Putting Formulas Into Cells for Automatic Calculation

In cells that require a number entry, you can either put a number in directly, or a formula. Often putting in a formula that will generate a number for the cell works better. Some occasions where you might want to do that are:

1. Where the number is the sum of other numbers. This may happen when you would add up several numbers, then enter the total into the cell. Instead of doing that, enter a formula by clicking the equal sign in front of the formula box, then enter the first number, the + (or -) sign, the next number, the + (or -) sign, etc. When all the numbers are in, press Enter, or the check mark to the left of the formula bar. An advantage of this is that you have a record of what made up the total, in that if you want to see what the total is comprised of you can click on the cell, and the formula containing the numbers will show in the formula bar.
2. Where the number is a function of other numbers. As in the above, the numbers and their relationship to each other might be fixed, in which case you would enter the formula to produce the result instead of doing the calculation manually, and entering the result. This might happen in the case of livestock sales where you need to enter a sale amount per head, but you want the amount to be weight X price/unit. In the cell then, you could enter a formula such as =800*1.1, which would result in the number 880. Or, you might want one of the parameters in the formula to be the function of another cell. This works well in the Cash Flow section where you want the number in a cell for a certain month to be the amount of that cash flow item, or a percentage of that cash flow item. If you want it to be the total amount, enter =, then click on the cell you want the amount to come from, then Enter, or click on the check mark. Whatever is in the originating cell, then, will automatically go to your formula cell. If you want the amount to be a function of that cell, do the same, but add * to your formula (ie: .1, .5, .66, etc.). Another advantage of this is that if the amount in the originating cell changes because of a change you have made elsewhere, the amount resulting from the formula will change as well. ***Remember***, if +,-,* and / functions are used, the * and / will happen first unless the + and – are bracketed.