

How to Apply Conditional Formatting to Text Columns in Power BI

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RECOMMENDED CITATION

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Conditional formatting allows you to visually highlight or format certain data based on a set of conditions. In Power BI, you can apply conditional formatting to a text column by selecting the desired column and then using the "Conditional formatting" option in the "Format" tab. From there, you can choose the conditions and format you want to apply, such as changing the font color or adding a background color, to specific values or ranges of values in the text column. This can help you identify important or relevant data and make it stand out in your visualizations.

Often you may want to apply conditional formatting to strings in a text column in Power BI, such as the following:

Team	Position	Points
A	Center	30
A	Forward	18
A	Forward	39
A	Guard	14
A	Guard	22
B	Center	17
B	Center	20
B	Forward	12
B	Forward	18
B	Guard	25
C	Center	23
C	Center	28
C	Forward	40
C	Guard	22
C	Guard	23

Total

Fortunately this is easy to do and the following step-by-step example shows how to do so.

Step 1: Import the Data

First, we will import the following dataset into Power BI that contains information about various basketball players:

The screenshot displays the Microsoft Power BI interface. At the top, the ribbon includes 'File', 'Home', 'Help', and 'Table tools'. The 'Table tools' ribbon is active, showing options like 'Name' (my_data), 'Mark as date table', 'Manage relationships', and 'Calculations' (New measure, Quick measure, New column, New table). Below the ribbon, a data table is visible with columns 'Team', 'Position', and 'Points'. The table contains 15 rows of data. A large watermark 'ARABPSYCHOLOGY.COM' is overlaid diagonally across the table.

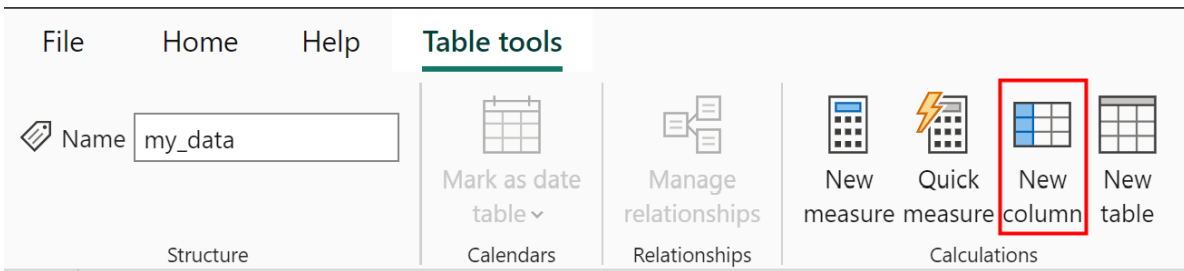
Team	Position	Points
A	Guard	22
A	Guard	14
A	Forward	18
A	Forward	39
A	Center	30
B	Guard	25
B	Forward	18
B	Forward	12
B	Center	17
B	Center	20
C	Guard	22
C	Guard	23
C	Forward	40
C	Center	23
C	Center	28

Step 2: Create New Column

Suppose that we would like to apply conditional formatting to the values in the **Team** column.

Before we can do so, we must first create a new column with numeric values that correspond to each of the values in the **Team** column.

To do so, click the **Table tools** tab, then click the **New column** icon:



Then type the following formula into the formula bar:

```
New = SWITCH(  
'my_data',  
"A", 1,  
"B", 2,  
"C", 3,  
4  
)
```

This will create a new column named **New** that contains numeric values that correspond to the text values in the **Team** column:

The screenshot shows the Power BI interface with a DAX formula editor and a data table. The formula for the 'New' column is as follows:

```

1 New = SWITCH(
2     'my_data'[Team],
3     "A", 1,
4     "B", 2,
5     "C", 3,
6     4
7 )
    
```

The resulting table below shows the data for each team and position, with the 'New' column values corresponding to the formula:

Team	Position	Points	New
A	Guard	22	1
A	Guard	14	1
A	Forward	18	1
A	Forward	39	1
A	Center	30	1
B	Guard	25	2
B	Forward	18	2
B	Forward	12	2
B	Center	17	2
B	Center	20	2
C	Guard	22	3
C	Guard	23	3
C	Forward	40	3
C	Center	23	3
C	Center	28	3

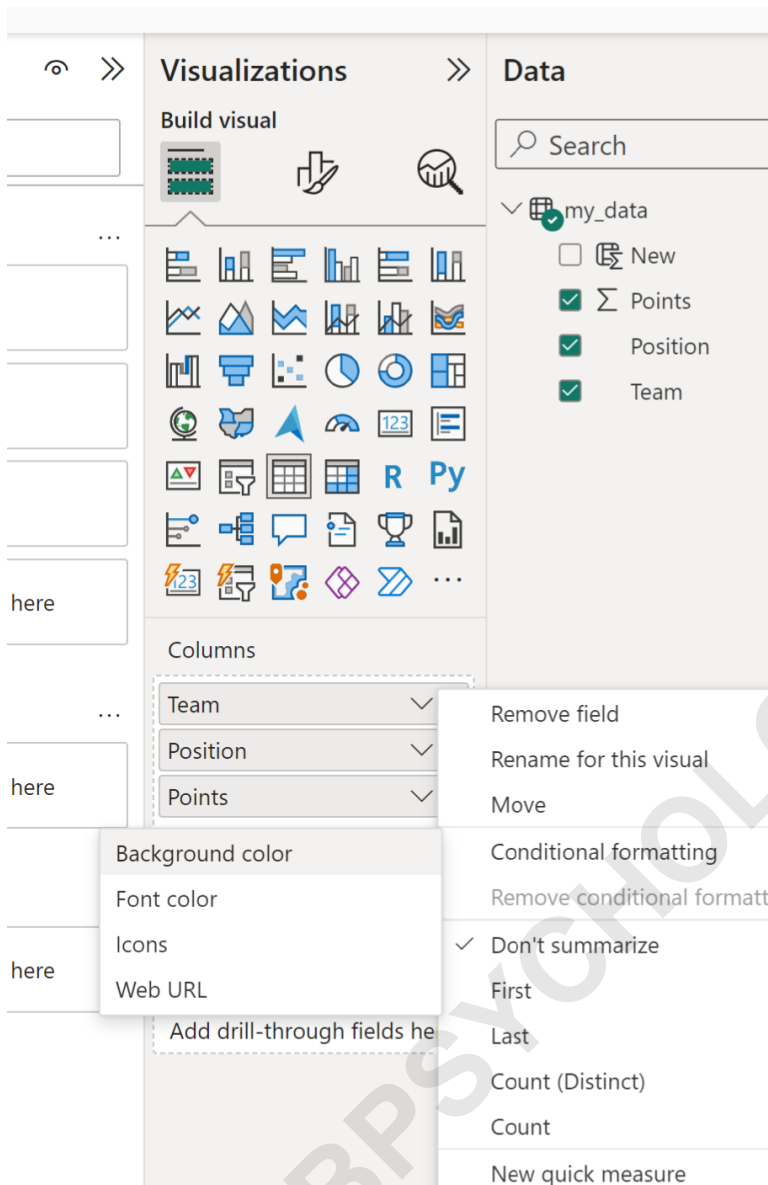
Step 3: Insert Table

Next, navigate to the Report View in Power BI and insert the following table:

Team	Position	Points
A	Center	30
A	Forward	18
A	Forward	39
A	Guard	14
A	Guard	22
B	Center	17
B	Center	20
B	Forward	12
B	Forward	18
B	Guard	25
C	Center	23
C	Center	28
C	Forward	40
C	Guard	22
C	Guard	23

Step 4: Apply Conditional Formatting to Text Column

To apply conditional formatting to the values in the Team column, click the dropdown arrow next to **Team** under the **Columns** label, then hover over **Conditional formatting**, then click **Background color**:



In the new window that appears, choose **New** for **What field should we base this on?** and then choose **Minimum** for **Summarization**, then create four rules that specify what colors to use for each numeric value in the **New** column:

Background color - Team ✕

Format style

Rules

Apply to

Values only

What field should we base this on?

Min of New

Summarization

Minimum

↕ Reverse color order

+ New rule

Rules					
If value =	1	Number	then		↑ ↓ ✕
If value =	2	Number	then		↑ ↓ ✕
If value =	3	Number	then		↑ ↓ ✕
If value =	4	Percent	then		↑ ↓ ✕

[Learn more about conditional formatting](#)

OK

Cancel

Once you click **OK**, conditional formatting will be applied to each of the strings in the **Team** column:

Team	Position	Points
A	Center	30
A	Forward	18
A	Forward	39
A	Guard	14
A	Guard	22
B	Center	17
B	Center	20
B	Forward	12
B	Forward	18
B	Guard	25
C	Center	23
C	Center	28
C	Forward	40
C	Guard	22
C	Guard	23

Total

The following tutorials explain how to perform other common tasks in Power BI: