# How to Reverse Score Data in Google Sheets

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Reverse scoring in Google Sheets can be done by using the "IF" function to create a formula that subtracts the original score from a specific number (usually the maximum score) to get the reversed score. This can be applied to a range of cells to quickly and efficiently reverse the scores in a spreadsheet. It is commonly used in surveys or assessments where the highest score indicates the least desirable outcome and needs to be reversed for accurate analysis.

When creating surveys, researchers sometimes rephrase "positive" questions in a "negative" way to make sure that individuals are giving consistent responses.

We say that these types of questions are **reverse-scored**.

When using a survey to assign a composite score to individuals, it's important to make sure the reverse-coded questions are reverse-scored as well.

The following example shows how to reverse the scores on reverse-coded questions in Google Sheets.

## Example: How to Perform Reverse Scoring in Google Sheets

Suppose a researcher administers a survey with 5 questions to 10 individuals in which the possible responses to each questions are:

Strongly Agree
Agree
Neither Agree Nor Disagree
Disagree
Strongly Disagree

The following dataset in Google Sheets shows the results of the survey in which "Strongly Agree" is assigned a value of 5, "Agree" is assigned a value of 4, and so on:

| | A | B | C | D | E |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | **Q1** | **Q2** | **Q3** | **Q4** | **Q5** |
| 2 | 5 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 2 |
| 3 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 2 |
| 4 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 3 |
| 5 | 5 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 2 |
| 6 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 3 |
| 7 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 8 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 5 | 4 |
| 9 | 1 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 5 |
| 10 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| 11 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 4 |
| 12 | | | | | |
| 13 | | | | | |
| 14 | | | | | |
| 15 | | | | | |

Suppose questions 2 and 5 are reverse coded, so we must reverse their scores.

In other words:

1 should become 5.
2 should become 4.
3 should become 3.
4 should become 2.
5 should become 1.

To do so, we can add 1 to the max possible score (5) to get 6. Then, we can subtract the original scores from 6 to get the reverse scored value.

For example:

5 becomes: 6 - 5 = **1**.
4 becomes: 6 - 4 = **2**.
3 becomes: 6 - 3 = **3**.
2 becomes: 6 - 2 = **4**.
1 becomes: 6 - 1 = **5**.

To do this in Google Sheets, first copy and paste all of the original answers into a new area on the spreadsheet:

| | A | B | C | D | E | F |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | **Q1** | **Q2** | **Q3** | **Q4** | **Q5** | |
| 2 | 5 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 2 | |
| 3 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 2 | |
| 4 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 3 | |
| 5 | 5 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 2 | |
| 6 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 3 | |
| 7 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 1 | |
| 8 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 5 | 4 | |
| 9 | 1 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 5 | |
| 10 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | |
| 11 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 4 | |
| 12 | | | | | | |
| 13 | | | | | | |
| 14 | | | | | | |
| 15 | **Q1** | **Q2** | **Q3** | **Q4** | **Q5** | |
| 16 | 5 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 2 | |
| 17 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 2 | |
| 18 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 3 | |
| 19 | 5 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 2 | |
| 20 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 3 | |
| 21 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 1 | |
| 22 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 5 | 4 | |
| 23 | 1 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 5 | |
| 24 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | |
| 25 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 4 | |
| 26 | | | | | | |



In cell **E16** type: **=6-E2**. Then copy and paste this formula down to all other cells in column E.

The values in column B and column E will now both be reverse coded:

E16 =6-E2

| | A | B | C | D | E | F |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | **Q1** | **Q2** | **Q3** | **Q4** | **Q5** | |
| 2 | 5 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 2 | |
| 3 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 2 | |
| 4 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 3 | |
| 5 | 5 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 2 | |
| 6 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 3 | |
| 7 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 1 | |
| 8 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 5 | 4 | |
| 9 | 1 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 5 | |
| 10 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | |
| 11 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 4 | |
| 12 | | | | | | |
| 13 | | | | | | |
| 14 | | | | | | |
| 15 | **Q1** | **Q2** | **Q3** | **Q4** | **Q5** | |
| 16 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 4 | |
| 17 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | |
| 18 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 3 | |
| 19 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 2 | 4 | |
| 20 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 3 | |
| 21 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 5 | |
| 22 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 5 | 2 | |
| 23 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 4 | 1 | |
| 24 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | |
| 25 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | |
| 26 | | | | | | |



The following tutorials explain how to perform other common tasks in Google Sheets: