When building financial models, analyses and spreadsheets, it is common to hide cells in white so that they do not appear on a print-out. Likewise, sometimes, a cell needs to be shaded so as to distinguish it from other cells, but again without the shading printed out – simply shade the cell with white fill. However, in order to see the white cells and white shaded cells, it is necessary to change the background of Excel and your computer to a color other than white.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Windows XP and prior</strong></th>
<th><strong>Windows Vista</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Right-click on your desktop ➔ “Properties” or Start ➔ Settings ➔ Control Panel ➔ (Appearance &amp; Themes) ➔ Display</td>
<td>1. Right-click on your desktop and select “Personalize”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. In the “Display” dialog box that appears, go to the “Appearance” tab</td>
<td>2. In the Personalization dialog box that appears, click on the first option, “Window Color &amp; Appearance”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Within the “Appearance” tab, click on the “Advanced” button ➔ Under “Item”, select “Window” and next to it, under “Color 1”, select a light shade of gray ➔ Click “OK” twice</td>
<td>3. In the “Window Color &amp; Appearance” dialog box, click on “Open classic appearance properties for more color options”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Note: Older versions of Windows will not have “Advanced button”, so simply select Window from the “Item” option in the middle of the Display Properties dialog box.</td>
<td>4. The “Appearance” tab should open</td>
</tr>
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<td>5. Within the “Appearance” tab, click on the “Advanced” button ➔ Under “Item”, select “Window” and next to it, under “Color 1”, select a light shade of gray ➔ Click “OK”</td>
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Windows Vista selected screen captures:
When building financial models, analyses and spreadsheets, it is common to hide cells in white so that they do not appear on a print-out. Likewise, sometimes, a cell needs to be shaded so as to distinguish it from other cells, but again without the shading printed out – simply shade the cell with white fill. However, in order to see the white cells and white shaded cells, it is necessary to change the background of Excel and your computer to a color other than white.

**Windows 7**

1. Right-click on your desktop ➔ “Personalize” or Start ➔ Control Panel ➔ (Appearance and Personalization) ➔ Personalization
2. In the Personalization dialog box that appears, click on the first option, “Window Color”
3. Click on “Advanced appearance settings…”
4. In the “Window Color and Appearance” window, under “Item”, select “Window” and next to it, under “Color 1”, select a light shade of gray ➔ Click “OK”
When building financial models, analyses and spreadsheets, it is common to hide cells in white so that they do not appear on a print-out. Likewise, sometimes, a cell needs to be shaded so as to distinguish it from other cells, but again without the shading printed out – simply shade the cell with white fill. However, in order to see the white cells and white shaded cells, it is necessary to change the background of Excel and your computer to a color other than white.

**Windows 8/10**

1. Press the Windows logo key + R to open the “Run…” dialog, enter `regedit`
2. If prompted (by UAC or otherwise), confirm that you would like to run it
3. On the left, click `HKEY_CURRENT_USER → Control Panel → Colors`
4. Scroll down on the right panel to the “Window” entry and double-click it
5. Change the “Value data” to the RGB value for a gray color, such as: `192 192 192`
6. Restart Windows so the gray background can take effect
7a. Sometimes, Windows will revert the background to white after a Sleep or Restart, so right click on your desktop and click “Personalize”
7b. If using Windows 10, click Themes → Theme settings
8. Name and save your theme (which can now be reloaded anytime)

*NOTE: We do not recommend modifying registry entries unless you are an advanced user. However, Windows 8/10 has removed the Window background color settings from the Control Panel, and you may want to back up your registry entries (File → Export) before making any modifications.*