

Create

Introduction to Conditional Formatting

Use IT+

Contents

Introduction	3
1 Understanding conditional formatting	3
2 Create a Conditional Formatting Rule.....	3
3 Remove Conditional Formatting	5
4 Conditional Formatting Presets	7

Introduction

Let's say you have a worksheet with thousands of rows of data. It would be extremely difficult to see patterns and trends just from examining the raw information. Similar to charts and sparklines, **conditional formatting** provides another way to visualise data and make worksheets easier to understand.

1 Understanding conditional formatting

Conditional formatting allows you to automatically apply formatting—such as **colors**, **icons**, and **data bars**—to one or more cells based on the **cell value**. To do this, you'll need to create a **conditional formatting rule**. For example, a conditional formatting rule might be: **If the value is less than £2000, color the cell red**. By applying this rule, you'd be able to quickly see which cells contain values less than £2000.

	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.
£ 3,947.00	£ 557.00	£ 3,863.00	£ 1,117.00	£ 8,237.00	£ 8,690.00	
£ 4,411.00	£ 1,042.00	£ 9,355.00	£ 1,100.00	£ 10,185.00	£ 18,749.00	
£ 2,521.00	£ 3,072.00	£ 6,702.00	£ 2,116.00	£ 13,452.00	£ 8,046.00	
£ 4,752.00	£ 3,755.00	£ 4,415.00	£ 1,089.00	£ 4,404.00	£ 20,114.00	
£ 4,964.00	£ 3,152.00	£ 11,601.00	£ 1,122.00	£ 3,170.00	£ 10,733.00	
£ 2,327.00	£ 4,056.00	£ 3,726.00	£ 1,135.00	£ 8,817.00	£ 18,524.00	
£ 3,967.00	£ 4,906.00	£ 9,007.00	£ 2,113.00	£ 13,090.00	£ 13,953.00	
£ 4,670.00	£ 521.00	£ 4,505.00	£ 1,024.00	£ 3,528.00	£ 15,275.00	
£ 3,379.00	£ 3,428.00	£ 3,973.00	£ 1,716.00	£ 4,839.00	£ 13,085.00	

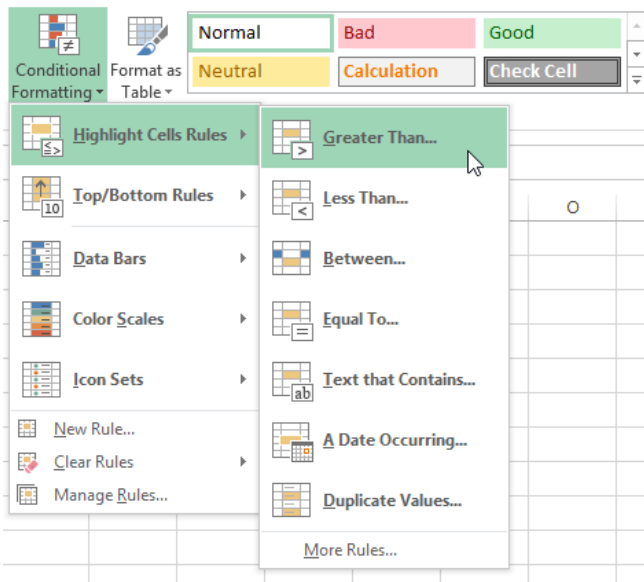
2 Create a Conditional Formatting Rule

In our example, we have a worksheet containing sales data, and we'd like to see which salespeople are meeting their monthly sales goals. The sales goal is £4000 per month, so we'll create a conditional formatting rule for any cells containing a value higher than 4000.

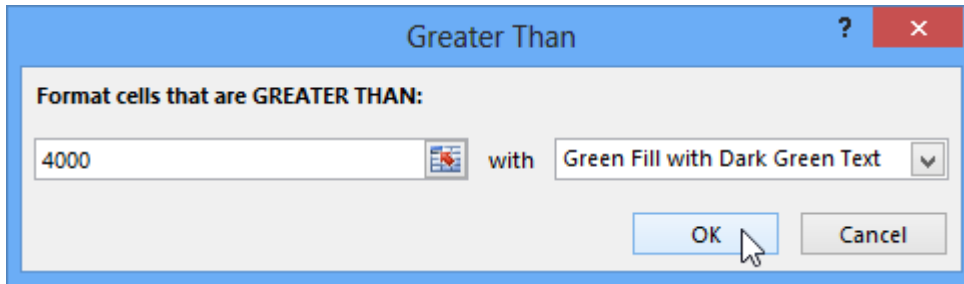
1. Select the **desired cells** for the conditional formatting rule.

May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.
£ 3,947.00	£ 557.00	£ 3,863.00	£ 1,117.00	£ 8,237.00	£ 8,690.00
£ 4,411.00	£ 1,042.00	£ 9,355.00	£ 1,100.00	£ 10,185.00	£ 18,749.00
£ 2,521.00	£ 3,072.00	£ 6,702.00	£ 2,116.00	£ 13,452.00	£ 8,046.00
£ 4,752.00	£ 3,755.00	£ 4,415.00	£ 1,089.00	£ 4,404.00	£ 20,114.00
£ 4,964.00	£ 3,152.00	£ 11,601.00	£ 1,122.00	£ 3,170.00	£ 10,733.00
£ 2,327.00	£ 4,056.00	£ 3,726.00	£ 1,135.00	£ 8,817.00	£ 18,524.00
£ 3,967.00	£ 4,906.00	£ 9,007.00	£ 2,113.00	£ 13,090.00	£ 13,953.00
£ 4,670.00	£ 521.00	£ 4,505.00	£ 1,024.00	£ 3,528.00	£ 15,275.00
£ 3,379.00	£ 3,428.00	£ 3,973.00	£ 1,716.00	£ 4,839.00	£ 13,085.00
£ 5,363.00	£ 1,562.00	£ 2,945.00	£ 1,176.00	£ 9,642.00	£ 13,714.00
£ 3,275.00	£ 2,779.00	£ 7,549.00	£ 1,101.00	£ 5,850.00	£ 15,065.00
£ 3,860.00	£ 3,470.00	£ 3,862.00	£ 1,040.00	£ 10,024.00	£ 18,389.00
£ 4,685.00	£ 1,913.00	£ 4,596.00	£ 1,126.00	£ 5,503.00	£ 10,686.00
£ 4,052.00	£ 2,883.00	£ 2,142.00	£ 2,012.00	£ 13,547.00	£ 21,983.00
£ 5,541.00	£ 4,931.00	£ 8,283.00	£ 1,054.00	£ 9,543.00	£ 11,967.00
£ 5,667.00	£ 4,798.00	£ 8,420.00	£ 1,389.00	£ 10,468.00	£ 12,677.00
£ 4,269.00	£ 4,459.00	£ 2,248.00	£ 1,058.00	£ 6,267.00	£ 14,982.00
£ 3,502.00	£ 4,172.00	£ 11,074.00	£ 1,282.00	£ 2,365.00	£ 9,380.00
£ 5,853.00	£ 2,011.00	£ 3,807.00	£ 1,348.00	£ 11,110.00	£ 18,047.00
£ 2,586.00	£ 2,398.00	£ 2,453.00	£ 1,020.00	£ 4,612.00	£ 20,525.00
£ 5,714.00	£ 4,960.00	£ 11,507.00	£ 1,010.00	£ 6,599.00	£ 11,626.00

2. From the **Home** tab, click the **Conditional Formatting** command. A drop-down menu will appear.
3. Hover the mouse over the desired **conditional formatting type**, then select the **desired rule** from the menu that appears. In our example, we want to **highlight cells that are greater than £4000**.



4. A dialog box will appear. Enter the **desired value(s)** into the blank field. In our example, we'll enter 4000 as our value.
5. Select a **formatting style** from the drop-down menu. In our example, we'll choose **Green Fill with Dark Green Text**, then click **OK**.



6. The conditional formatting will be applied to the selected cells. In our example, it's easy to see which salespeople reached the £4000 sales goal for each month.

	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.
£ 3,947.00	£ 557.00	£ 3,863.00	£ 1,117.00	£ 8,237.00	£ 8,690.00	
£ 4,411.00	£ 1,042.00	£ 9,355.00	£ 1,100.00	£ 10,185.00	£ 18,749.00	
£ 2,521.00	£ 3,072.00	£ 6,702.00	£ 2,116.00	£ 13,452.00	£ 8,046.00	
£ 4,752.00	£ 3,755.00	£ 4,415.00	£ 1,089.00	£ 4,404.00	£ 20,114.00	
£ 4,964.00	£ 3,152.00	£ 11,601.00	£ 1,122.00	£ 3,170.00	£ 10,733.00	
£ 2,327.00	£ 4,056.00	£ 3,726.00	£ 1,135.00	£ 8,817.00	£ 18,524.00	
£ 3,967.00	£ 4,906.00	£ 9,007.00	£ 2,113.00	£ 13,090.00	£ 13,953.00	

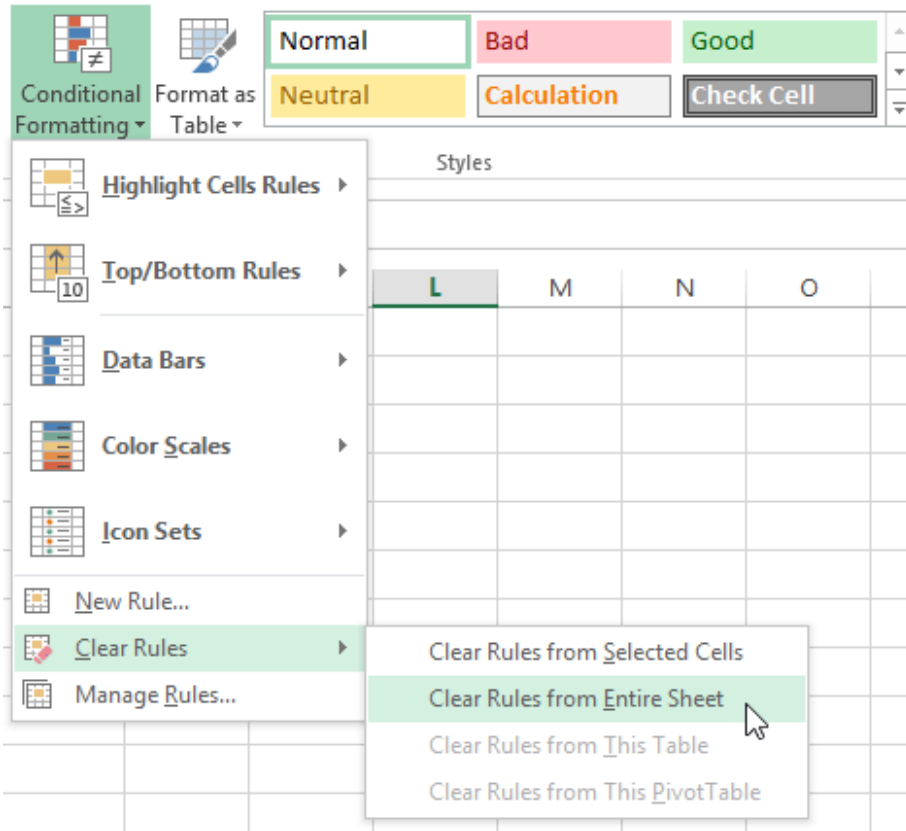
You can apply multiple conditional formatting rules to a cell range or worksheet, allowing you to visualize different trends and patterns in your data.

	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.
£ 3,947.00	£ 557.00	£ 3,863.00	£ 1,117.00	£ 8,237.00	£ 8,690.00	
£ 4,411.00	£ 1,042.00	£ 9,355.00	£ 1,100.00	£ 10,185.00	£ 18,749.00	
£ 2,521.00	£ 3,072.00	£ 6,702.00	£ 2,116.00	£ 13,452.00	£ 8,046.00	
£ 4,752.00	£ 3,755.00	£ 4,415.00	£ 1,089.00	£ 4,404.00	£ 20,114.00	
£ 4,964.00	£ 3,152.00	£ 11,601.00	£ 1,122.00	£ 3,170.00	£ 10,733.00	
£ 2,327.00	£ 4,056.00	£ 3,726.00	£ 1,135.00	£ 8,817.00	£ 18,524.00	
£ 3,967.00	£ 4,906.00	£ 9,007.00	£ 2,113.00	£ 13,090.00	£ 13,953.00	

3 Remove Conditional Formatting

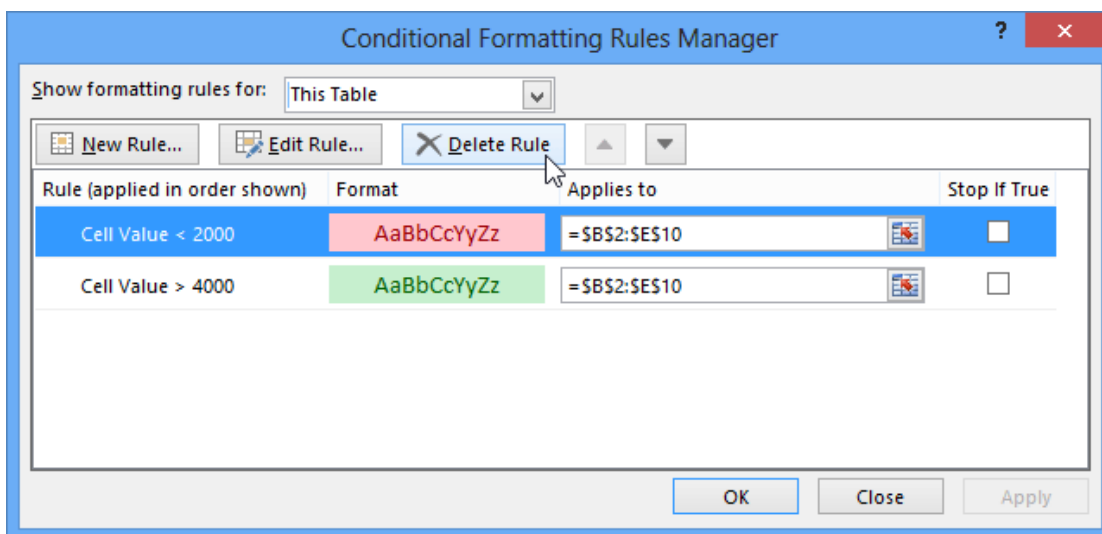
1. Click the **Conditional Formatting** command. A drop-down menu will appear.

2. Hover the mouse over **Clear Rules**, and choose which rules you want to clear. In our example, we'll select **Clear Rules from Entire Sheet** to remove all conditional formatting from the worksheet.



3. The conditional formatting will be removed.

Click **Manage Rules** to edit or delete individual rules. This is especially useful if you have applied **multiple rules** to a worksheet.



4 Conditional Formatting Presets

Excel has several predefined styles—or **presets**—you can use to quickly apply conditional formatting to your data. They are grouped into three categories:

Data Bars are horizontal bars added to each cell, much like a **bar graph**.

	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.
£	3,947.00	£ 557.00	£ 3,863.00	£ 1,117.00	£ 8,237.00	£ 8,690.00
£	4,411.00	£ 1,042.00	£ 9,355.00	£ 1,100.00	£ 10,185.00	£ 18,749.00
£	2,521.00	£ 3,072.00	£ 6,702.00	£ 2,116.00	£ 13,452.00	£ 8,046.00
£	4,752.00	£ 3,755.00	£ 4,415.00	£ 1,089.00	£ 4,404.00	£ 20,114.00
£	4,964.00	£ 3,152.00	£ 11,601.00	£ 1,122.00	£ 3,170.00	£ 10,733.00
£	2,327.00	£ 4,056.00	£ 3,726.00	£ 1,135.00	£ 8,817.00	£ 18,524.00

Color Scales change the color of each cell based on its value. Each color scale uses a **two- or three-color gradient**. For example, in the **Green - Yellow - Red** color scale, the **highest** values are green, the **average** values are yellow, and the **lowest** values are red.

	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.
£	3,947.00	£ 557.00	£ 3,863.00	£ 1,117.00	£ 8,237.00	£ 8,690.00
£	4,411.00	£ 1,042.00	£ 9,355.00	£ 1,100.00	£ 10,185.00	£ 18,749.00
£	2,521.00	£ 3,072.00	£ 6,702.00	£ 2,116.00	£ 13,452.00	£ 8,046.00
£	4,752.00	£ 3,755.00	£ 4,415.00	£ 1,089.00	£ 4,404.00	£ 20,114.00
£	4,964.00	£ 3,152.00	£ 11,601.00	£ 1,122.00	£ 3,170.00	£ 10,733.00
£	2,327.00	£ 4,056.00	£ 3,726.00	£ 1,135.00	£ 8,817.00	£ 18,524.00

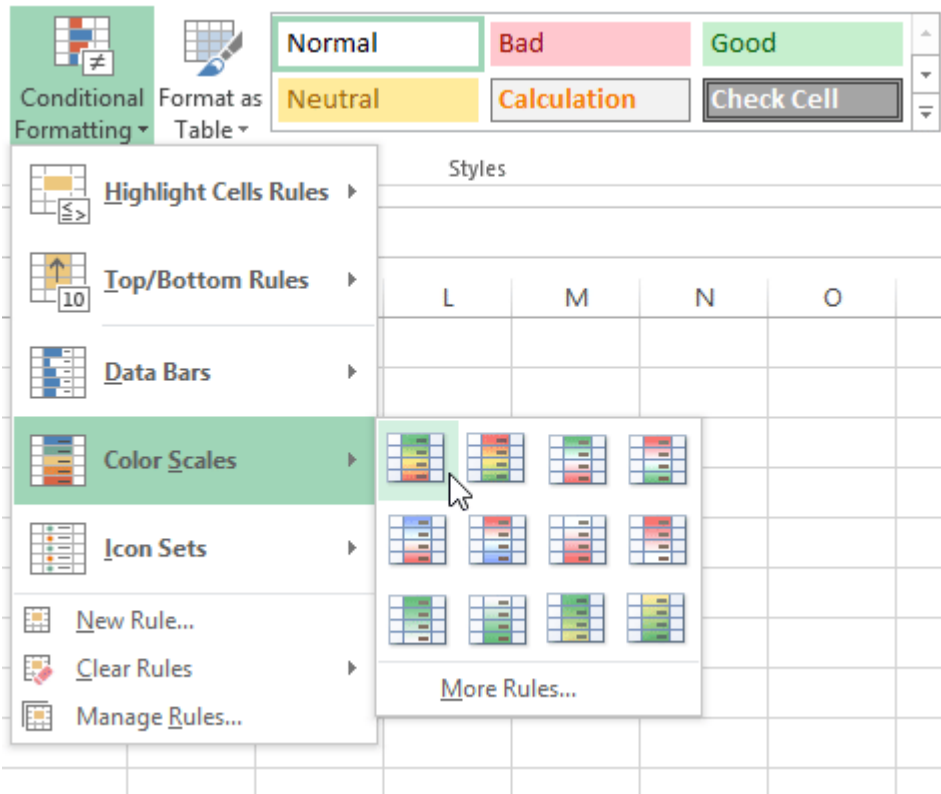
Icon Sets add a specific icon to each cell based on its value.

	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.
↓	£3,947.00	↓ £ 557.00	↓ £ 3,863.00	↓ £1,117.00	→ £ 8,237.00	→ £ 8,690.00
↓	£4,411.00	↓ £1,042.00	→ £ 9,355.00	↓ £1,100.00	→ £10,185.00	↑ £18,749.00
↓	£2,521.00	↓ £3,072.00	↓ £ 6,702.00	↓ £2,116.00	→ £13,452.00	→ £ 8,046.00
↓	£4,752.00	↓ £3,755.00	↓ £ 4,415.00	↓ £1,089.00	↓ £ 4,404.00	↑ £20,114.00
↓	£4,964.00	↓ £3,152.00	→ £11,601.00	↓ £1,122.00	↓ £ 3,170.00	→ £10,733.00
↓	£2,327.00	↓ £4,056.00	↓ £ 3,726.00	↓ £1,135.00	→ £ 8,817.00	↑ £18,524.00

4.1 Use preset conditional formatting

1. Select the **desired cells** for the conditional formatting rule.
2. Click the **Conditional Formatting** command. A drop-down menu will appear.

3. Hover the mouse over the **desired preset**, then choose a **preset style** from the menu that appears.



4. The conditional formatting will be applied to the selected cells.