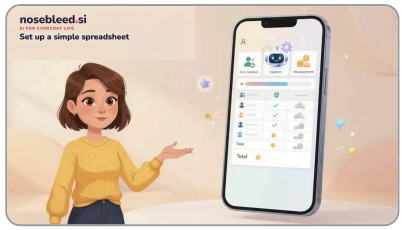
Set up a simple spreadsheet



Use AI to set out a simple spreadsheet, with neat columns and a total that adds itself up, then check the total.

By the end, you'll be able to:

- plan the columns a spreadsheet needs
- use AI to explain how to set it up
- check a formula adds up the right cells

Warm-up What would you keep track of?

Talk about it with your group. Savings for a holiday? Club money? Allotment costs? Birthdays? Where do you keep track now?

1 Plan the columns

Bill wants to keep track of his allotment costs. Which columns would help? Write a heading in each box.

A spreadsheet is a grid. Each box is a **cell**, named by its column letter and row number, like **B3**.

What else could Bill use a spreadsheet for?

2 Ask AI to set it up

If you have a device, try this prompt.

TRY THIS PROMPT

I'd like a simple spreadsheet to track my allotment costs this year. I've never used one before. Please suggest the columns, and explain, step by step, how to add a total at the bottom that adds itself up. Use a free spreadsheet app.

3 Check the total

Here is Bill's spreadsheet. The total in cell B7 uses the formula **=SUM(B2:B5)**.

	A	B
1	**Item**	**Cost**
2	Rent for the plot	£40.00
3	Seeds	£18.50
4	Compost	£24.00
5	Netting	£12.00
6	New hoe	£15.99
7	**Total**	**£94.50**

What should the total be? _____

What's wrong with the formula? _____

What should it be? _____

Show your working:

4 Your spreadsheet

Choose something to keep track of. Plan the columns, and write a prompt asking AI to help you set it up.

5 Good habits

- Check totals with a calculator the first time.
- When you add a new row, check it's included in the total.
- Ask AI: "What does this formula do?" if you're not sure.

> **No device?** In pairs, draw a spreadsheet on paper for tracking holiday savings. Label the columns, and add a total.

Find out more: read the free step-by-step guide, with a 10-second video, at **nosebleed.si/ideas/set-up-a-simple-spreadsheet**

Teacher notes: Set up a simple spreadsheet

Time: 45 to 60 minutes

Group: any size; works well in pairs

Level: beginners; no AI experience needed

You'll need: a copy per learner; calculators; phones, tablets or computers with an AI chat app and a spreadsheet app (optional)

Before the session

Try the prompt yourself. Several companies offer free spreadsheet apps; any will do. If you have a projector, show a spreadsheet on screen.

Running order

5 min	**Warm-up.** What we'd track.
10 min	**Part 1.** Columns and cells.
20 min	**Parts 2 and 3.** Try the prompt, then check the total.
10 min	**Part 4.** Plan their own.
5 min	**Wrap-up.** Check the total includes every row.

Answers: Part 1

For example: date; item; cost; where bought; notes.

Answers: Part 3

The total should be **£110.49**. The formula adds B2 to B5, so it misses the hoe in B6 (£15.99). It should be **=SUM(B2:B6)**.

Jargon

Cell: one box in the grid.
Formula: a sum the spreadsheet works out, starting with "=".
SUM: adds up a range of cells. B2:B6 means B2 to B6.

Discussion points

- A missed row is one of the most common spreadsheet mistakes.

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