Training Guide

Microsoft Excel 2010 – Level 1

9 – Cell alignment

CORPORATE LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

CELL ALIGNMENT

INFOCUS

Microsoft Excel provides you with a great number of options for placing your data within a cell. These options determine how the data within a cell will be ***aligned***.

In this booklet you will:

- ✓ gain an understanding of the cell alignment options available in ***Microsoft Excel***
- ✓ learn how to align the contents of a cell to the right
- ✓ learn how to align data in a cell to the centre
- ✓ learn how to align text to the left in a cell
- ✓ learn how to rotate text in a worksheet
- ✓ learn how to indent cells in a worksheet

UNDERSTANDING CELL ALIGNMENT

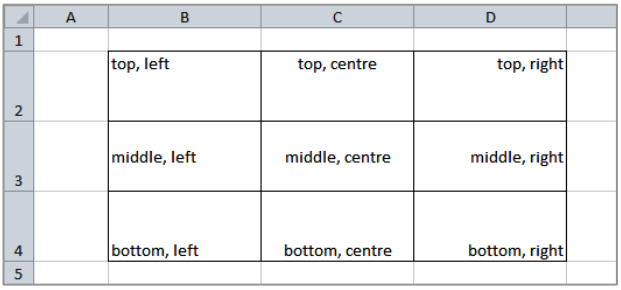
When creating a new worksheet or workbook it can sometimes be a tough call working out where to place your data. Do I start in row 1, do I start in column A, etc, etc? Well just to add even more complexity to your decision making process, you also have a huge number of choices in terms of where your data should appear within any given cell. This is what ***cell alignment*** is all about.

Understanding Your Options

Basically your options when it comes to cell alignment can be broken up into 4 main parts: ***horizontal and vertical alignment***, ***orientation***, ***wrapping***, and ***merging***.

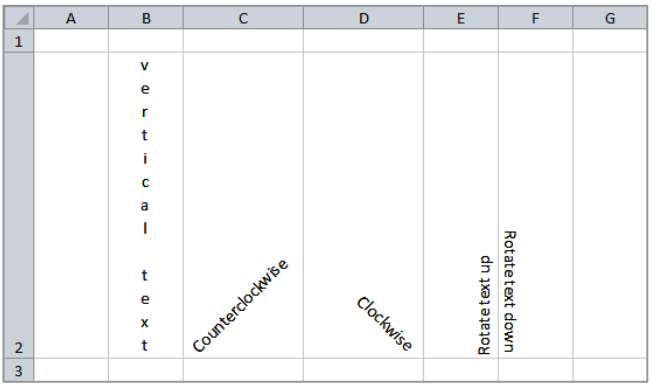
1 Horizontal and Vertical Alignment

Data in a cell can be positioned horizontally and vertically within the cell. There are three horizontal alignments available – against the ***left*** border, against the ***right*** border, and in the ***centre***. There are also three vertical alignments available – against the ***top*** border, against the ***bottom*** border, and in the ***middle***. The vertical and horizontal alignments are not mutually exclusive and can be mixed together. For example, you can have text that appears aligned to the right and aligned to the top border.



2 Orientation

Orientation refers to the ***rotation*** of data within a cell. With the orientation you can ***angle*** the data upwards or downwards, display the data ***vertically*** down the cell, or ***rotate*** it 90˚ up or down the cell (this is sometimes referred to as ***sideways***).

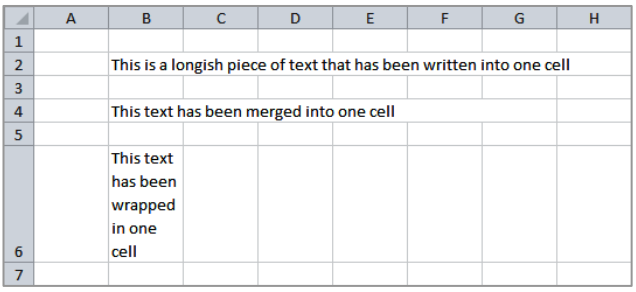


3 Wrapping

Wrapping is a process used in word processors where long sentences automatically wrap to the next line. This can also be done with long text entries that are typed into a cell in a worksheet. A sentence that may span across quite a few columns can be made to wrap down a single cell or even merged into several cells.

4 Merging

Merging basically means combining several cells into one so as to make a super-sized cell which can accommodate larger text entries. It is used quite often for placing a heading across a table at the top rather than leaving it in the top left corner. It is also used together with wrapping to allow longer lines of text to be properly displayed in a worksheet.



ALIGNING RIGHT

As a default in Microsoft Excel, text typed into a cell is aligned to the left border of the cell while numbers are aligned to the right. Of course this is only the default and you can align text, and numbers for that matter, on any border of the cell you wish. Text is sometimes ***aligned to the right*** of a cell to convey the impression of indenting the text to enhance readability of the overall data.

Try This Yourself:

Open File

Before starting this exercise you MUST open the file E813 Cell Alignment_1.xlsx...

1 Click on cell ***B5***

2 Click on the ***Align Text Right*** tool in the ***Alignment*** group on the ***Home*** tab of the ribbon

The text in cell B5 will now align to the right of the cell...

3 Click on ***C5***, hold down Shift and click on ***G5*** to select the range ***C5:G5***

4 Click on the ***Align Text Right*** tool in the ***Alignment*** group on the ***Home*** tab

All of the text in the selected range will now align to the right of their respective cells.

1

	A	B	C	D
1	**Alpheius Global Enterprises**			
2	**Annual Sales**			
3	**Health Services**			
4				
5		**Week 1**	**Week 2**	**Week 3**
6	***Midweek***			
7	**Tuesday**	21,412	25,942	24,944
8	**Wednesday**	20,824	31,288	37,456
9	**Thursday**	20,722	29,782	35,963
10	**Friday**	49,254	64,750	125,811
11				

2

	A	B	C	D
1	**Alpheius Global Enterprises**			
2	**Annual Sales**			
3	**Health Services**			
4				
5		**Week 1**	**Week 2**	**Week 3**
6	***Midweek***			
7	**Tuesday**	21,412	25,942	24,944
8	**Wednesday**	20,824	31,288	37,456
9	**Thursday**	20,722	29,782	35,963
10	**Friday**	49,254	64,750	125,811
11				

4

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	**Alpheius Global Enterprises**						
2	**Annual Sales**						
3	**Health Services**						
4							
5		**Week 1**	**Week 2**	**Week 3**	**Week 4**	**Week 5**	**Total**
6	***Midweek***						
7	**Tuesday**	21,412	25,942	24,944	53,624	35,241	161,163
8	**Wednesday**	20,824	31,288	37,456	48,569	45,214	183,351
9	**Thursday**	20,722	29,782	35,963	25,126	75,963	187,556
10	**Friday**	49,254	64,750	125,811	75,863	15,429	331,107
11							

For Your Reference...

To ***align data*** to the ***right***:

1. Select the cell or range to align
2. Click on the ***Align Text Right*** tool in the ***Alignment*** group on the ***Home*** tab

Handy to Know...

- Since text aligns to the left as a default and numbers to the right, you can use this as an indication of how Excel is treating your data. For example, if data you type goes right then Excel thinks it is working with numbers. This can sometimes be useful when you encounter a problem with a formula.

ALIGNING TO THE CENTRE

For visual effect it is sometimes useful to ***align text and numbers to the centre*** of a cell. This is often used for small values such as part numbers or where there is a change of information in the midst of several columns of numbers. Placing text in the centre means that there is essentially a "corridor" of space left either side which helps improve readability.

Try This Yourself:

Same File

Continue using the previous file with this exercise, or open the file E813 Cell Alignment_2.xlsx...

1 Click on cell ***A6***

2 Click on the ***Centre*** tool in the ***Alignment*** group on the ***Home*** tab of the ribbon

The text in cell A6 will now align to the centre of the cell...

3 Click on ***A7***, hold down Shift and click on ***A18*** to select the range ***A7:A18***

4 Click on the ***Centre*** tool in the ***Alignment*** group on the ***Home*** tab

2

4			
5		Week 1	Week 2
6	*Midweek*		
7	Tuesday	21,412	25,942
8	Wednesday	20,824	31,288
9	Thursday	20,722	29,782
10	Friday	49,254	64,750
11			

3

4			
5		Week 1	Week 2
6	*Midweek*		
7	Tuesday	21,412	25,942
8	Wednesday	20,824	31,288
9	Thursday	20,722	29,782
10	Friday	49,254	64,750
11			
12	Subtotal	112,212	151,762
13			
14	*Weekend*		
15	Saturday	22,126	26,760
16	Sunday	21,027	19,874
17			
18	Subtotal	43,153	46,634
19			

4

4			
5		Week 1	Week 2
6	*Midweek*		
7	Tuesday	21,412	25,942
8	Wednesday	20,824	31,288
9	Thursday	20,722	29,782
10	Friday	49,254	64,750
11			
12	Subtotal	112,212	151,762
13			
14	*Weekend*		
15	Saturday	22,126	26,760
16	Sunday	21,027	19,874
17			
18	Subtotal	43,153	46,634
19			

For Your Reference...

To ***align data*** to the ***centre***:

1. Select the cell or range to align
2. Click on the ***Centre*** tool in the ***Alignment*** group on the ***Home*** tab

Handy to Know...

- The values in the cells will remain centred even if the column is widened or narrowed.

ALIGNING LEFT

Conventional wisdom had it when spreadsheets were first invented that text should ***align to the left*** of a cell and numbers should align to the right. This is the default setup for Excel. However, you can place any text to the left of a cell you please – it can be text, numbers, or even dates.

Try This Yourself:

Same File

Continue using the previous file with this exercise, or open the file E813 Cell Alignment_3.xlsx...

1 Click on ***A6***

2 Click on the ***Align Text Left*** tool in the ***Alignment*** group on the ***Home*** tab

The text in cell A6 will now align to the left of the cell...

3 Click on ***A12***, hold down Ctrl then click on cell ***A14*** and ***A18***

4 Click on the ***Align Text Left*** tool in the ***Alignment*** group on the ***Home*** tab

All of the text in the selected cells will now align to the left of their respective cells

1

4			
5		Week 1	Week 2
6	*Midweek*		
7	Tuesday	21,412	25,942
8	Wednesday	20,824	31,288
9	Thursday	20,722	29,782
10	Friday	49,254	64,750
11			

2

4			
5		Week 1	Week 2
6	*Midweek*		
7	Tuesday	21,412	25,942
8	Wednesday	20,824	31,288
9	Thursday	20,722	29,782
10	Friday	49,254	64,750
11			

4

4			
5		Week 1	Week 2
6	*Midweek*		
7	Tuesday	21,412	25,942
8	Wednesday	20,824	31,288
9	Thursday	20,722	29,782
10	Friday	49,254	64,750
11			
12	Subtotal	112,212	151,762
13			
14	*Weekend*		
15	Saturday	22,126	26,760
16	Sunday	21,027	19,874
17			
18	Subtotal	43,153	46,634
19			

For Your Reference...

To ***align data*** to the ***left***:

1. Select the cell or range to align
2. Click on the ***Align Text Left*** tool in the ***Alignment*** group on the ***Home*** tab

Handy to Know...

- We have only aligned text to the left in the exercise above. Exactly the same technique is used to align numbers to the left. However, we can think of very few times that you would ever need to do this given that numbers are more readable when right aligned.

ROTATING TEXT

Microsoft Excel also allows you to change the orientation of your data – this is known as ***text rotation***. You may, for example, have a worksheet that has many columns of values that need to be squeezed onto one page. Rotating the column headings will allow you to retain narrow columns and still have longish and descriptive headings for each column.

Try This Yourself:

Open File *Before starting this exercise you MUST open the file E813 Cell Alignment_7.xlsx...*

1 Click on cell ***B5***

2 Click on the ***Orientation*** tool in the ***Alignment*** group on the ***Home*** tab and select **Angle Counterclockwise** to angle the cell at 45°

3 Click on the ***Orientation*** tool and select **Angle Clockwise** to angle the cell from the opposite direction

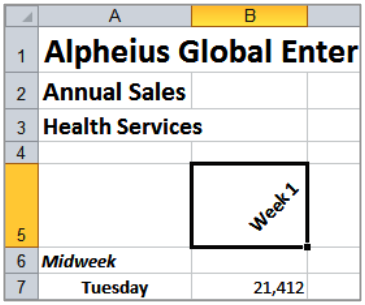
4 Click on the ***Orientation*** tool and select **Vertical Text** to display the text vertically

5 Click on the ***Orientation*** tool and select **Rotate Text Up**

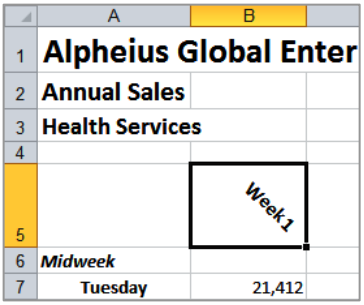
6 Click on the ***Orientation*** tool and select **Rotate Text Down**

7 Select the range ***B5:G5***

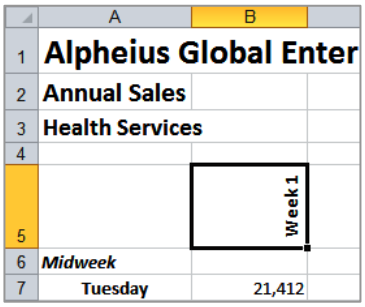
8 Click on the ***Orientation*** tool and select **Angle Counterclockwise**



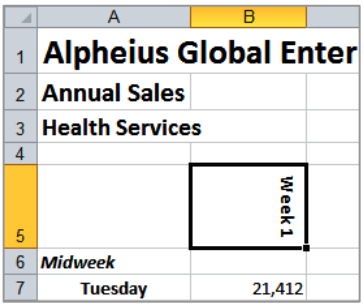
2



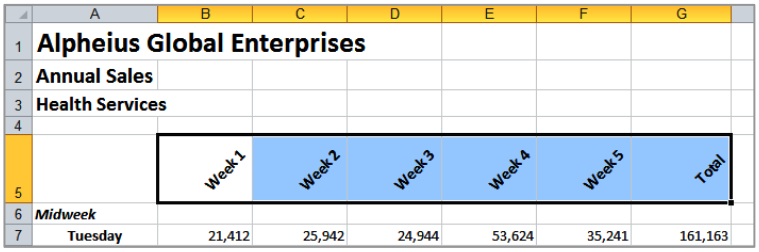
3



5



6



8

For Your Reference...

To ***adjust text rotation***:

1. Select the cell or range to rotate
2. Click on the ***Orientation*** tool in the ***Alignment*** group on the ***Home*** tab and select the appropriate rotation command

Handy to Know...

- You can also rotate text using the options in the ***Format Cells*** dialog box. The options here give you more control also over the rotation angles.

INDENTING CELLS

If left, centre, or right horizontal alignment still is not enough to satisfy your needs in terms of placement within a cell, Microsoft Excel also allows you to ***indent text and numbers*** in a cell. Indenting places consistent spacing to the left of the top and is determined by predefined *stops* built into the cell. Each time you indent the data it moves to the next of these *stops*.

Try This Yourself:

Same File

Continue using the previous file with this exercise, or open the file E813 Cell Alignment_8.xlsx...

1. Click on ***A7***, hold down Shift and click on ***A10*** to select the range ***A7:A10***
2. Click on the ***Align Text Left*** tool in the ***Alignment*** group on the ***Home*** tab to align the text to the left
3. Click on the ***Increase Indent*** tool to indent the cells to one stop
4. Click on the ***Increase Indent*** tool three more times to increase the indent
5. Click on the ***Decrease Indent*** tool twice to decrease the indent
6. Use the above steps to left align and then increase the indent of the range ***A15:A16*** two stops

2

		Week 1	Week 2
5			
6	*Midweek*		
7	Tuesday	21,412	25,942
8	Wednesday	20,824	31,288
9	Thursday	20,722	29,782
10	Friday	49,254	64,750
11			
12	Subto		
13			

3

		Week 1	Week 2
5			
6	*Midweek*		
7	Tuesday	21,412	25,942
8	Wednesday	20,824	31,288
9	Thursday	20,722	29,782
10	Friday	49,254	64,750
11			
12	Subto		
13			

4

		Week 1	Week 2
5			
6	*Midweek*		
7	Tuesday	21,412	25,942
8	Wednesda	20,824	31,288
9	Thursday	20,722	29,782
10	Friday	49,254	64,750
11			
12	Subtotal	112,212	151,762
13			

6

8	Wednesday	20,824	31,288
9	Thursday	20,722	29,782
10	Friday	49,254	64,750
11			
12	Subtotal	112,212	151,762
13			
14	*Weekend*		
15	Saturday	22,126	26,760
16	Sunday	21,027	19,874
17			
18	Subtotal	43,153	46,634

For Your Reference...

To ***indent cells***:

1. Select the cell or range to indent
2. Click on the ***Increase Indent*** tool to increase the indent or the ***Decrease Indent*** tool to decrease the indent

Handy to Know...

- You don't have to left align the cells prior to indenting. However, it does help if you do this as you are then assured that the indenting is commenced from as far left as possible.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Congratulations!

You have now completed the **Cell alignment** booklet. This booklet was designed to get you to the point where you can competently perform a variety of operations as listed in the objectives on page 2.

We have tried to build up your skills and knowledge by having you work through specific tasks. The step by step approach will serve as a reference for you when you need to repeat a task.

Where To From Here...

The following is a little advice about what to do next:

- Spend some time playing with what you have learnt. You should reinforce the skills that you have acquired and use some of the application's commands. This will test just how much of the concepts and features have stuck! Don't try a big task just yet if you can avoid it - small is a good way to start.
- Some aspects of the course may now be a little vague. Go over some of the points that you may be unclear about. Use the examples and exercises in these notes and have another go - these step-by-step notes were designed to help you in the classroom and in the work place!

Here are a few techniques and strategies that we've found handy for learning more about technology:

- visit CLD's e-learning zone on the Intranet
- read computer magazines - there are often useful articles about specific techniques
- if you have the skills and facilities, browse the Internet, specifically the technical pages of the application that you have just learnt
- take an interest in what your work colleagues have done and how they did it - we don't suggest that you plagiarise but you can certainly learn from the techniques of others
- if your software came with a manual (which is rare nowadays) spend a bit of time each day reading a few pages. Then try the techniques out straight away - over a period of time you'll learn a lot this way
- and of course, there are also more courses and booklets for you to work through
- finally, don't forget to contact CLD's IT Training Helpdesk on **01243-752100**