Excel 2019 with JAWS
Adjusting Column Width

Often, you will need to change the width of a column in order to display all of the text in a given cell. You have two methods of adjusting the width of a column, these are to manually specify a column width or to use the AutoFit column width feature. Both methods are outlined below.

Manually Specifying a Column Width

To specify the width of a column, follow these suggested steps:

1.   Move the cursor to the cell which contains the longest entry in that column.

2.   Press **ALT** to move focus to the upper part of the **Office Ribbon**. Upon doing this, JAWS will announce the name of the currently selected Tab.

3.   Press **RIGHT ARROW** or **LEFT ARROW** until the **Home t**ab is selected and then press **TAB** to move focus to the lower part of the **Office Ribbon**.

4.   Press **TAB** until the **Format** button is selected and then press **ENTER**. Upon doing this, a dropdown menu will be displayed. JAWS will say the name of the first option in the menu. This should be 'Row Height...'.

An alternative method of choosing an option from the **Office Ribbon** is to press a sequence of keys. The sequence of keys to press to quickly display the **Format** dropdown menu are as follows:

ALT followed by **H** then **o**

5.   Press **DOWN ARROW** or **UP ARROW** until the **Column Width...** option is selected and press **ENTER**.   Upon doing this, the **Column Width** dialog box will be displayed.

6.   In the **Column Width** dialog box, focus will be in an edit box. This will contain the existing column width. Overtype this value with the value you require and press **ENTER**.

Note: When specifying a manual column width, you might have to try out a few different width settings before the data fits correctly.

Automatically Adjusting Column Width

1.   Select all cells in the column which contain data.

2.   Press **ALT** to move focus to the **Office Ribbon**. Upon doing this, JAWS will announce the name of the currently selected Tab.

3.   Press **RIGHT ARROW** or **LEFT ARROW** until the **Home t**ab is selected and then press **TAB** to move focus to the lower part of the **Office Ribbon**.

4.   Press **TAB** until the **Format** button is selected and press **ENTER**. Upon doing this, a dropdown menu will be displayed. JAWS will say the name of the first option in the menu. This should be 'Row Height...'.

An alternative method of choosing an option from the **Office Ribbon** is to press a sequence of keystrokes. The sequence of keys to press to quickly display the **Format** dropdown menu are as follows:

ALT followed by **H** then **o**

5.   Press **DOWN ARROW** or **UP ARROW** until the 'AutoFit Column Width' option is selected and press **ENTER**. Upon doing this, all cells in the column which contain data will be adjusted to match the width of the longest entry in the column.

6.   Finally, press **UP ARROW** to deselect the selected cells.

Applying Cell Text Visibility Detection

JAWS includes a feature called Cell Text Visibility. This feature, when turned on, informs you when the data in a cell is too long for the current column width. The ability of JAWS to do this really makes creating and amending worksheets easier and helps ensure accuracy at all times.

To turn on the Cell Text Visibility Detection feature, follow these suggested steps:

1.   From anywhere in your workbook, press **INSERT and V**. Upon doing this, the **Quick Keys** dialog box for Microsoft Excel will be displayed. This dialog box contains a list of options that can be configured to meet your needs.

2.   In the Quick Settings dialog box, focus will be in an edit box labelled Search. Here, you can type the first few characters of the setting you are looking for. All matches will then be displayed just below the **Search** edit box. Although this is very useful, it does rely on you knowing what you are looking for and how it is spelt. Therefore, it is recommended to ignore this option.

3.   Press **TAB** once to move focus into a long list of settings. JAWS should say "Tree view", followed by the name of the currently selected item in the list. This should be "Excel Settings", and JAWS should report it to be "Open". If JAWS announces that this option is "Closed", press RIGHT ARROW to open it.

4.   Press the letter **C** until the setting called **Cell Text Visibility Detection** is selected in the list. This is a check box and JAWS will inform you that it is turned Off.

5.   Press **SPACEBAR** to turn the **Cell Text Visibility Detection** option on.

6.   Finally, press **ENTER** to choose the OK button and close the dialog box.

Now, when you navigate to a cell which contains data longer than the column width, JAWS will alert you to this by saying "Overlaps right" followed by the cell reference of the adjacent cell to the right. You can then change the column width accordingly!