

# Protecting individual cells in an Excel spreadsheet

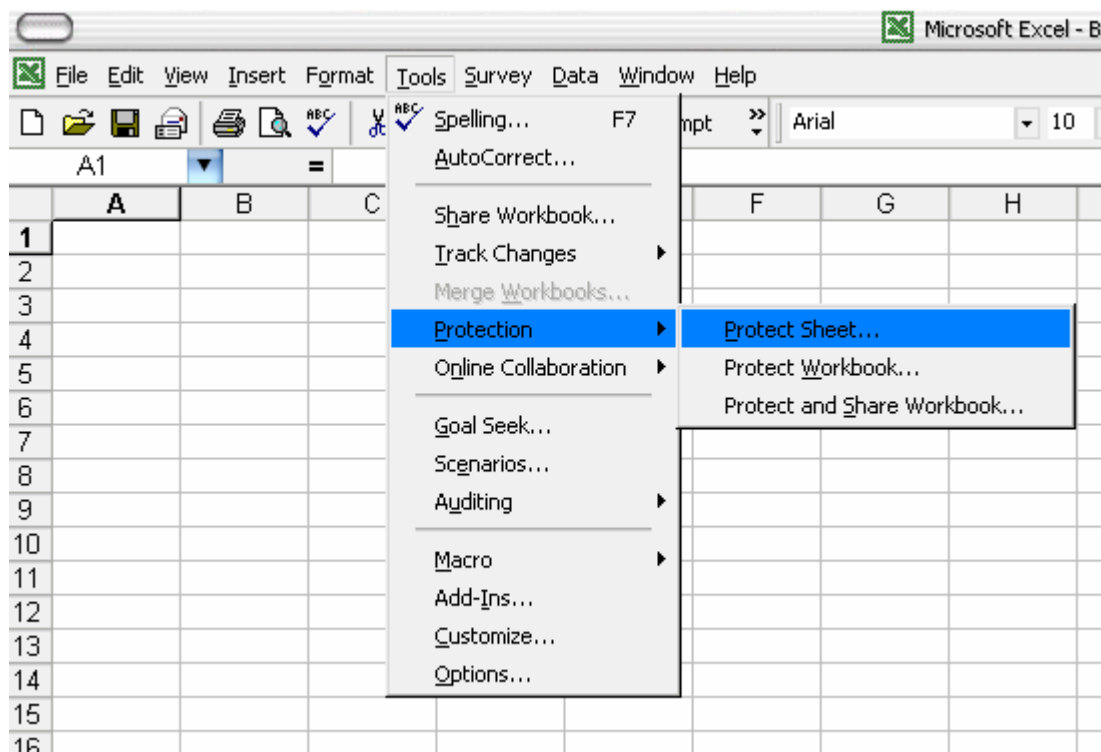
*By Kevin Diggins*

I recently learned how to perform Cell Level Protection (**CLP**) in MS Excel.

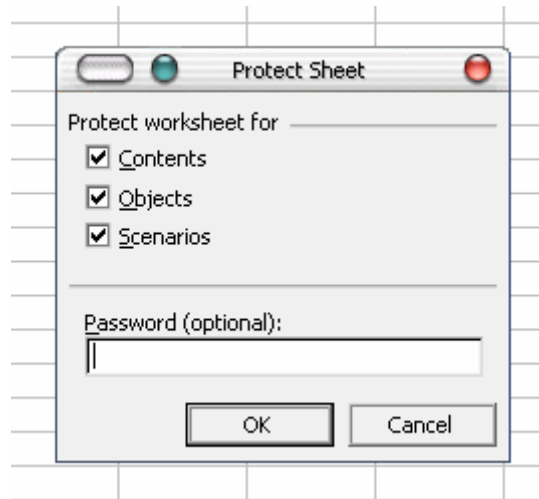
CLP is useful when you have a worksheet that requires some cells to be changed and other cells that MUST NOT change. **CLP** is especially useful on spreadsheets where several users will be making changes to the same spreadsheet.

## THE BASICS

All new MS Excel worksheets default to having ALL cells protected. For example, Create a new worksheet then **select TOOLS | PROTECTION | PROTECT SHEET**



You should get the following **DialogBox**.



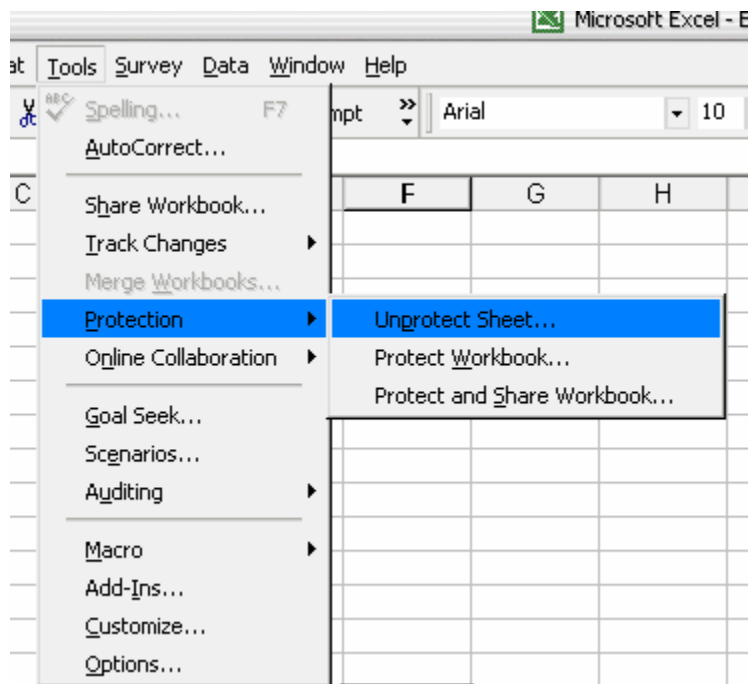
I normally protect all 3 items : **Contents, Objects, and Scenarios**  
and I almost **never use a Password** for fear that I won't remember it!

Now that you've done this, **try typing into any cell**  
You should get the following **AlertBox**:



**Okay ... this is good!**

We've protected our spreadsheet from accidental changes.  
If you want to make changes to the spreadsheet, go back to  
**TOOLS | PROTECTION | UNPROTECT SHEET**



## HERE IS WHERE CELL LEVEL PROTECTION COMES IN.

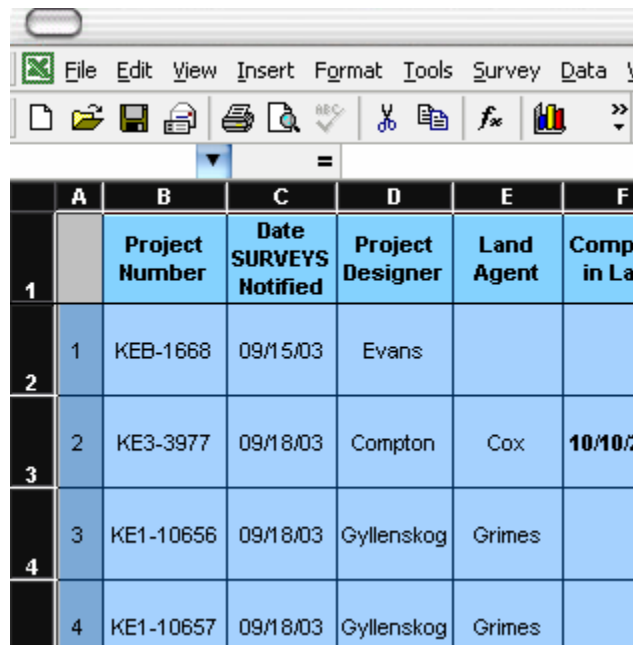
After you have your worksheet the way you want it, do the following steps:

- UNPROTECTED the worksheet
- Left Click the SELECT ALL cell (See red arrow)

 A screenshot of an Excel spreadsheet showing a table with 6 columns (A-F) and 5 rows (1-5). The first row is a header row with the following text: 'Project Number', 'Date SURVEYS Notified', 'Project Designer', 'Land Agent', and 'Compl in La'. The second row contains: '1', 'KEB-1668', '09/15/03', 'Evans', and an empty cell. The third row contains: '2', 'KE3-3977', '09/18/03', 'Compton', 'Cox', and '10/10/2'. The fourth row contains: '3', 'KE1-10656', '09/18/03', 'Gyllenskog', 'Grimes', and an empty cell. The fifth row contains: '4', 'KE1-10657', '09/18/03', 'Gyllenskog', 'Grimes', and an empty cell. A red arrow points from the bottom right towards the 'A1' cell, which is the top-left cell of the data area.
 

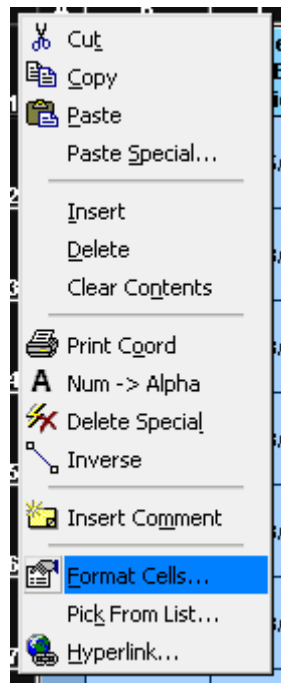
	A	B	C	D	E	F
1		Project Number	Date SURVEYS Notified	Project Designer	Land Agent	Compl in La
2	1	KEB-1668	09/15/03	Evans		
3	2	KE3-3977	09/18/03	Compton	Cox	10/10/2
4	3	KE1-10656	09/18/03	Gyllenskog	Grimes	
5	4	KE1-10657	09/18/03	Gyllenskog	Grimes	

Your entire worksheet should turn blue



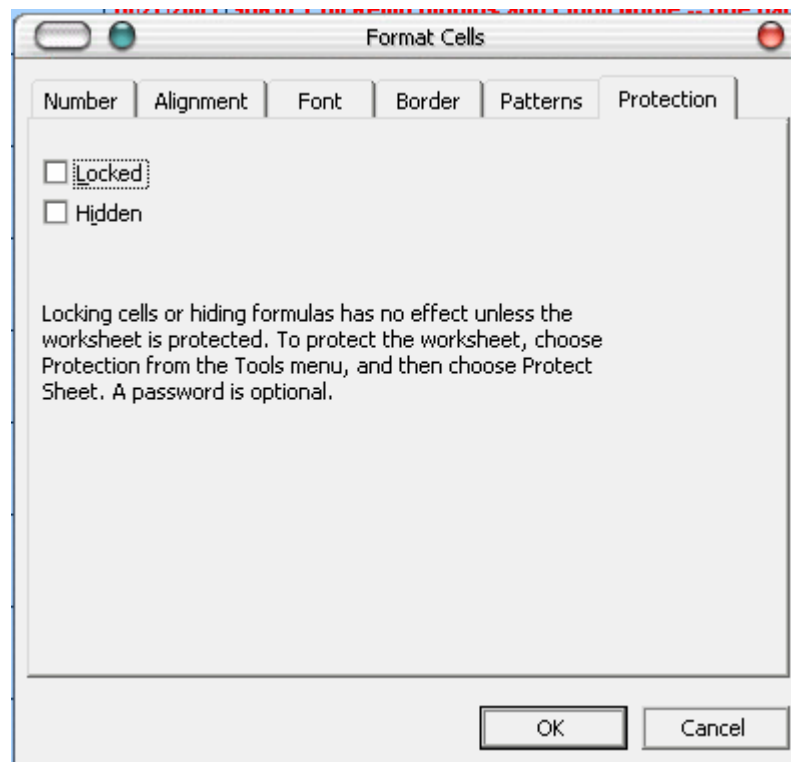
	A	B	C	D	E	F
1		Project Number	Date SURVEYS Notified	Project Designer	Land Agent	Comp in La
2	1	KEB-1668	09/15/03	Evans		
3	2	KE3-3977	09/18/03	Compton	Cox	10/10/03
4	3	KE1-10656	09/18/03	Gyllenskog	Grimes	
	4	KE1-10657	09/18/03	Gyllenskog	Grimes	

- Next, Right Click and select **FORMAT CELLS**



You should get the following **DialogBox**:

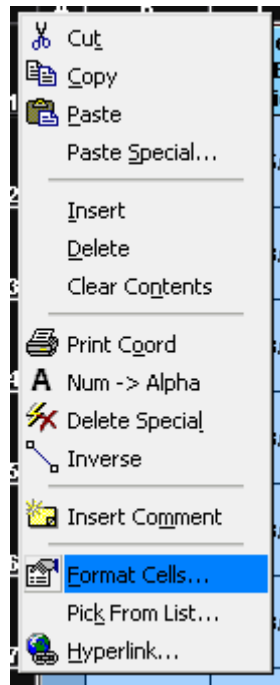
**UNCHECK THE LOCKED OPTION then Click OK**



**Now, all INDIVIDUAL cells are UNPROTECTED.**

You are now free to protect individual cells or groups of cells while leaving the rest of the cells unprotected.

- **Select the cells that -YOU- want to protect, then**
  - Right Click and select **FORMAT CELLS**
  -



\* Now LOCK your selected Cells by clicking the **Locked** option box.

B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
Project Number	Date SURVEYS Notified	Project Designer	Land Agent	Complete in Land	Z-Code Date	Status / Remarks	Drawing Received A or R
KEB-1668	09/15/03	Evans				AMEC has been authorized to complete a BLUESTAKE	
KE3-3977	09/18/03	Comptor				Easements acquired, Keys Department	
KE1-10656	09/18/03	Gyllenskd					
KE1-10657	09/18/03	Gyllenskd					
KE1-10658	09/18/03	Gyllenskd					
KE1-10659	09/18/03	Gyllenskd					
KE1-10662	09/18/03	Gyllenskd					
KE1-10663	09/18/03	Gyllenskd					

Format Cells

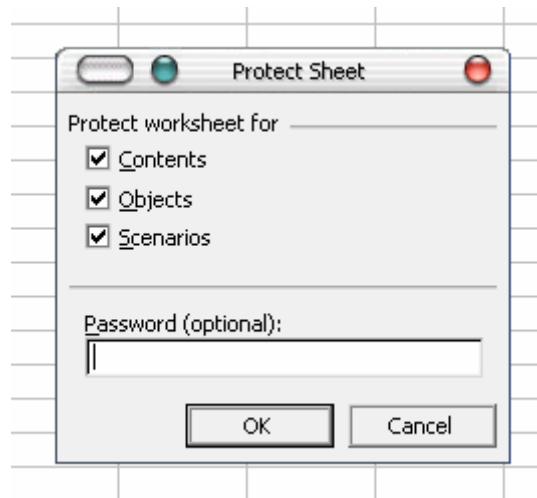
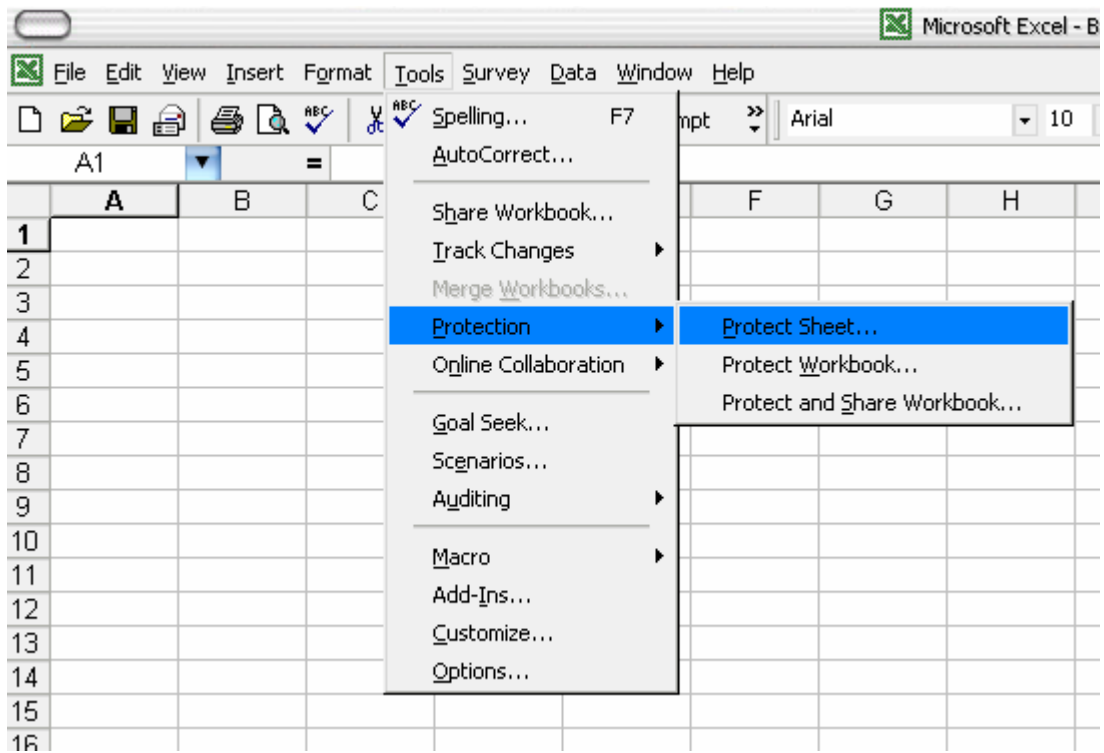
Number | Alignment | Font | Border | Patterns | Protection

Locked  
 Hidden

Locking cells or hiding formulas has no effect unless the worksheet is protected. To protect the worksheet, choose Protection from the Tools menu, and then choose Protect Sheet. A password is optional.

OK    Cancel

When you've completed all your changes, the final step is to PROTECT THE WORKSHEET.



You're all set!

**Convince yourself that it's working by trying to type into the Protected and Unprotect cells.**