

# Colourful Data Makes Clear Decisions: Mastering Conditional Formatting

## What Is Conditional Formatting?

A feature in Excel that automatically changes the appearance of cells based on specific rules or conditions.

**Tip:** Think of a traffic light when thinking about conditional formatting in Excel – green is good, yellow is caution and red means stop.

## Benefits of Conditional Formatting

- Instantly highlights important data
- Reveals patterns and trends (see below for an example of colour scale conditional formatting)
- Flags errors and exceptions
- Improves decision making at a glance

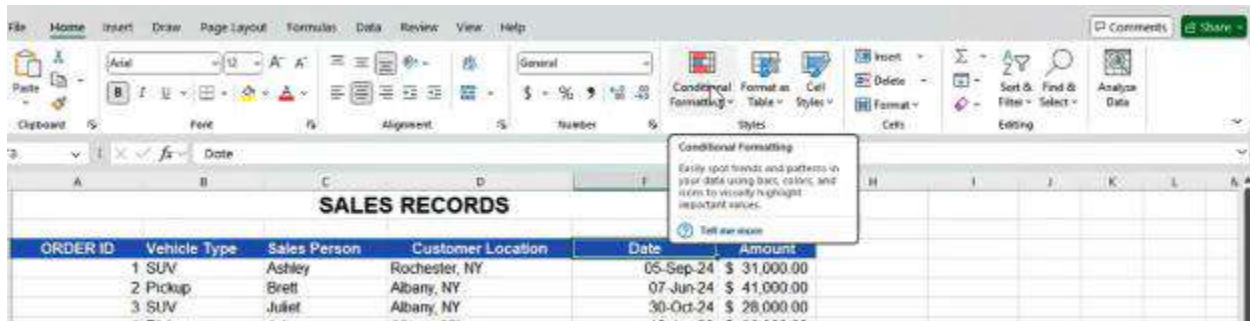
Student Number	Test Scores %
Caleb Johnson	60
Eleni Georgiou	80
Maya Daniels	90
Mateo Silva	20
Daniel Clark	95
John Stone	92
Gary Michaels	89
Richard Spearman	86
Yvonne Joseph	83
Peter Stanley	80
Sienna Naidoo	77
Amanda Keith	74
Zayn Moore	73
Claydon Sharpe	78
Joanna Harris	83
Kimberly Maine	88
Jonathan White	93

# When to Use Conditional Formatting

- Highlighting trends
- Flagging exceptions or anomalies
- Visual grouping of categories
- Emphasizing key performance indicators
- Spotting duplicates or errors

# How to Use Conditional Formatting

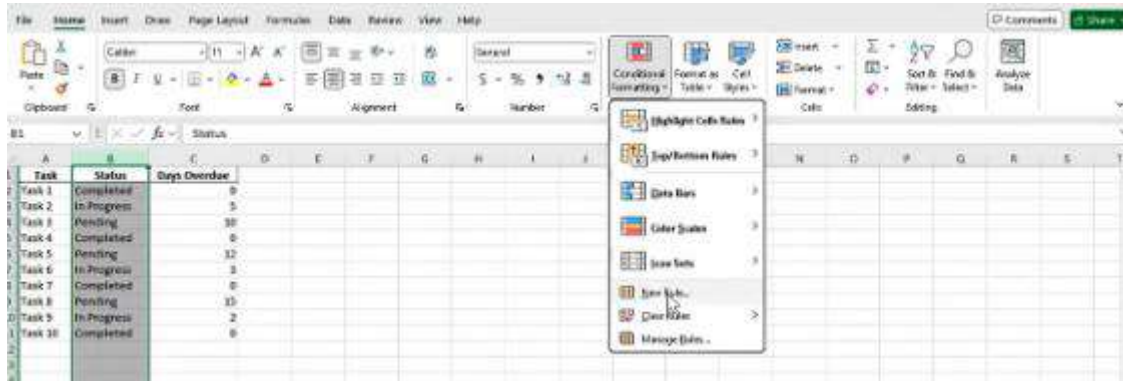
## 1. Using Excel's Built-In Tools



Once you navigate to Excel's built-in tools, you can select from the following options:

- a) Highlight Cell Rules
- b) Top/Bottom Rules
- c) Data Bars
- d) Colour Scales
- e) Icon Sets

## 2. Using an Excel Rule You Create



Keep the following best practices in mind when creating your own Excel rules:

- Rule Manager
- Editing and managing rule priority - the rule that is applied last will take priority
- Test rules on copies of data first
- Avoid over-formatting

Catch the webinar replay [here](#). Ready for the next step? We offer Excel training, available for both public and private training.

- Learn more about Conditional Formatting in our [Excel Level 3 \(Advanced\)](#) course.
- Learn how to apply Conditional Formatting and other Excel tips and tricks in the following courses: [Excel Tips, Tricks and Time Savers Level 1 \(Basic\)](#), [Excel Tips, Tricks and Time Savers Level 2 \(Advanced\)](#) and [Excel Tips, Tricks and Time Savers Complete](#).
- We also offer beginner to advanced Excel training - explore all our Excel courses [here](#).