

Cell Formatting: Colours, Hidden Rows and Columns, Toolbar Control

60 minutes

ICT Specialism 3: Spreadsheets

Outcome M3.U3.4

WHAT THIS LESSON DOES

In this lesson you will learn how to highlight answer cells in a spreadsheet so readers can find them easily, hide rows or columns with working calculations, clear formatting without deleting numbers, and use ribbon or full-screen view control for more sheet space.

CURRICULUM OUTCOMES

Outcome	What the specification asks for
M3.U3.4	Manipulate and edit spreadsheets and prepare for printing by using features such as changing margins, orientation, page set up, gridlines, selecting cell range and selected charts.

WHAT STUDENTS SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO

- Highlight answer cells so a reader knows where to look
- Hide and unhide rows or columns used for intermediate calculations
- Clear formatting without deleting the underlying data
- Use ribbon or full-screen view control to free sheet space when checking a long range

BEFORE THE BELL

- Print key-concepts and common-issues tables for weaker readers.
- Upload starter file sm3_format_practice (products, VAT/Gross/TOTAL formulas already filled) into 09_specialism/sm3/ for the class.
- Confirm sm3_vat_calc (or equivalent) exists as the independent-practice fallback.
- Have a sample project sheet ready for the 2-minute answer-vs-working think-aloud before independent practice.
- Open the starter on the projector for the short highlight / hide / Clear Formats demo.
- Print key-concepts and common-issues handouts. Have the before/after opening image ready on the projector.
- Have printed key-concepts sheets ready for weaker readers.
- Upload starter file sm3_format_practice (with formulas filled) into 09_specialism/sm3/ for the class. Open it on the projector for the short demo.
- Have printed common-issues handouts ready.
- Confirm each student can open an existing sm3 spreadsheet (or sm3_vat_calc / sm3_format_practice fallback) before independent practice. Have one sample sheet ready for the 2-minute think-aloud.
- No extra prep beyond the circulating notes from independent practice.

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HOW THE LESSON RUNS

5 min	introduction	Introduction
6 min	content	Key concepts
18 min	activity	Step-by-step task
3 min	content	Common issues
18 min	activity	Independent practice
5 min	content	Reflection
5 min	summary	Lesson summary

TEACHING MOVES

- Model highlight, hide, and Clear Formats on the projector, then release students into the written steps.
- Before independent practice, spend about 2 minutes thinking aloud on a real sample sheet: answers → green; working column → hide; neon styling → Clear Formats.
- Move around the room during independent practice and record, for each student, the calm answer highlight, the hidden intermediate range and the formulas still updating, since that is what the later assessment looks for.
- Use whole-class discussion in the reflection step to share specific cell references.
- Emphasise Undo for any hide-versus-delete mistakes.
- The two-colour input/answer extension may go home; the polished project spreadsheet itself is finished in class.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR

- Deleting a column or row instead of hiding it, causing #REF! errors. Solution: Undo and hide from the header.
- Highlighting the wrong cells. Solution: Identify answer cells before applying colour.
- Confusing clear formatting with delete. Solution: Use Clear Formats only.

DIFFERENTIATION

- Support: starter file removes the formula-build barrier so everyone reaches presentation skills.
- Support: printed concept and common-issues sheets; paired work on the step-by-step if needed.
- Extension: second calm colour on input cells; print-preview check that hidden working ranges stay out of the way.