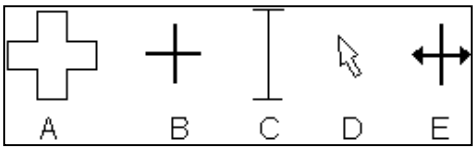
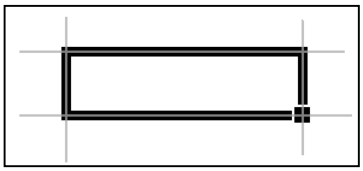
Microsoft Excel 2013: Mouse Pointers & Cursor Movements

As you move the mouse over the Excel window it changes shape to indicate the availability of different functions. The five main shapes are shown in the diagram below.



A	General pointer for selecting cells singly or in groups
B	Pointer used at bottom right of selection to extend and fill data. Selected cells are shown by means of a heavy border as shown.  The extension point is at the bottom right of the border and is a detached square.
C	Insertion point. When pointer is like this you may type in text in this area. You must double click the left mouse button to move the cursor (a flashing vertical line) into the cell area. Insertion and editing can then be done in the normal way.
D	Pointer for menus or moving a selection. When Copying a selection a small cross appears
E	Used where you can change the dimensions of a Row or column. This pointer indicates that you can drag a boundary in the direction of the arrows.

What do the different mouse pointer shapes mean in Microsoft Excel?

The mouse pointer changes shape in Microsoft Excel depending upon the context. The six shapes are as follows:

	Used for selecting cells
	The I-beam which indicates the cursor position when editing a cell entry.
	The fill handle. Used for copying formula or extending a data series.
	To select cells on the worksheet. Selects whole row/column when positioned on the number/letter heading label.
	At borders of column headings. Drag to widen a column.
	At borders of row letters. Drag to increase height of row.

Excel Cursor Movements

To achieve this:	Do this:
Move the active **cell** up one row	Press <up arrow> key
Move the active **cell** down one row	Press <down arrow> key
Move the active **cell** left one column	Press <left arrow> key
Move the active **cell** right one column	Press <right arrow> key
Move the active **cell** one screen down	Press <Page Down> key
Move the active **cell** one screen up	Press <Page Up> key
Move the active **cell** to the first **cell** in the row	Press <Home> key
Move to the last active **cell** in a row	Press <End> key
Move to **cell** A1	Press <Ctrl>+<Home>
Move to the intersection of the last active row and column	Press <Ctrl>+<End>
If the cursor is currently in a data cell, move in the direction of the arrow until it encounters an empty cell; if the cursor is currently in a blank cell, moves in the direction of the arrow until it encounters a non-blank cell	Press <End> followed by an arrow key (two consecutive keystrokes)
Enter a **cell** address and go directly to it	Press <F5>

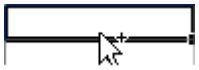
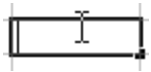
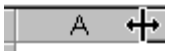
To select any range of cells in Excel

Before formatting any cells in Excel, you must first **select** (highlight) them.

To achieve this:	Do this:
Select (highlight) cells using the keyboard	Hold the **shift key** down while using any of the above commands to move the cursor.
Select (highlight) cells using the mouse	When the mouse is a white plus sign drag the mouse over the desired cells.
Select **non-adjacent** cells	Select the first range of cells with the mouse, then **while holding the control key down**, drag the mouse over each additional range of cells that you wish to select.

Excel's cursor shapes

The cursor in Excel takes on a number of different shapes, depending on where you are on the worksheet.

Shape	Used to:
	The **Select Cursor.** Select a cell or range. This is <u>always</u> used to select data before applying formatting commands.
	The **Fill Handle.** Use this to copy formulas or values. The fill handle only appears when you are in the lower right corner of the current selection.
	The **White Arrow with a smaller 4-headed black arrow.** Use this to drag and drop the selected cell or range. The white arrow only appears when you are at the edge of the current selection.
	The **I-Beam.** Use this to enter or edit data. The cursor (vertical line inside the cell) blinks.
	The **2-headed arrow (horizontal).** Resize column width
	The **2-headed arrow (vertical).** Resize row height
	The **Format Painter.** Use this to copy cell formats. Click on the text that is already formatted the way you want it. Then click on the Format Painter button (on the **Home** tab, in the **Clipboard** group). Click on one cell or drag the cursor over the cells that you want to format. They will be formatted exactly the same as the cell that you were in when you clicked on the Format Painter