

# How can I compare two columns in Google Sheets?

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## RECOMMENDED CITATION

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Comparing two columns in Google Sheets is a simple and efficient way to analyze and understand the data in a spreadsheet. This process involves evaluating the values in two different columns and determining any similarities or differences between them. To compare two columns in Google Sheets, one can use various functions such as IF, COUNTIF, or VLOOKUP to highlight matching or unique values, calculate the percentage of similarity, or identify discrepancies between the two columns. This allows users to quickly identify patterns, trends, or anomalies in the data and make informed decisions based on the comparison results. Overall, comparing two columns in Google Sheets is a useful tool for data analysis and can help users gain valuable insights from their spreadsheets.

## **Compare Two Columns in Google Sheets (With Examples)**

**Often you may want to compare two columns in Google Sheets to look for similarities and differences.**

**The following examples show how to make the following comparisons between two columns:**

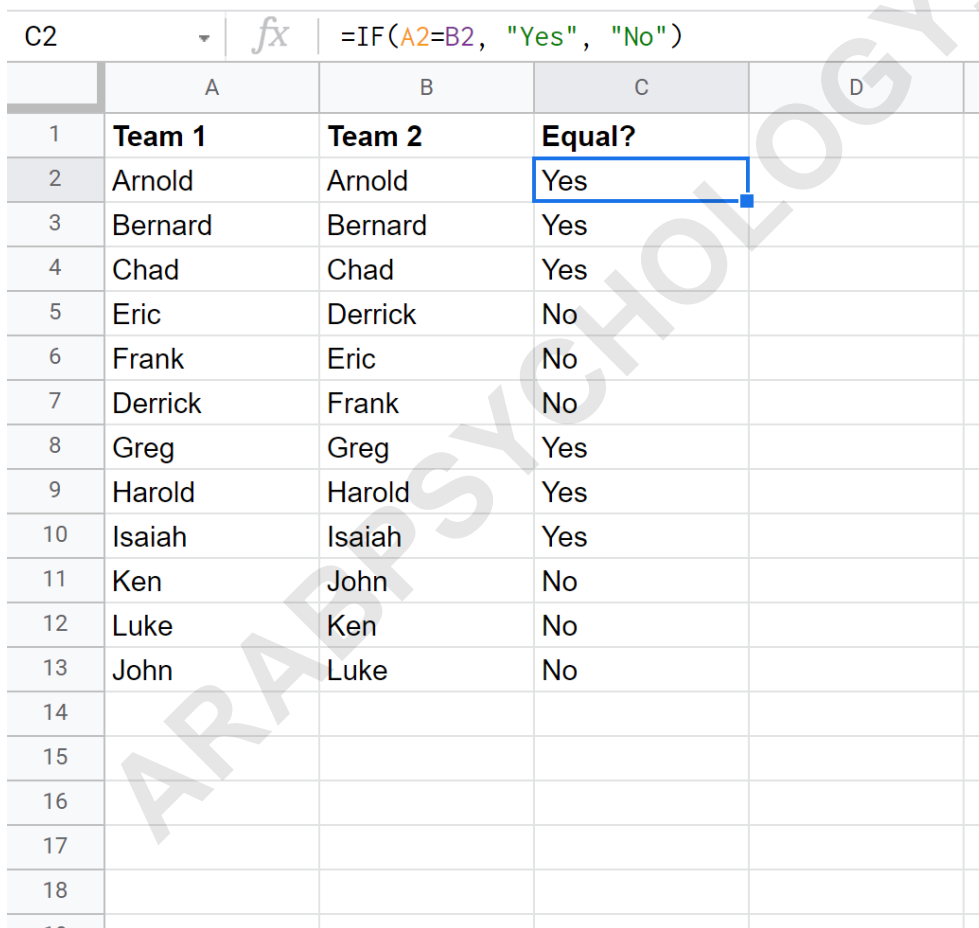
- 1. Compare Two Columns to Find Which Values are Equal**
- 2. Compare Two Columns to Find Which Values are Greater / Less Than**
- 3. Compare Two Columns to Find Which Values Belong to Both Columns**

**Example 1: Find Which Values are Equal**

We can use the following syntax to compare values across two columns and find which values are equal:

**=IF(A1=B1,"Yes","No")**

The following screenshot shows how to use this syntax in practice:



	A	B	C	D
1	<b>Team 1</b>	<b>Team 2</b>	<b>Equal?</b>	
2	Arnold	Arnold	Yes	
3	Bernard	Bernard	Yes	
4	Chad	Chad	Yes	
5	Eric	Derrick	No	
6	Frank	Eric	No	
7	Derrick	Frank	No	
8	Greg	Greg	Yes	
9	Harold	Harold	Yes	
10	Isaiah	Isaiah	Yes	
11	Ken	John	No	
12	Luke	Ken	No	
13	John	Luke	No	
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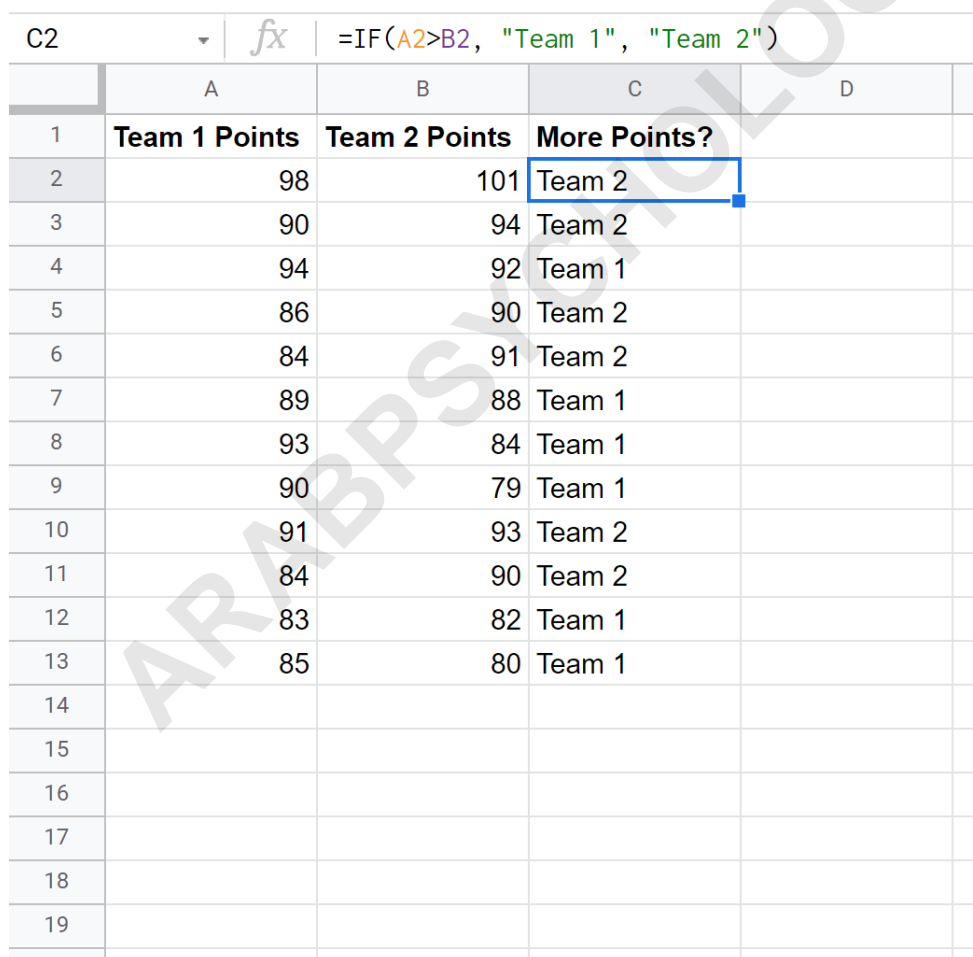
This allows us to quickly see which values match in each row between the two columns.

## Example 2: Find Which Values are Greater & Less Than

We can use the following syntax to compare values across two columns and find which values are greater:

**=IF(A1>B1,"Team 1","Team 2")**

The following screenshot shows how to use this syntax in practice:



	A	B	C	D
1	<b>Team 1 Points</b>	<b>Team 2 Points</b>	<b>More Points?</b>	
2	98	101	Team 2	
3	90	94	Team 2	
4	94	92	Team 1	
5	86	90	Team 2	
6	84	91	Team 2	
7	89	88	Team 1	
8	93	84	Team 1	
9	90	79	Team 1	
10	91	93	Team 2	
11	84	90	Team 2	
12	83	82	Team 1	
13	85	80	Team 1	
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This allows us to quickly see which team scored more

**points in each row.**

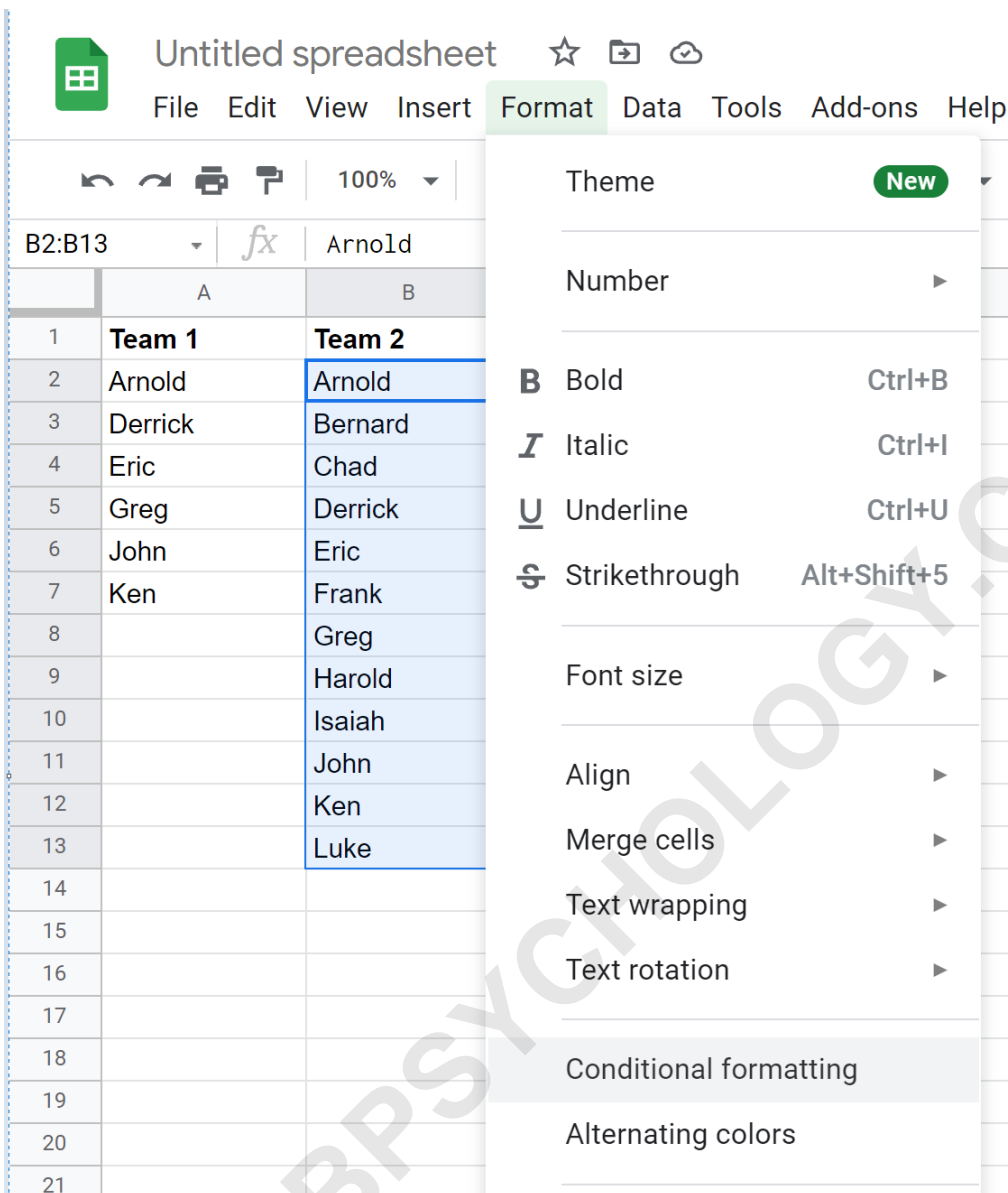
### Example 3: Find Which Values Belong to Both Columns

**Suppose we have the following two columns and we want to find which values in column B also belong to column A:**

	A	B	C	D
1	<b>Team 1</b>	<b>Team 2</b>		
2	Arnold	Arnold		
3	Derrick	Bernard		
4	Eric	Chad		
5	Greg	Derrick		
6	John	Eric		
7	Ken	Frank		
8		Greg		
9		Harold		
10		Isaiah		
11		John		
12		Ken		
13		Luke		
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**We can use Conditional formatting to accomplish this.**

**First, highlight cells B2:B13. Then click the Format tab and then click Conditional formatting:**



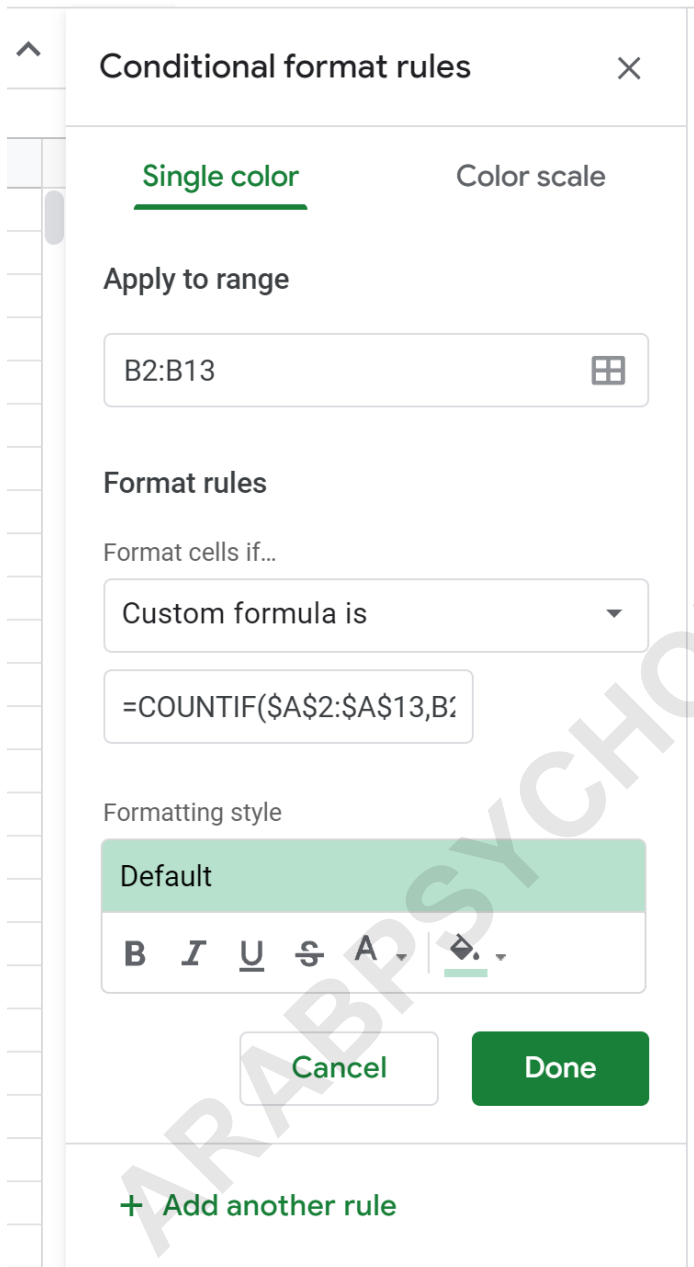
The screenshot shows a Google Sheets interface with a spreadsheet titled "Untitled spreadsheet". The spreadsheet has two columns: "Team 1" and "Team 2". The "Format" menu is open, showing options like Theme, Number, Bold, Italic, Underline, Strikethrough, Font size, Align, Merge cells, Text wrapping, Text rotation, Conditional formatting, and Alternating colors. The "Conditional formatting" option is highlighted.

	A	B
1	<b>Team 1</b>	<b>Team 2</b>
2	Arnold	Arnold
3	Derrick	Bernard
4	Eric	Chad
5	Greg	Derrick
6	John	Eric
7	Ken	Frank
8		Greg
9		Harold
10		Isaiah
11		John
12		Ken
13		Luke
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In the Conditional format rules panel that appears on the right side of the screen, click the dropdown menu next to Format cells if... and scroll to the bottom of the list and click Custom formula is.

Then enter the following formula:

**=COUNTIF(\$A\$2:\$A\$13,B2)>0**



The image shows the 'Conditional format rules' dialog box in Google Sheets. The dialog is titled 'Conditional format rules' and has a close button (X) in the top right corner. It is divided into several sections:

- Single color** (selected) and **Color scale** options.
- Apply to range**: A text box containing 'B2:B13' with a grid icon to its right.
- Format rules**: A section with a dropdown menu set to 'Custom formula is' and a text box containing the formula '=COUNTIF(\$A\$2:\$A\$13,B2)>0'.
- Formatting style**: A section with a 'Default' style selected, and a toolbar with icons for Bold (B), Italic (I), Underline (U), Strikethrough (ABC), and a color fill icon.
- Buttons for 'Cancel' and 'Done' at the bottom.
- A '+ Add another rule' link at the bottom left.

**Once you click Done, the conditional formatting will be applied to column B:**

	A	B	C	D	
1	<b>Team 1</b>	<b>Team 2</b>			
2	Arnold	Arnold			
3	Derrick	Bernard			
4	Eric	Chad			
5	Greg	Derrick			
6	John	Eric			
7	Ken	Frank			
8		Greg			
9		Harold			
10		Isaiah			
11		John			
12		Ken			
13		Luke			
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**Notice that each value in column B that also appears in column A is highlighted.**

**Note that you can also change the color used for highlighting in the Conditional format rules panel.**

**For example, we could change the highlighting color to orange:**

	A	B	C	D
1	<b>Team 1</b>	<b>Team 2</b>		
2	Arnold	Arnold		
3	Derrick	Bernard		
4	Eric	Chad		
5	Greg	Derrick		
6	John	Eric		
7	Ken	Frank		
8		Greg		
9		Harold		
10		Isaiah		
11		John		
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## How to Use SUMIF with Multiple Columns in Google Sheets