cell. From the menu, select Format – Cells – Font. In the Underline dropdown, choose double or double accounting. The cell will have a double underline, as shown in Fig. 1288.

Grand Total	<u><u>37,599</u></u>
--------------------	----------------------

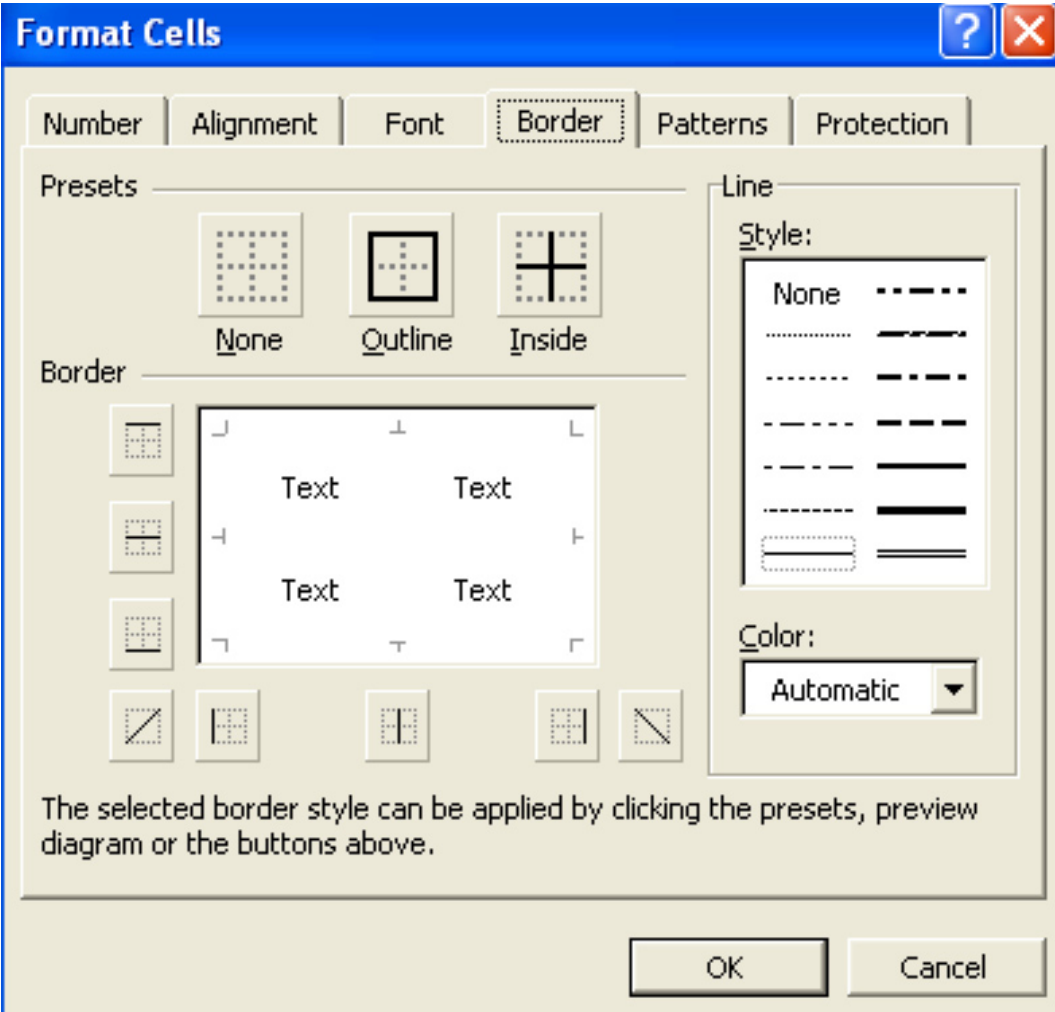
Fig. 1288

Summary: You can add a double underline to a number, but you have to use the Font tab of the Format Cells dialog.

Commands Discussed: Format – Cells – Font – Underline

USE THE BORDER TAB IN THE FORMAT CELLS DIALOG

Problem: Borders drive you insane. How do you actually use the Border tab of the Format Cells toolbar, shown in Fig. 1289?



Part
IV

Fig. 1289

Strategy: The trick is to select the color and weight before you draw any borders. Once you’ve selected a color and the heavy line style, then you can begin drawing borders.

The large white area shows four sides plus a center horizontal and center vertical border. The center borders only make sense if you are formatting a range of cells. If you are formatting a single cell, choosing the center horizontal bar will not draw a border through the center of the cell.

Additional Details: Here is a typical example. Say that you want a thick blue border around a selection. You want a narrow green border around all cells inside the selection. Follow these steps:

- 1) Select the entire range.
- 2) Select Format – Cells – Borders.
- 3) Select Thick Border.
- 4) Select Blue.
- 5) Hit Outline button in the Presets area, as shown in Fig. 1290.

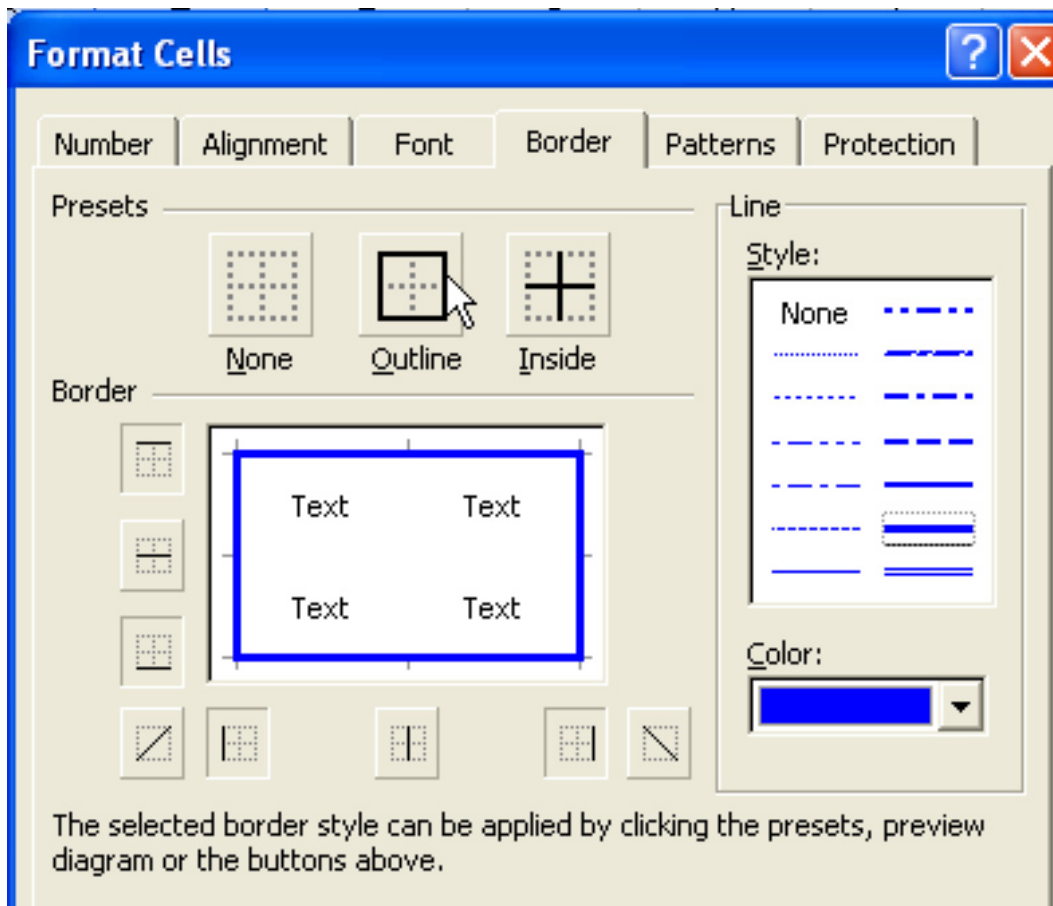


Fig. 1290

- 6) Select the thin border for the Style and select green for the color.
- 7) Choose Inside button in the Presets area, as shown in Fig. 1291.

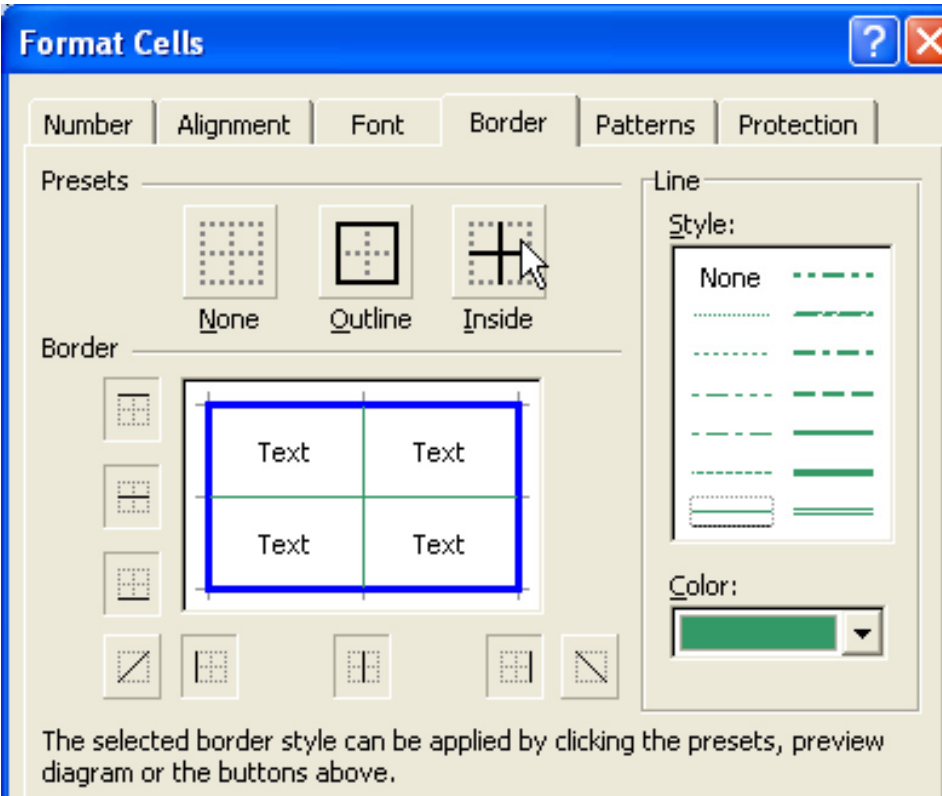


Fig. 1291

- 8) Choose OK to apply the format to the selected range, as shown in Fig. 1292.

	A	B	C	D	E
1					
2	Region	Books	DVD	VHS	Total
3	Western Australia	177	710	152	1,039
4	South Australia	794	289	69	1,152
5	Northern Territory	425	164	184	773
6	Queensland	919	588	896	2,403
7	New South Wales	425	978	713	2,116
8	Victoria	90	892	771	1,753
9	Tasmania	462	855	363	1,680
10	Total	3,292	4,476	3,148	10,916
11					

Fig. 1292

Additional Details: Choose the small buttons around the outside to select individual border formats. This group also includes diagonal cross through borders. The diagonal borders apply to individual cells only, as shown in Fig. 1293.

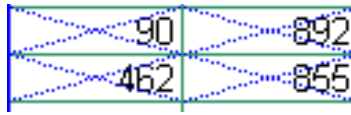


Fig. 1293

Summary: When drawing borders with the Format Cells dialog, it is important to select the line weight and color before drawing a border.

Commands Discussed: Format – Cells – Borders