

## EXCEL



By Bill Jelen

# Formatting All Worksheets at Once

Sandy from Cleveland asked this question at the IMA Annual Conference & Exposition in Baltimore: “I have a workbook with several worksheets and want to format all of the sheets in a similar manner. Is there a method to do it without having to format each one individually?” There are two techniques to solve this problem: (1) group mode and (2) editing a recorded macro.

## Group Mode

When you select more than one worksheet, the worksheets are in Group mode. Any changes that you make to the visible worksheet are also made to all of the worksheets in the selection. You can tell that you are in Group mode when the title bar of Microsoft Excel includes the word [Group] after your workbook name.

Group mode works best when all the worksheets have an identical layout. For example, if all the worksheets have titles in rows 1 through 3, a blank row 4, headings in row 5, data in rows 6 through 99, and a total row in row 100, then you have an easy scenario for using Group mode. In other cases, the top of the worksheet might be identical, but

then you’ll have a differing number of detail rows on each worksheet. In these cases, you would only want to use Group mode when working on a section of the worksheet that’s identical to the other worksheets.

### Selecting All Worksheets

Before selecting all the worksheets, decide which worksheet you want to be the visible worksheet. Right-click that worksheet tab, and choose Select All Sheets. Alternatively, you can select the first worksheet, then hold down SHIFT and click the tab for the last worksheet.

### Selecting Some Worksheets

If you need to select noncontiguous worksheets, hold down CTRL while clicking additional worksheets. Say that you wanted to select the worksheets for months with 30 days. Start by selecting the April worksheet. Then hold down the CTRL key while clicking on the worksheet tabs for June, September, and November.

### Applying Changes to the Selected Worksheets

When worksheets are grouped, any

changes that you make to the visible worksheet are applied to all of the selected sheets. This includes formatting cells, entering data, and adding formulas to cells. In fact, if you forget that you have worksheets grouped, you can easily destroy data on all of the selected worksheets if you start entering data intended only for the visible worksheet. The [Group] indicator at the top of the application is small and easy to overlook. Get in the habit of exiting Group mode as soon as you’ve finished applying changes to all of the worksheets.

### Exiting Group Mode

The most reliable way to exit Group mode is to right-click a worksheet tab and choose Ungroup Sheets. There are other methods, but the rules for those methods change depending on if all worksheets are selected or not.

## Editing a Recorded Macro

There are some commands that are grayed out when you’re in Group mode. For example, you can’t specify that you want rows 1:5 to print at the top of every page when you’re in Group mode.



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If you want to change this setting on all of the worksheets, you can record and then edit a simple macro.

With only one worksheet selected, turn on the macro recorder. In Excel 2007, go to the View ribbon and select Macros, Record New Macro. In Excel 2003, go to Tools, Macro, Record New Macro. In the Record Macro dialog, choose to store the macro in a new workbook.

While the macro recorder is running, access the Page Setup dialog. On the Sheet tab of the Page Setup dialog, go to Rows to Repeat at Top and enter 1:5. Close the Page Setup dialog, then stop recording the macro. The Stop Recording button can be found to the right of the Ready indicator in the bottom-left corner of the window in Excel 2007 or on a floating toolbar in Excel 2003.

Once you've stopped recording,

press ALT+F8 to open the Macro dialog. Select the macro you just recorded, and press Edit. This will take you to the VBA Macro Editor. You'll see that the macro recorder set up the rows to repeat at top with this code:

```
With ActiveSheet.PageSetup
    .PrintTitleRows = "$1:$5"
    .PrintTitleColumns = ""
End With
```

The macro recorder also recorded 46 additional lines of code that note every setting in the four-tab Page Setup dialog. Delete those lines of code, leaving only the End Sub command at the bottom of the macro.

The recorded macro only sets the Rows to Repeat at Top on the active worksheet. You can type three new lines in the macro to have it work with all worksheets. Add the bolded lines

shown below:

**For Each WS in ActiveWorkbook.  
Worksheets**

**WS.Select**

With ActiveSheet.PageSetup

.PrintTitleRows = "\$1:\$5"

.PrintTitleColumns = ""

End With

**Next WS**

Now press ALT+Q to return to Excel. Reopen the macro dialog by pressing ALT+F8. Run the macro you just edited. You'll find that the Rows to Repeat at Top setting has now been applied to all the worksheets.

Those three new lines of code set up a loop that repeat the recorded macro on every worksheet in the workbook. You can add them to most recorded macros to have the macro run on all the worksheets in the workbook. **SF**

*Bill Jelen is the host of [MrExcel.com](http://MrExcel.com) and does Professional Development seminars for IMA chapters around the U.S. Visit [www.MrExcel.com/speaking.html](http://www.MrExcel.com/speaking.html) for details on bringing Bill to your next chapter or council PD seminar. Send questions for future articles to [IMA@MrExcel.com](mailto:IMA@MrExcel.com).*