

How do I create a forecast in Google Sheets?

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Creating a forecast in Google Sheets is a simple process that can help users predict future trends and make informed decisions. To create a forecast, users can first enter their data into a spreadsheet, ensuring that it is organized in columns and rows. Then, they can select the cells with the data they want to analyze and click on the "Explore" button located in the bottom right corner of the screen. This will open a sidebar with various tools, including the "Forecast" option. By selecting this option, users can generate a forecast based on their data, which can be customized by adjusting the time period and confidence interval. The forecast will then be displayed on the spreadsheet, allowing users to easily visualize and analyze the predicted trends. Additionally, users can update the forecast at any time by simply clicking the "Update" button. This feature in Google Sheets makes it easy for users to create accurate and customizable forecasts for their data analysis needs.

Create a Forecast in Google Sheets (With Example)

You can use the FORECAST function in Google Sheets to calculate the expected value of some future observation using historical data.

This function uses the following methods:

Method 1: Forecast One Future Value

=FORECAST(A17,B2:B16,A2:A16)

This particular formula forecasts the y-value that corresponds to the x-value in cell A17 using the range B2:B16 as the past y-values and the range A2:A16 as the past x-values.

Method 2: Forecast Multiple Future Values

=ArrayFormula(FORECAST(A17:A19,B2:B16,A2:A16))

This particular formula forecasts the y-values that corresponds to the x-values in the range A17:A19 using the range B2:B16 as the past y-values and the range A2:A16 as the past x-values.

The following examples show how to use each method in practice.

Example 1: Forecast One Future Value

The following screenshot shows how to use the FORECAST function to forecast the sales value for 4/1/2021 using A2:A16 as the historical months and B2:B16 as the historical sales values:

B17 fx =FORECAST(A17, B2:B16, A2:A16)

	A	B	C	D
1	Date	Sales		
2	1/1/2020	45		
3	2/1/2020	56		
4	3/1/2020	61		
5	4/1/2020	78		
6	5/1/2020	85		
7	6/1/2020	90		
8	7/1/2020	91		
9	8/1/2020	98		
10	9/1/2020	104		
11	10/1/2020	118		
12	11/1/2020	120		
13	12/1/2020	140		
14	1/1/2021	130		
15	2/1/2021	140		
16	3/1/2021	148		
17	4/1/2021	156.9550162		
18	5/1/2021			
19	6/1/2021			
20				
21				

The FORECAST function predicts that there will be 156.955 total sales on 4/1/2021.

Example 2: Forecast Multiple Future Values

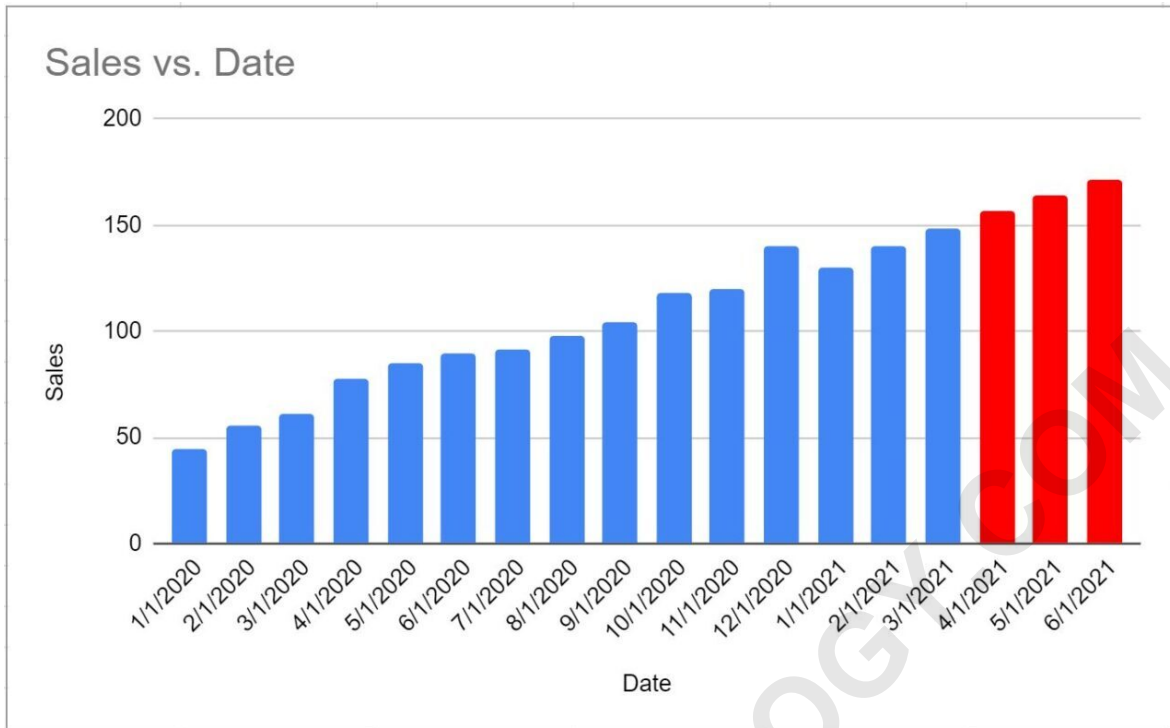
The following screenshot shows how to use the FORECAST function to forecast the sales values for 4/1/2021 through 6/1/2021 using A2:A16 as the historical months and B2:B16 as the historical sales values:

B17 fx =ArrayFormula(FORECAST(A17:A19, B2:B16, A2:A16))

	A	B	C	D	E
1	Date	Sales			
2	1/1/2020	45			
3	2/1/2020	56			
4	3/1/2020	61			
5	4/1/2020	78			
6	5/1/2020	85			
7	6/1/2020	90			
8	7/1/2020	91			
9	8/1/2020	98			
10	9/1/2020	104			
11	10/1/2020	118			
12	11/1/2020	120			
13	12/1/2020	140			
14	1/1/2021	130			
15	2/1/2021	140			
16	3/1/2021	148			
17	4/1/2021	156.9550162			
18	5/1/2021	163.9554985			
19	6/1/2021	171.1893301			
20					
21					

We can see that the FORECAST function produces a forecasted number of sales for each of the three months that we specified.

Click on the last three bars in the chart to change each of their fill colors to red to indicate that they represent predicted values:



The x-axis shows the date and the y-axis shows the sales for each date.

Note 1: Under the hood, the FORECAST function simply uses simple linear regression to find the line that best fits the dataset and then uses the fitted regression model to predict future values.

Note 2: You can find the complete documentation for the FORECAST function in Google Sheets .

Additional Resources

The following tutorials explain how to perform other

common tasks in Google Sheets:

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