

## Cell Formatting

When it comes to the quality and clarity of a workbook, layout and appearance both play major roles. Excel features a number of formatting features at your disposal, letting you create practical worksheets with a professional look and feel. This lesson deals with some of the cell formatting tools that can help you present your data in a polished and meaningful way. In this lesson, we will cover conditional formatting and the Format Painter. We will also learn about cell merging, AutoFit, and Find and Replace Formatting.

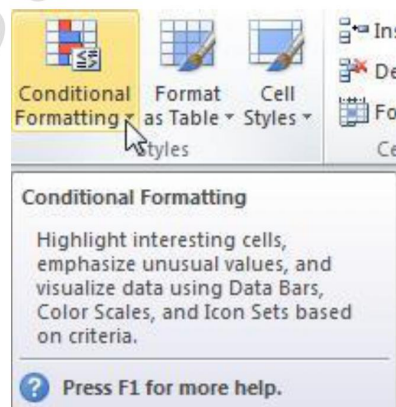
### Conditional Formatting

Excel allows you to format data based on the values the data assumes at any given time. This is called **conditional formatting** and makes certain types of worksheets easier to read. It is useful for worksheets that show financial figures (black = positive, red = negative), test results (results change color based on their value), or any time you want to highlight the data that falls within a certain value.

To use conditional formatting, select a range of data that you want to format with conditional formatting:

	A	B
1	100	1
2	2300	4
3	20	567
4	3500	654
5	750	898

Now click Home → Conditional Formatting:



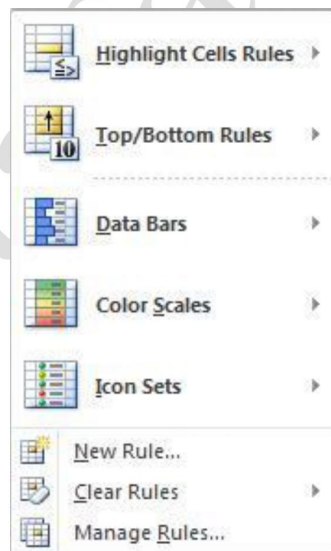
Here, we have added some data bars. These bars color the background of the cell based on the value of one cell compared to the others in the range:

	A	B
1	100	1
2	2300	4
3	20	567
4	3500	654
5	750	898

As you can see, the largest number is 3500 and the smallest is 1. Each number in between those values will be shaded accordingly. The amount of shading is maintained at a constant ratio, no matter how the cells are modified:

	A	B
1	100	1
2	2300	4
3	20	567
4	3500	654
5	750	898

There are several options available via the Conditional Formatting command. Let's go over the basics of each option:



Conditional formatting works using logical rules. Notice the commands at the bottom of this menu where you can define your own rules for conditional formatting, clear the rules currently in use, and manage existing rules (edit/delete).

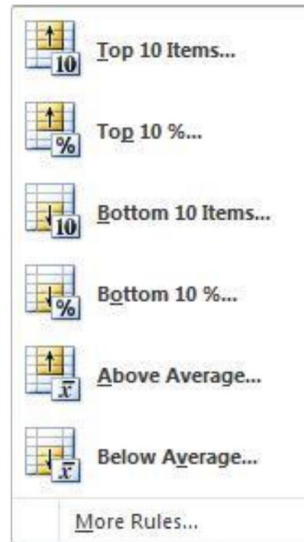
The formatting options are:

**Highlight Cells Rules** This will highlight cells that are greater than, less than, between, or equal to specified values:



**Top/Bottom Rules**

This option will allow you to highlight the top or bottom numbers or percentages in the selected cells:



**Data Bars**

Will display colored bars that are indicative of the value in the cell. The more the cell is filled in, the higher its value compared to the other cells in the range:



**Color Scales**

Will use different shades of color to represent different values, from low to high:



**Icon Sets**

Will use sets of similar icons that will visually indicate a cell's value:



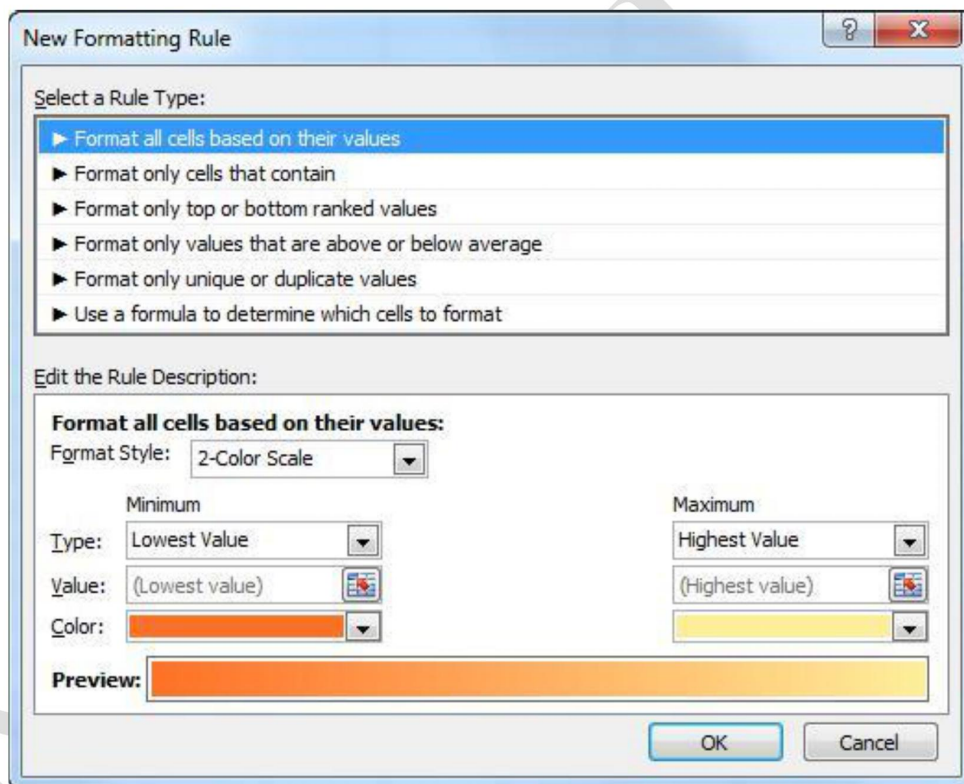
Notice that at the bottom of each submenu there is a command to choose additional rules in this category.

You can apply multiple conditional formatting rules to a group of cells by simply re-selecting the group and applying another condition. Here, we have added an icon set to the data that already contains data bars:

	A	B
1	100	1
2	2300	4
3	20	567
4	3500	654
5	750	898

Red arrows are low values, descending yellow means low range, ascending yellow means high range, and green arrows indicate high values.


If you click the New Rule option near the bottom of the Conditional Formatting submenu, the New Formatting Rule dialog box will appear:

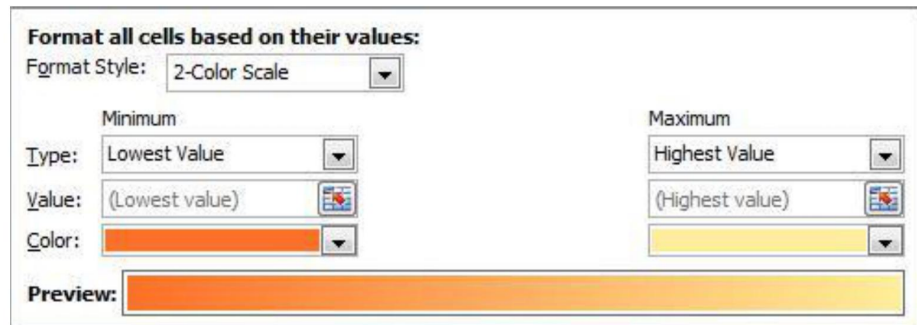


In this dialog box you can configure more precise and specific conditional formatting rules. Select one of the six rule types at the top, and then modify the details of how the rule will work at the bottom. The details for each rule type are different.



Let's briefly go over each rule option:

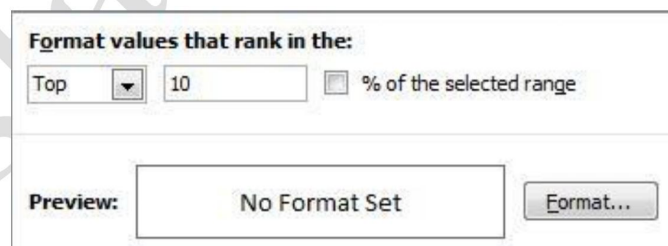
**Format all cells based on their values** Apply formatting based on numerical values. Click the  icon to select a value or values directly from the spreadsheet.



**Format only cells that contain** Apply formatting to values between a high and low value. Click the Format button to define the cell formatting.



**Format only ranked values** Apply formatting to the top or bottom portion of the selected range. Click **top** or **bottom** the Format button to define the cell formatting.



**Format only values that are above or below average**

Apply formatting to all values that are above or below the average for the selected range. Click the Format button to define the cell formatting.

**Format only unique or duplicate values**

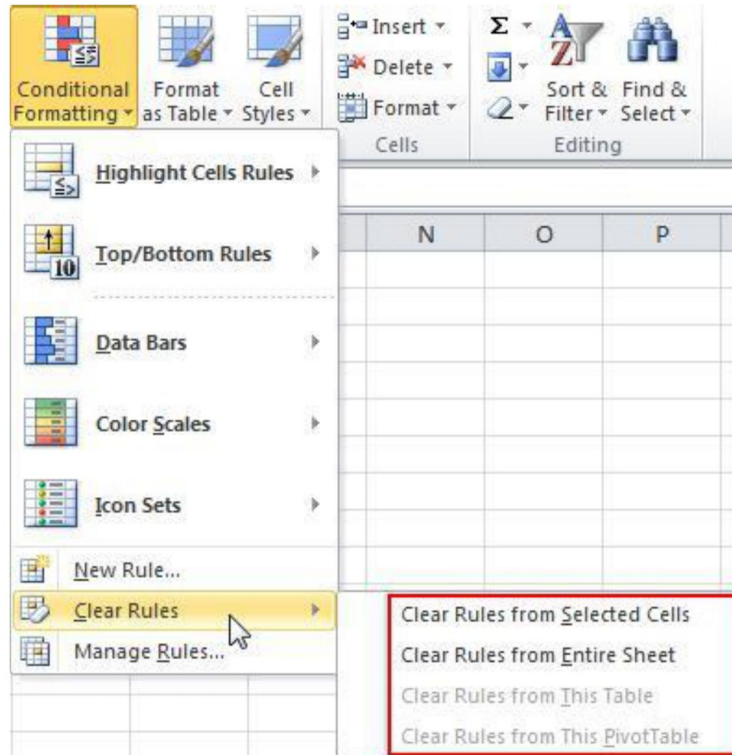
Apply formatting to all duplicate or unique values in the selected range. Click the Format button to define the cell formatting.

**Use a formula to determine which cells to format**

Apply formatting to all cells in the selected range that satisfy the equation. Click the Format button to define the cell formatting.



If you want to remove conditional formatting rules, click Conditional Formatting  Clear Rules and then select what to clear:.



The Manage Rules option will allow you to delete, edit, or add new conditional formatting rules.

