Google Sheets

How to Use Google Sheets

Step 1: Create a spreadsheet

To create a new spreadsheet:

1. Open the Sheets home screen at sheets.google.com.
2. Click New Add. This will create and open your new spreadsheet.

You can also create new spreadsheets from the URL sheets.google.com/create.

Step 2: Edit and format a spreadsheet

You can add, edit, or format text, numbers, or formulas in a spreadsheet.

- Edit and format a spreadsheet
- Use formulas and functions in a spreadsheet

Step 3: Share & work with others

You can share files and folders with people and choose whether they can view, edit, or comment on them.

Edit & format a spreadsheet in Google Sheets

Edit data in a cell

1. Open a spreadsheet in Google Sheets.
2. Click a cell that's empty, or double-click a cell that isn't empty.
3. Start typing.
4. **Optional:** To add another line within a cell, press ⌘ **+ Enter** on a Mac or **Ctrl + Enter** on Windows.
5. When you're done, press **Enter**.

Format one or more cells

1. Open a spreadsheet in Google Sheets.
2. Click a cell, then drag your mouse across nearby cells you want to select, or hold ⌘ on a Mac or **Ctrl** on Windows and click another cell.
3. To format text or numbers in a cell, use the options in the toolbar at the top.

Format your data

Here are some options for formatting your cells or text. You can find these options above the document.

- Undo Undo
- Redo Redo
- Bold Bold
- Italic Italic
- Strikethrough Strikethrough
- Change font or font size
- Color text Change text color
- Fill color Change cell fill color
  - Single color

- Alternating colors
- **Borders** Change cell borders
  - **Border color** Change border color
  - **Border style** Change border style
- **Merge cells** Merge cells
- Change horizontal text alignment
- Change vertical text alignment
- Rotate text in a cell
- **Wrap** Wrap text in a cell

To format part of the text or content in a cell, double-click the cell, select what you want to format, then select a formatting option.

Align & resize objects

Move an object anywhere you want or change its size. Lines will appear that show what it lines up with, equal space between objects, and when one object is the same size as another.

Add a theme

You can apply changes to the format of an entire spreadsheet with themes.

1. Open a spreadsheet in Google Sheets.
2. At the top, click **Format** and then **Theme.**
3. Choose an available theme or click **Customize** to create your own.

Notes:

- If you create a custom theme, the most recent version will be saved.
- Colors from your current theme are available in the text and fill color pickers.

Parts of your spreadsheet affected by theme

- Text font and color of grid text, charts, and pivot tables
- Hyperlink color of grid text
- Chart background color
- Color of series in charts

- Pivot table background

Note: If you change the format of an item in your spreadsheet, it will override the theme.

Use conditional formatting rules in Google Sheets

Cells, rows, or columns can be formatted to change text or background color if they meet certain conditions. For example, if they contain a certain word or a number.

1. On your computer, open a spreadsheet in Google Sheets.
2. Select the cells you want to apply format rules to.
3. Click **Format** and then **Conditional formatting**. A toolbar will open to the right.
4. Create a rule.
   - **Single color**: Under "Format cells if," choose the condition that you want to trigger the rule. Under "Formatting style, choose what the cell will look like when conditions are met.
   - **Color scale**: Under "Preview," select the color scale. Then, choose a minimum and maximum value, and an optional midpoint value. To choose the value category, click the Down arrow Down Arrow image not found or type unknown.
5. Click **Done**.

Example

A teacher can highlight test scores to see which students scored less than 80%.

1. On your computer, open a spreadsheet in Google Sheets.
2. Select the test scores.
3. Click **Format** and then **Conditional formatting**.
4. Under "Format cells if," click **Less than**. If there's already a rule, click it or **Add new rule** and then **Less than**.
5. Click **Value or formula** and enter 0.8.
6. To choose a red color, click Fill Color fill image not found or type unknown.
7. Click **Done**. The low scores will be highlighted in red.

Use advanced conditional formatting

Use custom formulas with conditional formatting

You can use custom formulas to apply formatting to one or more cells based on the contents of other cells.

1. On your computer, open a spreadsheet in Google Sheets.
2. Select the cells you want to format.
3. Click **Format** and then **Conditional formatting**.
4. Under the "Format cells if" drop-down menu, click **Custom formula is**. If there's already a rule, click it or **Add new rule** and then **Custom formula is.**
5. Click **Value or formula** and add the formula and rules.
6. Click **Done**.

Note: Formulas can only reference the same sheet, using standard notation "(='sheetname'!cell)."

To reference another sheet in the formula, use the INDIRECT function.

Example 1

To highlight when there's more than one occurrence of the same value in your data:

1. On your computer, open a spreadsheet in Google Sheets.
2. Select the range you want to format. For example, cells A1 to A100.
3. Click **Format** and then **Conditional formatting**.
4. Under the "Format cells if" drop-down menu, click **Custom formula is**. If there's already a rule, click it or **Add new rule** and then **Custom formula is.**
5. Write the rule for the first row. In this case the rule would be, "=COUNTIF($A$1:$A$100,A1)>1."
6. Choose other formatting properties.
7. Click **Done**.

Example 2

To format an entire row based on the value of one of the cells in that row:

1. On your computer, open a spreadsheet in Google Sheets.
2. Select the range you want to format, for example, columns A:E.
3. Click **Format** and then **Conditional formatting**.
4. Under the "Format cells if" drop-down menu, click **Custom formula is**. If there's already a rule, click it or **Add new rule** and then **Custom formula is.**
5. Write the rule for the first row. For example, if you want to make the whole row green if the value in column B is "Yes", write a formula like "=$B1="Yes"."
6. Choose other formatting properties.

7. Click **Done**.

Absolute vs. relative references

Often, you will need to add dollar signs ($) in front of letters and numbers in formulas so that the formatting is applied using absolute references as opposed to relative references (A1 to B1, A2 to B2).

Use wildcard characters with conditional formatting

You can use wildcard characters to match multiple expressions. Wildcard characters can be used with the "Text contains" or "Text does not contain" fields while formatting.

- To match any single character, use a question mark (?). For example, a text rule containing "a?c" would format cells with "abc," but not "ac" or "abbc."
- To match zero (0) or more characters, use an asterisk (*) . For example, a text rule containing "a*c" would format cells with "abc," "ac," and "abbc" but not "ab" or "ca."
- To match a question mark or asterisk in text, you can escape the wildcard characters by adding a tilde (~) in front of them. For example, a text rule containing "a~?c" would format cells with "a?c" but not "abc" or "a~?c."

Notes:

- To remove a rule, point to the rule and click Remove Remove. Image not found or type unknown
- Rules are evaluated in the order listed. The first rule found to be true will define the format of the cell or range. To reorder rules, click and drag them.
- If you copy and paste from a cell or range that has formatting rules, these rules will be applied when you paste the copied data.

Sort & filter your data in Google Sheets

You can sort data in alphabetical and numerical order, or use filters to hide data you don't want to see.

Note: Filter views are only available on a computer. See the FILTER article for info about the function.

Sort data in alphabetical or numerical order

1. On your computer, open a spreadsheet in Google Sheets.
2. Highlight the group of cells you'd like to sort.
3. Click **Data** and then **Sort range**.
4. If your columns have titles, click **Data has header row**.
5. Select the column you'd like to be sorted first and choose a sorting order.

   - To add another sorting rule, click **Add another sort column**.

6. Click **Sort**.

Sort an entire sheet

1. On your computer, open a spreadsheet in Google Sheets.
2. At the top, right-click the letter of the column you want to sort by.
3. Click **Sort sheet by A to Z** or **Sort sheet Z to A**.

Tip: If your sheet includes a header row, freeze the first row.

Sort by color

1. On your computer, open a spreadsheet in Google Sheets.
2. Select a range of cells.
3. Click **Data** and then Create a filter.
4. To see filter options, go to the top of the range and click Filter Filter image not found or type unknown
   - **Sort by color:** Choose which text or fill color to filter or sort by. Cells with the color you choose to sort by will move to the top of the range. You can sort by conditional formatting colors, but not alternating colors.
5. To turn the filter off, click **Data** and then **Turn off filter**.

Filter your data

To see and analyze data in a spreadsheet, use filters. Filters let you hide data that you don't want to see. You'll still be able to see all your data when you turn the filter off.

Filters vs. filter views

Both filters and filter views help you analyze a set of data in a spreadsheet.

Filters can be useful if:

- You want everyone viewing your spreadsheet to see a specific filter when they open it.
- You want your data to stay sorted after using the filter.

Filter views can be useful if:

- You want to save multiple views.
- You want to name your view.
- You want others to be able to view the data differently. Since filter views need to be turned on by each person viewing a spreadsheet, each person can view a different filter view at the same time.
- You want to share different filters with people. You can send different filter view links to different people so everyone will see the most relevant information for them.
- You want to make a copy or create another view with similar rules.
- You don't have edit access to a spreadsheet and still want to filter or sort. In this case, a temporary filter view will be created.

Note: You can import and export filters, but not filter views.

Use filters in a spreadsheet

To temporarily hide data in a spreadsheet, add a filter.

Note: When you add a filter, anyone with access to your spreadsheet will see the filter too. Anyone with permission to edit your spreadsheet will be able to change the filter.

Filter your data

To filter your data:

1. On your computer, open a spreadsheet in Google Sheets.
2. Select a range of cells.
3. Click **Data** and then **Create a filter.**
4. To see filter options, go to the top of the range and click Filter Filter image not found or type unknown

   - **Filter by condition**: Choose conditions or write your own.
   - **Filter by values**: To hide data points, uncheck the box next to the data point and click OK.
   - **Search**: Search for data points by typing in the search box.
   - **Filter by color:** Choose which text or fill color to filter by. You can filter by conditional formatting colors, but not alternating colors.

5. To turn the filter off, click **Data** and then **Turn off filter**.

Tip: You can sort data with a filter turned on. Only the data in the filtered range will be sorted. Learn how to sort data.

Create, name, and save a filter view

Use a filter view when:

- You want to save your filter and use it later.
- You don't want to disrupt others' view of the data.
- You want to share a link to a specific filter with others.
- You can't edit a spreadsheet, but you want to filter or sort data.

Create, save, or delete a filter view

1. On your computer, open a spreadsheet in Google Sheets.
2. Click **Data** and then **Filter views** and then **Create new filter view**.
3. Sort and filter the data.
4. To close your filter view, go to the top right and click Close Close image not found or type unknown
5. Your filter view is saved automatically.

To delete or duplicate a filter view, in top right, click Options Settings not found or type unknown

and then found **Delete or Duplicate**.

Rename a filter view

1. On your computer, open a spreadsheet in Google Sheets.
2. Click **Data** and then found **Filter views**.
3. Select a filter view.
4. Click the filter view name in the top left of the black bar and type the new name.
5. Press Enter.

See an existing filter view

1. On your computer, open a spreadsheet in Google Sheets.
2. Click **Data** and then found **Filter views**.
3. Select a filter view.
4. Your filter will be applied to the spreadsheet.
5. To close your filter view, go to the top right and click Close Close image not found or type unknown

Save a filter as a filter view

1. On your computer, open a spreadsheet in Google Sheets.
2. Apply a filter.
3. Click **Data** and then found **Filter views** and then found **Save as filter view**.

Use filter view with "view only" access

If you have permission to view a spreadsheet but not edit it, you can still use filter views:

- To apply existing filter views, click **Data** and then found **Filter views**.
- You can create a temporary filter view that only you can use. Because you don't have "edit" access to the spreadsheet, the filter view won't be saved.

- Only users with permission to edit a spreadsheet can create filter views that anyone viewing the spreadsheet can use.