

Sort by Color

Do you ever use color to mark problem cells?

Figure 9.1

Red projects are really behind; yellow projects are a little behind.

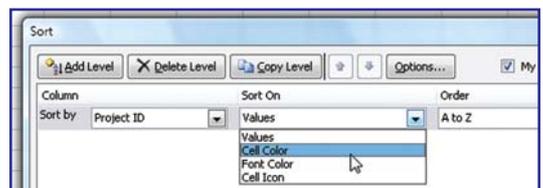
	A	B	C	D	E
1	Project ID	ProjMgr	Start Date	Due Date	% Complete
15	P114	Lora	2/6/07	3/7/07	99%
16	P115	Bill	2/19/07	6/11/07	67%
17	P116	Lora	2/20/07	4/3/07	100%
18	P117	Bill	2/27/07	4/16/07	82%
19	P118	Lora	2/28/07	6/14/07	62%
20	P119	Lora	3/5/07	5/14/07	100%
21	P120	Lora	3/6/07	6/21/07	56%
22	P121	Tracy	3/8/07	6/13/07	71%
23	P122	Bill	3/12/07	5/31/07	66%

While it is easy to use the paint bucket icon to color cells, it is difficult to then do anything with the colors. Now, in Excel 2007, you can sort the data by color.

1. From the Data menu, click on the Sort icon.
2. In the Sort dialog, change the Sort On dropdown from Values to Cell Color.

Figure 9.2

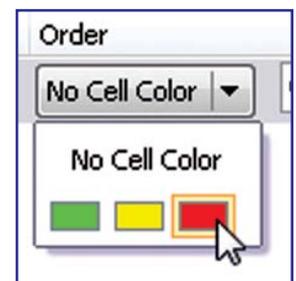
You can sort by cell color, font color, or conditional formatting icon.



3. A dropdown appears in the Order column. Choose the appropriate color from the dropdown.

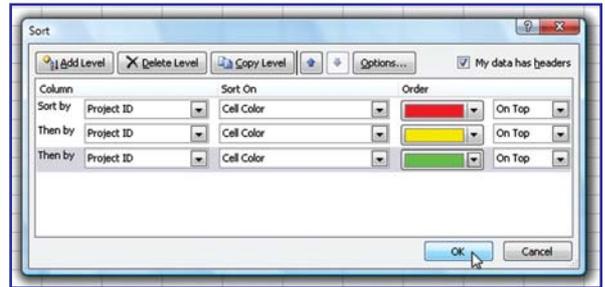
Figure 9.3

The dropdown shows colors present in the range.



- If you want an additional color to appear after the first color, click Add Level. Repeat steps 2 – 3 for each additional color. Your dialog might look like Figure 9.4.

Figure 9.4
If you used 50 colors, filling out this dialog would take forever.



- Click OK to perform the sort. All of the red cells will come to the top.

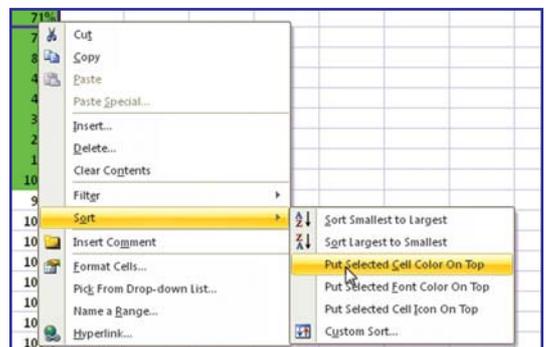
Figure 9.5
The data is sorted by color. Any cell with no fill color appears at the end of the dataset.

1	Project ID	ProjMgr	Start Date	Due Date	% Complete
9	P123	Bill	3/13/07	5/25/07	70%
10	P124	Tracy	3/13/07	5/3/07	89%
11	P127	Bill	3/20/07	5/2/07	83%
12	P132	Bill	3/28/07	5/17/07	78%
13	P103	Bill	1/3/07	4/2/07	94%
14	P115	Bill	2/19/07	6/11/07	67%
15	P120	Lora	3/6/07	6/21/07	56%
16	P125	Schar	3/14/07	5/17/07	88%
17	P130	Tracy	3/27/07	6/4/07	65%
18	P131	Bill	3/27/07	5/15/07	95%
19	P136	Lora	4/16/07	7/24/07	22%
20	P140	Lora	5/2/07	6/26/07	16%
21	P121	Tracy	3/8/07	6/13/07	71%
22	P128	Lora	3/21/07	6/4/07	78%

Quick Sort by Color

If you are interested in one particular color, you can sort that color to the top using the right-click menu. Choose a cell with the appropriate color. Right-click and choose Sort – Put Selected Cell Color On Top.

Figure 9.6
For a quick sort, just right click a cell with the color you want to bring to the top.



Removing Duplicates

There are many tasks in Excel where you need to remove duplicates from a data set.

Tip: This feature can also be used to find the unique list of values in a data set.

Say that you want to find the unique list of customers in this range:

Figure 10.1
Who are the unique customers in the list?

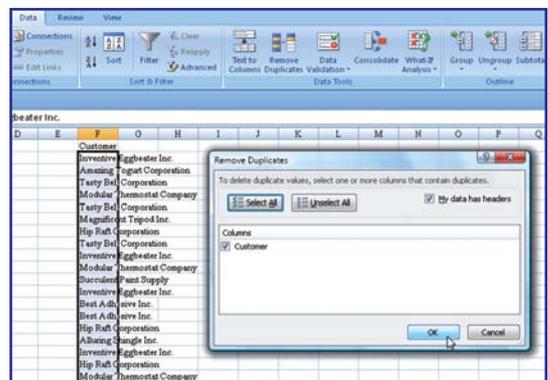
	A	B	C
1	Date	Customer	Sales
2	6/27/2007	Inventive Eggbeater Inc.	184
3	6/14/2007	Amazing Yogurt Corporation	169
4	6/12/2007	Tasty Belt Corporation	106
5	6/23/2007	Modular Thermostat Company	181
6	6/6/2007	Tasty Belt Corporation	168
7	6/9/2007	Magnificent Tripod Inc.	153
8	6/9/2007	Hip Raft Corporation	135
9	6/25/2007	Tasty Belt Corporation	105
10	6/6/2007	Inventive Eggbeater Inc.	117
11	6/27/2007	Modular Thermostat Company	143
12	6/29/2007	Succulent Paint Supply	171
13	6/18/2007	Inventive Eggbeater Inc.	153
14	6/27/2007	Best Adhesive Inc.	124
15	6/10/2007	Best Adhesive Inc.	117
16	6/15/2007	Hip Raft Corporation	184
17	6/27/2007	Alluring Shingle Inc.	190
18	6/8/2007	Inventive Eggbeater Inc.	95
19	6/5/2007	Hip Raft Corporation	143
20	6/30/2007	Modular Thermostat Company	183

Caution! Remove Duplicates is a destructive function. It is best to make a copy of your data before you use the feature!

In Figure 10.2, a copy of the customer column appears in column F. From the Data ribbon, choose Remove Duplicates.

Figure 10.2

If your data set has multiple columns, you can tell Excel to base the duplicates on a subset of the columns.



Click OK and Excel will delete any duplicated values. The remaining dataset is the unique list of customers.

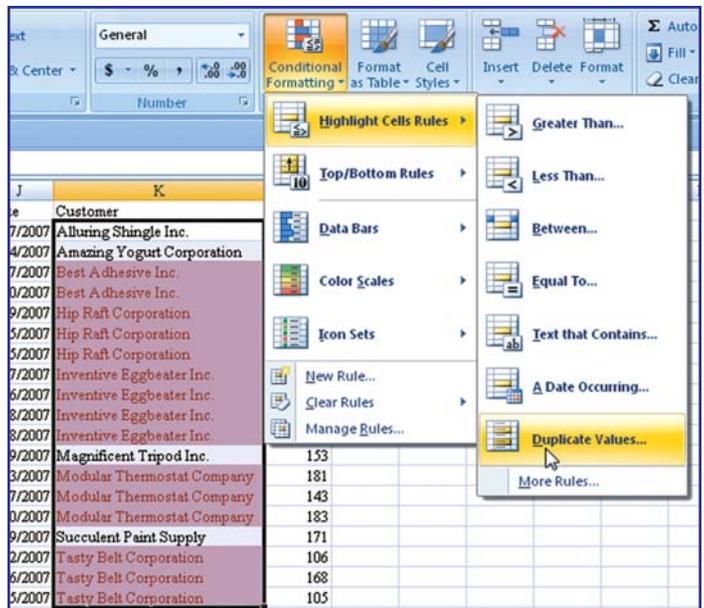
Figure 10.3
The duplicates are actually removed.



Marking Duplicates

While the Remove Duplicates button is amazing, it is also destructive. Perhaps you would like to identify the duplicates so that you can decide how to combine information from the duplicates. Select the range of values. On the Home ribbon, choose Conditional Formatting – Highlight Cells Rules – Duplicate Values. Excel will highlight the duplicates in red.

Figure 10.4
Marking the duplicates with conditional formatting is less destructive and gives you time to figure out how to combine duplicates.



* * *

Seeing Totals in the Status Bar

You can figure out totals without ever entering a formula.

Simply select some cells that contain numeric data. Excel's Status bar will show you the total of the selected cells.

Figure 11.1

At the bottom of the screen, you can see the total of these cells is 1033. There are 12 cells, ranging from 22 to 210, with an average of 86.08.

Qty	Price	Merchandise	Tax	Freight	Total
5	42	210	12.6	9	231.6
2	31	62	3.72	6	71.72
5	23	115	6.9	9	130.9
3	26	78	4.68	7	89.68
4	40	160	9.6	8	177.6
2	28	56	3.36	6	65.36
3	21	63	3.78	7	73.78
1	30	30	1.8	5	36.8
4	23	92	5.52	8	105.52
3	33	99	5.94	7	111.94
1	22	22	1.32	5	28.32
2	23	46	2.76	6	54.76

Average: 86.08333333 Count: 12 Min: 22 Max: 210 Sum: 1033

The Status bar has been doing this for a dozen years, yet few people ever noticed. In prior versions of Excel you could choose to have the Status bar show either a total, min, max, count, or average.

Now, in Excel 2007, you can have the Status bar show you all of those statistics.

Simply right-click the Status bar and you can choose to turn on or off any of these settings.

Figure 11.2

Have Excel show you a wide range of statistics for the current selection.



Note: The statistics in the Status bar only appear when more than one numeric cell is selected.

With the exception of the count statistics, Excel will ignore text cells in your selection. As soon as your selection includes one error cell, such as #N/A!, Excel will stop displaying statistics in the Status bar.

Tip: Say that you have 5,000 rows of data and you need to know if any of the values are #N/A! errors. Select the range. If Excel will not show you the total, then you know that you have at least one error cell in the range. If you find that your range contains an error cell and don't want to sort the data, use this technique. Start in the first cell. Hold down the Shift key while repeatedly pressing Page Down. As soon as the Status bar stops showing a total, you know that an error cell was encountered in the most recent page.



Handling Large Blocks of Text

Excel is great with numbers, but also has some tricks for dealing with text.

Say that you have typed some text at the bottom of a worksheet and you wish to wrap the text in order to fit a rectangular range from column B through I.

Figure 12.1
You would like to word wrap this text to fill columns B:I.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
29	Costs in year 1			1176120	0	0	0	0			
30	Bottom Line			3693144	4869264	4869264	4869264	4869264	23170200		
31											
32		Final Result	3980883.2								
33											
34											
35		Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Aenean congue blandit velit. Sed scelerisque blandit sem.									
36		Sed tincidunt tincidunt felis.									
37		Morbi vel eros vel felis consectetur accumsan. Donec a arcu eu urna lacinia dictum. Proin consectetur elit sed nisi.									
38		Donec eleifend arcu porta tellus. Nunc feugiat lacus et nunc.									
39		Mauris scelerisque magna ac diam.									
40		Maecenas eget ipsum in augue hendrerit suscipit.									
41		Nunc tempor tortor et est. Morbi egetas neque eu nisi. Sed sit amet quam in augue pellentesque ultrices.									
42		Aenean dapibus arcu ut neque. Vestibulum interdum mattis magna. Phasellus euismod ante nec massa.									
43		Cras mattis sagittis ipsum. Praesent dignissim massa id erat. Nam facilisis diam vel nisi.									
44		Duis nonummy elit rhoncus pede.									
45											
46											
47											

Select a rectangular range that includes all of the text in B and is wide enough to fill the range that you want to fill. It is a good idea to include a few extra blank rows at the bottom in case the wrapped text needs to extend that far.

From the Home ribbon, select Fill – Justify.

Figure 12.2
Select the Justify command.



Excel will wrap the text to fill the selected area.

Figure 12.3
Fill – Justify will cause the text to fit a certain area.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
35		>Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Aenean congue blandit velit. Sed							
36		scelerisque blandit sem. Sed tincidunt tincidunt felis. Morbi vel eros vel felis consectetur							
37		accumsan. Donec a arcu eu uma lacinia dictum. Proin consectetur elit sed nisi. Donec							
38		eleifend arcu porta tellus. Nunc feugiat lacus et nunc. Mauris scelerisque magna ac diam.							
39		Maecenas eget ipsum in augue hendrerit suscipit. Nunc tempor tortor et est. Morbi egestas							
40		neque eu nisi. Sed sit amet quam in augue pellentesque ultrices. Aenean dapibus arcu ut							
41		neque. Vestibulum interdum mattis magna. Phasellus euismod ante nec massa. Cras mattis							
42		sagittis ipsum. Praesent dignissim massa id erat. Nam facilisis diam vel nisi. Duis nonummy							
43		elit rhoncus tpede.							
44									

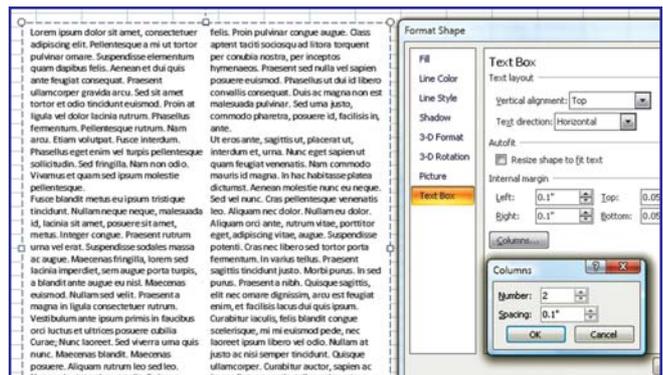
Using the Justify command is not perfect. It does not work when a cell contains more than 255 characters. If you resize any columns after the Justify, you will have to repeat the Justify command. If some cells have different formatting, that formatting will be lost after the Justify.

Using a TextBox

If you are dealing with long passages of text, you can insert them in a textbox in Excel. Follow these steps:

1. On the Insert ribbon, choose Text Box.
2. Draw a rectangle in your worksheet about the size and shape that you want the text to fill.
3. Paste (or type) the text.
4. Select the text in the text box and use the Mini Toolbar to format the font size to fit the text box.
5. Right-click the text box and choose Format Shape. On the Line Color category, choose No Line. In the Text Box category, you can specify the number of columns that you would like in the text box.

Figure 12.4
New in Excel 2007, text boxes support multiple columns.



When you click out of the text box, your text will float on the worksheet.

