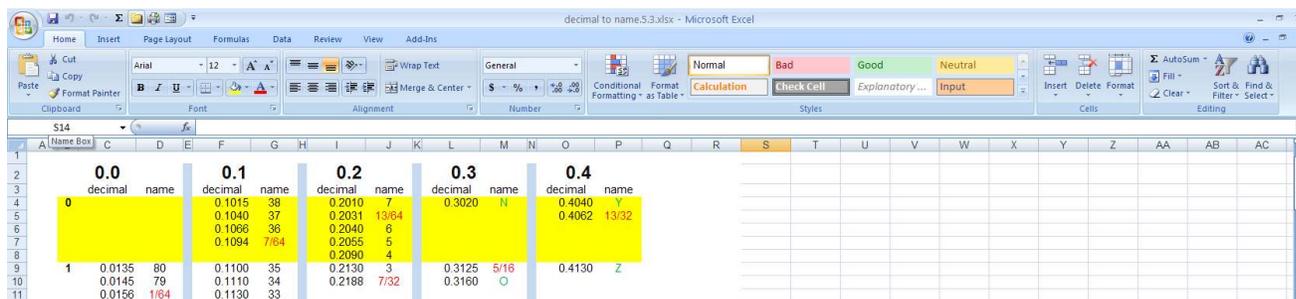


Excel® to Walgreens®: Making Small Reference Cards

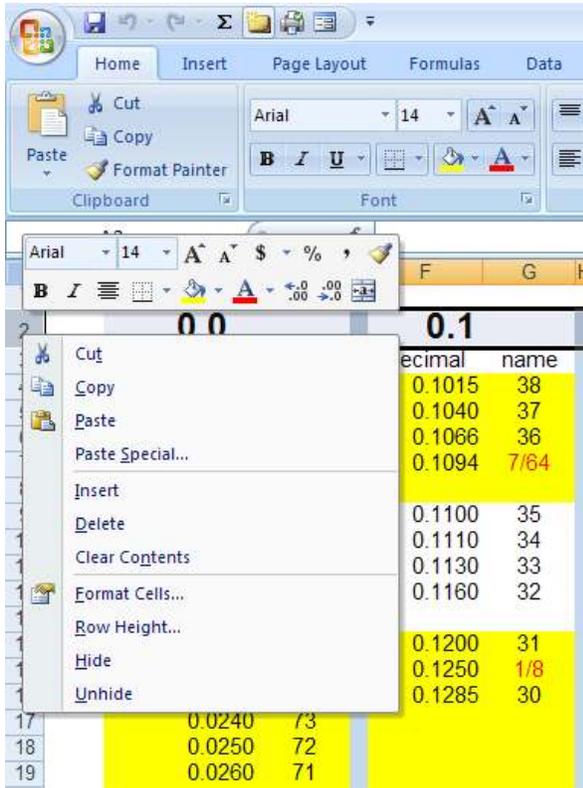
By R. G. Sparber

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Excel is a very useful program that I use in my shop for messy computations. But it is also useful as an artwork generating tool. Making tables is simple and you can add lots of color to make it look professional. But then what? If you print it out on an inkjet or even a gray scale laser printer, it loses some of that great look. An alternative is to print the file out as a photograph at Walgreens. They charge me \$0.21 per print including tax and I get a very crisp and full color reference card. Here are the tricks I picked up along the way.

¹ You are free to copy and distribute this document but not change it.



If you bring up an Excel spreadsheet, you can right click on the boarder for a row or column. It will give you a menu that includes the height of a row or the width of a column.

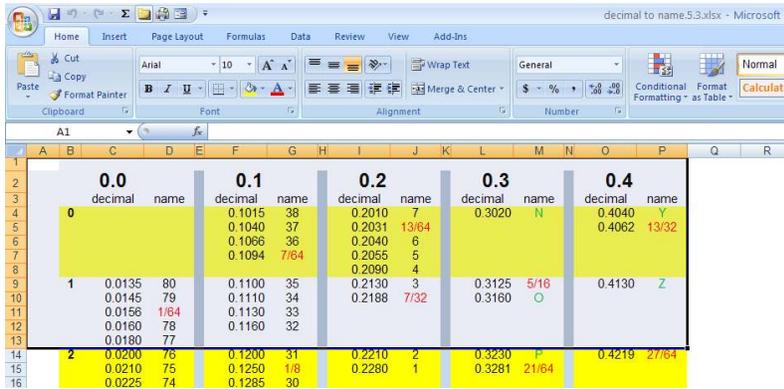
In order to fit on a 4" x 5.3" print, what they call a "true digital" size, limit the artwork to a total column width of 110. Limit the total row height to 790.

I found that the height and width units of a cell are not equal. You can see this in the numbers given above. My print has an aspect ratio of 4:5.3 which is 1:1.3 while my spreadsheet has an aspect ratio of 110:790 which is 1:7.2. So be careful to only apply column widths to columns and row heights to rows.

If you select all rows by clicking and then dragging down the row numbers, you can then right click, select row height, and define the row height for all of them. This also works for column widths if you want them uniform. In my case the column width varied so I had to manually add them up.

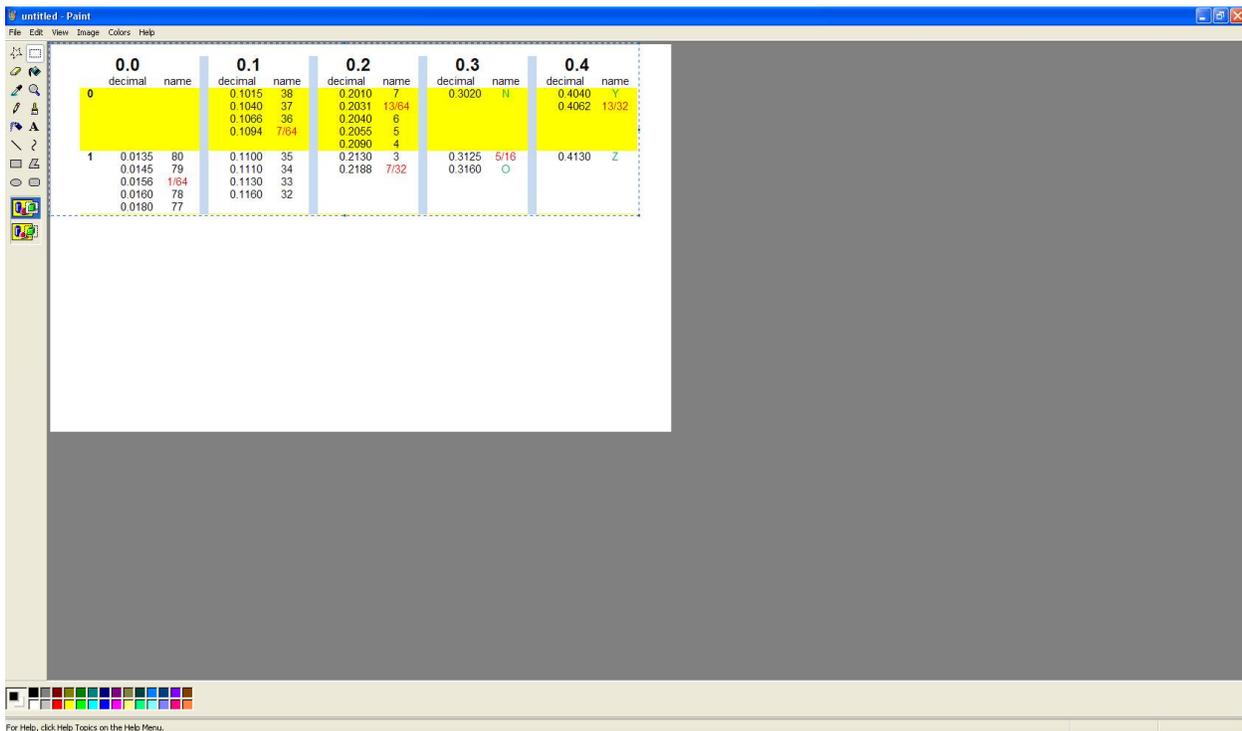
Place a row of white cells at the top and bottom that is 5 high. Place a column at the far left and right that is 3 wide. This white space helps the person doing the printing to window in on your artwork.

At least my version of Excel cannot output a file format acceptable to Walgreens. They currently only takes .jpg.



	0.0		0.1		0.2		0.3		0.4	
	decimal	name	decimal	name	decimal	name	decimal	name	decimal	name
0			0.1015	38	0.2010	7	0.3020	N	0.4040	Y
			0.1040	37	0.2031	13/64			0.4062	13/32
			0.1066	36	0.2040	6				
			0.1094	7/64	0.2055	5				
					0.2090	4				
1	0.0135	80	0.1100	35	0.2130	3	0.3125	5/16	0.4130	Z
	0.0145	79	0.1110	34	0.2188	7/32	0.3160	O		
	0.0156	1/64	0.1130	33						
	0.0160	78	0.1160	32						
	0.0180	77								
2	0.0200	76	0.1200	31	0.2210	2	0.3230	F	0.4219	27/64
	0.0210	75	0.1250	1/8	0.2280	1	0.3281	21/64		
	0.0225	74	0.1285	30						

I solved this problem by first selecting all of the artwork I wanted to print and then doing a copy.



Open up that ancient Microsoft program called Paint and do a paste. Then do a save as... with the file type set to .jpg.

The process of printing pictures at Walgreens (<http://www.walgreens.com/>) is mostly straight forward except for the print size. You should select 4 x 6 prints but later it will ask you if you want “true digital” which is 4” x 5.3”. Say yes.

I suggest that you only print one copy at first until you have ironed out the bugs. If your artwork is cut off, go back to your spreadsheet and figure out what has to be changed to make it fit. My artwork has 56 rows so reducing the height of all rows by just 0.5 units makes a big difference. Of course, you don't have to make all rows and columns the same size.

I have found that the colors tend to be lighter in the print than on my screen. You might be able to work with the operator at Walgreens to adjust this parameter.

The operator told me that they can move their selection window around the artwork but they cannot scale it. There is a CVS further from my home and I know they have different capabilities. But for now, I'm happy with Walgreen's photos.

I welcome your comments and questions.

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