

Teach a little, practise a lot

Companion to the 16-page student pack. Keep answers separate until the learner has tried.

Audience: a Grade 4 beginner who can read short instructions and use a mouse and keyboard. No previous spreadsheet experience is assumed.

Before the first lesson

Open English-language Excel for Windows and choose a folder the child can find. Check that they can create and save a blank workbook. No downloads, macros, personal data or prepared Excel files are needed; learners create their own files.

Day	Teaching focus	Success evidence
1	Cells, text, numbers, save	Find a named cell and reopen the saved list.
2	Ranges and clear formatting	Read the whole table; explain that formatting does not change values.
3	Formulas and cell references	Use row-matched references; watch a result update.
4	SUM and a range	Add all five days once; exclude the total cell.
5	Charts and A4 preview	Chart four categories, test an input and preview a readable page.

How to use each 40-minute lesson

Demonstrate for 8 minutes, let the child work for 20, allow 8 minutes for paper practice, then use 4 minutes to check and save. On Day 5, include the print preview in the computer time. The actual paper print can be done later.

The review, own-table grid and quick guide (student pages 14-16) are optional. If typing is slow, enter a few labels together and keep the child responsible for selecting cells and explaining formulas.

Printing and software notes

Student pack: A4 portrait, Actual size / 100%, preferably single-sided for writing space. Greyscale works. These PDFs are already laid out for printing; the Excel print lesson teaches a separate skill.

Web users: rename the file at the top and confirm it is saved online. Use Excel's own File > Print. Menu labels may vary. The guide is not a claim of alignment to a particular school board.

Cells and saving

Student pages 3-4

Question	Answer and explanation
1	8. B2 is the number beside Pencils.
2	A4. Rulers is in column A, row 4.
3	Column B, row 5. The letter comes before the number.
4	Examples: A2 contains text; B2 contains a number. Accept any correct examples from the printed table.
5	C4. Use column C followed by row 4.

Expected saved sheet after practice

	A	B
1	Item	Number
2	Pencils	8
3	Erasers	5
4	Rulers	4
5	Notebooks	6
6	Glue	2

Sheet: Supplies. File: Day1_Supplies.xlsx. The original 3 in B3 becomes 5. After the Undo exercise, B6 returns from 20 to 2.

Check the process

- ☐ Ask the child to point to a row, a column and B4.
- ☐ Reopen the saved workbook and verify B3 = 5 and B6 = 2.
- ☐ Ask the child to explain the difference between the file name and the sheet name.

Common mix-up

If the child types A1, B1 or the row numbers into the data area, explain that these are Excel's built-in location labels. Only type the table contents.

A clear reading log

Student pages 5-6

Question	Answer and explanation
1	Thursday, 25 minutes. This is the largest value in the original table.
2	Wednesday, 10 minutes. This is the smallest original value, before editing.
3	A1:B6. Two columns, with the header row and five day rows.
4	18. Wednesday is on row 4, so its value is B4.
5	No. A background colour changes appearance; it does not change the stored number.

Expected saved values after practice

	A	B
1	Day	Minutes
2	Monday	15
3	Tuesday	20
4	Wednesday	18
5	Thursday	25
6	Friday	20

Sheet: Reading. File: Day2_Reading.xlsx. A1:B1 has bold, 14-point headings and light fill. A1:B6 has borders. Columns A and B are wide enough to show every entry.

Teach selection before formatting

Have the child say the intended range aloud before clicking a tool. If only one cell changes, the range was probably not selected. Do not require an exact shade of grey or an exact column width.

The printed question answers use the original table. The saved workbook uses the corrected Wednesday value of 18. Keeping these two moments clear prevents confusion.

Read the references

Student pages 7-8 | File: Day3_Marbles.xlsx | Sheet: Marbles

	A	B	C	D
1	Player	Start	Added	Now
2	Mia	6	3	9
3	Arun	8	4	12
4	Jo	5	2	7

Cell	Formula	Result / explanation
D2	=B2+C2	9 = 6 + 3
D3	=B3+C3	12 = 8 + 4
D4	=B4+C4	7 = 5 + 2

Answers to paper practice

1. D2 temporarily shows **11**: $6 + 5 = 11$. The formula uses C2, so changing C2 changes the answer. After C2 is restored to 3, D2 returns to 9.

Formula	Answer	Why
=7+5	12	7 plus 5
=18-6	12	18 minus 6
=4*3	12	4 groups of 3
=16/4	4	16 shared into 4 equal groups

2. The missing symbol is **=**. The corrected formula is =5+2. Without =, the entry 5+2 is not entered as a calculation.

Observe, then ask

Click D3 and inspect the formula bar. A typed answer of 12 is numerically right but does not demonstrate a formula. Accept =C3+B3 as an equivalent addition formula. Check the input-change behaviour, not only the displayed answers.

A total that updates

Student pages 9-10

Question / task	Answer and explanation
1. Range B2:B6	B2, B3, B4, B5 and B6. There are five cells.
2. Formula in B7	=SUM(B2:B6). It adds only the five daily values.
Original total	$8 + 12 + 10 + 6 + 14 = 50$.
Prediction / test	53. Thursday rises by 3, so the total rises from 50 to 53. Restore B5 to 6; the final total is 50.
3. Fruit formula	=SUM(B2:B5) in B6. The fruit table has four vote values.
4. Fruit total	$4 + 7 + 3 + 6 = 20$.

Two ranges, two different total cells

Table	Numbers to add	Total cell	Formula
Reading pages	B2 through B6	B7	=SUM(B2:B6)
Fruit votes	B2 through B5	B6	=SUM(B2:B5)

Why not include the total?

Putting =SUM(B2:B7) in B7 includes B7 itself. This creates a circular reference. Help the child select only the input numbers, then keep the result immediately below them.

Check the process

- ☐ The formula bar shows SUM with the correct first and last cell.
- ☐ The result changes to 53 when Thursday changes to 9.
- ☐ The file is saved after Thursday is restored to 6.

Sheet: Pages. File: Day4_Pages.xlsx. The fruit question is paper practice and is reused as the Day 5 worked example; a separate Day 4 fruit file is not required.

A chart you can explain

Student pages 11-13

Worked fruit chart: Apples 4, Mangoes 7, Bananas 3, Oranges 6. Mangoes has the tallest column.
Save this practice example as Day5_FruitExample.xlsx.



Final report: in B6 use =SUM(B2:B5), giving **20**. Chart A1:B5 only. The Total row is excluded.

Question / check	Answer
Page 12, question 1	Football, with 8 votes.
Page 12, question 2	6 more votes: $8 - 2 = 6$.
Page 12, question 3	20 votes in all.
Page 13 input-change test	23 votes while $B4 = 7$. The Skipping column rises to 7. Restore $B4 = 4$; total returns to 20.

Completion checklist

- ☐ Four game names and all four numbers are accurate.
- ☐ A working SUM formula gives 20 after restoration.
- ☐ The chart has four correctly sized columns, a useful title and axis titles.
- ☐ A4 print preview shows the full table and chart at a readable size.
- ☐ The saved file is Day5_Games.xlsx; the sheet is Games.

Accept sensible differences in chart colours and styling. Number labels above columns are optional. A checked print preview is enough if no printer is available.

End-of-week check

Student page 14: 10 marks. Award 1 mark for each correct question.

#	Answer	Reason
1	A3	Pencils is in column A, row 3.
2	2	B4 is the number beside Rulers.
3	B and 3	Both the column and the row must be correct.
4	= (equals sign)	It begins a formula.
5	=B2+B3	Adds the two requested cells. Accept =B3+B2 or =SUM(B2:B3).
6	10	$4 + 6 = 10$.
7	12	The star means multiply: 3 times 4.
8	=SUM(B2:B4)	Includes 4, 6 and 2. The question asks for SUM.
9	Ctrl + S	The Windows shortcut to save changes.
10	Pencils	6 is the largest value.

Use the score to choose the next practice

A total score is only one clue. For questions 1-3, practise finding cells. For 4-8, practise formulas. For 9, rehearse saving and reopening. For 10, ask the child to compare the chart columns with the source numbers.

Do not confuse paper knowledge with computer skill

Watch the child select a range, enter a real formula, save a file and explain a chart. If they need a prompt, note the help and let them try again independently. This is a practice check, not a formal grading standard.

Student page 15 is open-ended. Accept any small, sensible table with clear headings, correct formulas and a chart that matches its input data. The quick guide on page 16 can stay beside the keyboard.

Help, sources and next practice

The examples, diagrams and questions in this course are original.

What you notice	What to check
A formula is shown as text	Confirm it starts with =. If the cell was Text-formatted, change it to General and re-enter the formula.
An answer does not update	Check the references and use Formulas > Calculation Options > Automatic.
A word is cut off / ##### appears	Widen the column first. Other number/date issues may need an adult to investigate.
An extra Total column is in the chart	Select only the category rows and headings as the chart source.
The printout is tiny or incomplete	Resize the chart, check the print area and recheck the preview.

Official Microsoft help used for the menu guidance

1. Create and enter data - Microsoft Support
2. Basic tasks in Excel - Microsoft Support
3. Save your workbook - Microsoft Support
4. Change column width and row height - Microsoft Support
5. Apply or remove cell borders - Microsoft Support
6. Create a simple formula - Microsoft Support
7. SUM function - Microsoft Support
8. Present data in a column chart - Microsoft Support
9. Print a worksheet or workbook - Microsoft Support

Links are clickable in this PDF. On paper, search Microsoft Support using the titles above. Guidance checked 11 October 2026. Illustrations show cell relationships and chart values; they are not screenshots of a particular Excel release.

Suggested next week

Repeat with a new small dataset before adding new tools. Suitable next steps are sorting a whole table, using MIN and MAX, and comparing two weeks of reading. Introduce one new idea at a time.