

Microsoft Office Excel

How to unhide row 1 and column A in an Excel sheet

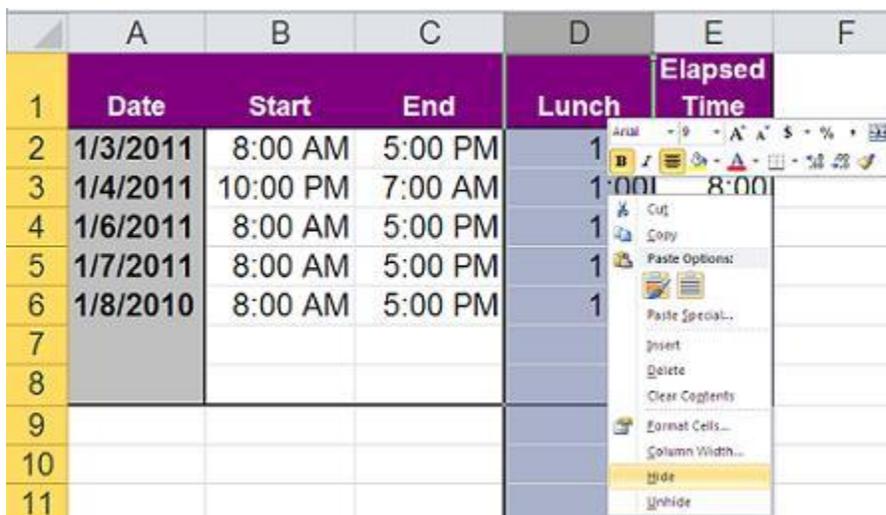
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Takeaway: The typical un hiding techniques don't work everywhere in Excel. Learn an easy to remember method for un hiding row 1 and column A.

Hiding and un hiding rows and columns is a straightforward and easy task, unless you're trying to un hide row 1 or column A. When un hiding a row or column, you select the adjacent rows or columns, but there's no row above row 1 or column to the left of column A, which presents a bit of a conundrum. Today, I'll show you how to un hide row 1 and column A.

First, let's run through the instructions for hiding and un hiding rows and columns, just in case this task is new to you. To hide a row or column, you click the header to select the entire row or column, right-click the selection, and choose Hide from the resulting context menu. To hide multiple noncontiguous rows or columns, select the rows or columns and choose Hide & Unhide from the Format dropdown in the Cells group. In Excel 2003, choose Column or Row from the Format menu, and then select Hide.



The screenshot shows an Excel spreadsheet with columns A through F and rows 1 through 11. The spreadsheet data is as follows:

| | A | B | C | D | E | F |
|----|----------|----------|---------|-------|--------------|------|
| 1 | Date | Start | End | Lunch | Elapsed Time | |
| 2 | 1/3/2011 | 8:00 AM | 5:00 PM | 1 | 1:00 | 8:00 |
| 3 | 1/4/2011 | 10:00 PM | 7:00 AM | 1 | | |
| 4 | 1/6/2011 | 8:00 AM | 5:00 PM | 1 | | |
| 5 | 1/7/2011 | 8:00 AM | 5:00 PM | 1 | | |
| 6 | 1/8/2010 | 8:00 AM | 5:00 PM | 1 | | |
| 7 | | | | | | |
| 8 | | | | | | |
| 9 | | | | | | |
| 10 | | | | | | |
| 11 | | | | | | |

A context menu is open over the 'Lunch' header in column D, with the 'Hide' option selected. The menu items are: Cut, Copy, Paste Options, Paste Special..., Insert, Delete, Clear Contents, Format Cells..., Column Width..., Hide, and Unhide.

| | A | B | C | E | F |
|---|----------|----------|---------|--------------|---|
| 1 | Date | Start | End | Elapsed Time | |
| 2 | 1/3/2011 | 8:00 AM | 5:00 PM | 8:00 | |
| 3 | 1/4/2011 | 10:00 PM | 7:00 AM | 8:00 | |
| 4 | 1/6/2011 | 8:00 AM | 5:00 PM | 8:00 | |
| 5 | 1/7/2011 | 8:00 AM | 5:00 PM | 8:00 | |
| 6 | 1/8/2010 | 8:00 AM | 5:00 PM | 8:00 | |
| 7 | | | | 0:00 | |
| 8 | | | | 0:00 | |
| 9 | | | | | |

You can quickly discern that a row or column is hidden by the missing header. Unhiding is also simple. Select the adjacent columns or rows, right-click, and select Unhide from the resulting context menu. In the sheet below, I selected columns C and E to unhide column D. Use the same process to unhide multiple non-contiguous rows and columns as you would a single row or column, just select a larger range.

| | A | B | C | E | F |
|----|----------|----------|---------|--------------|---|
| 1 | Date | Start | End | Elapsed Time | |
| 2 | 1/3/2011 | 8:00 AM | 5:00 PM | 8:00 | |
| 3 | 1/4/2011 | 10:00 PM | 7:00 AM | 8:00 | |
| 4 | 1/6/2011 | 8:00 AM | 5:00 PM | 8:00 | |
| 5 | 1/7/2011 | 8:00 AM | 5:00 PM | 8:00 | |
| 6 | 1/8/2010 | 8:00 AM | 5:00 PM | 8:00 | |
| 7 | | | | 0:00 | |
| 8 | | | | 0:00 | |
| 9 | | | | | |
| 10 | | | | | |
| 11 | | | | | |
| 12 | | | | | |
| 13 | | | | | |

It's a simple task, but a problem arises when you want to unhide row 1 or column A because there's no row or column above or to the left, respectively.

When row 1 or column A is hidden, enter A1 in the Name Box, and press Enter. Excel will select cell A1, but you won't see that happen, because the cell's hidden. Next, click the Format dropdown in the Cells group (on

the Home tab) and choose Hide & Unhide. Then, select Unhide and Excel will expose the hidden row or column. In Excel 2003, use the Name Box to select cell A1. Then, choose Row or Column from the Format menu, and select Unhide.

There are a couple of tricks for un hiding, but I've found most users forget them because they don't use them often enough to commit them to memory. This technique seems easy for most users to remember. What's your favorite trick for un hiding row 1 or column A?