

What are the different types of number formats available in Excel?

Authored by
stats writer

June 28, 2024

RECOMMENDED CITATION

stats writer (2024). *What are the different types of number formats available in Excel?*. PSYCHOLOGICAL SCALES. Retrieved from <https://scales.arabpsychology.com/?p=157332>

Microsoft Excel offers various types of number formats that can be applied to data in a spreadsheet. These formats allow users to customize how numbers are displayed, making it easier to interpret and analyze data. Some of the most commonly used number formats in Excel include:

1. **General:** This is the default number format in Excel and displays numbers as they are entered, without any special formatting.
2. **Currency:** This format is used for monetary values and adds a currency symbol, such as \$ or €, to the numbers. It also allows users to specify the number of decimal places to be displayed.
3. **Number:** Similar to the general format, this format displays numbers as they are entered, but allows users to specify the number of decimal places and add a thousands separator.
4. **Date:** Excel offers various date formats, such as short date, long date, and custom date formats, which allow users to display dates in different ways according to their preferences.
5. **Time:** This format allows users to display time values, such as hours, minutes, and seconds, in different formats, such as 12-hour or 24-hour clock.
6. **Percentage:** This format is used to display numbers as percentages, and allows users to specify the number of decimal places to be displayed.
7. **Scientific:** This format is used for very large or very small numbers and displays them in scientific notation, such as 1.23E+05 for 123,000.
8. **Custom:** Excel also offers the option to create custom number formats, where users can specify their own formatting rules, such as adding text or symbols to numbers.

In addition to these, there are many other specialized number formats available in Excel, such as fraction, accounting, and text formats. These formats provide users with a wide range of options to display and manipulate data in a way that best suits their needs.

Excel Number Formats

Number Formats

The default Number format is **General**.

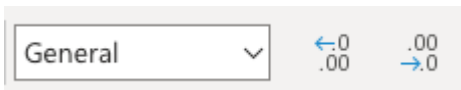
Why change number formats?

Make data explainable Prepare data for functions, so that Excel understands what kind of data you are working with.

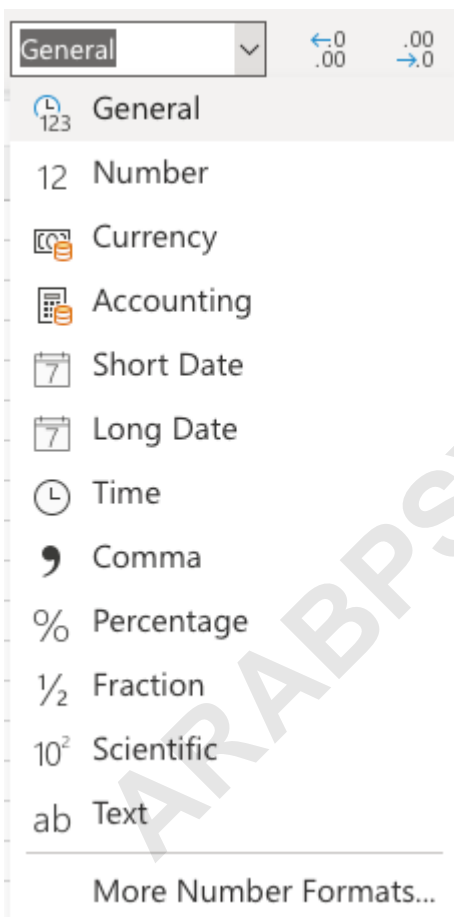
Examples of number formats:

General Number Currency Time

Number formats can be changed by clicking the Number format dropdown, accessed in the Ribbon, found in the Numbers group.



Note: You can switch the Ribbon view to access more Number format options.



Example

In the example we have cells that represent prices, which can be formatted as Currency.

Let's try to change the format of the prices to the Currency Number format.

Step by step:

Mark the range **B2:C8** Click the Number format dropdown menu Click the **Currency** format

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	Item	Item price	Price	Shop cart		
2	Pokeball	200	200	1		
3	Great ball	600	600	1		
4	Ultra ball	1200	1200	1		
5	Potion	300	600	2		
6	Super potio	700	1400	2		
7	Hyper potio	1200	3600	3		
8	Antidote	100	300	3		
9						
10	Subtotal	7900				
11	Discount	790			Discount	10
12						
13	Total	7110				

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	Item	Item price	Price	Shop cart		
2	Pokeball	USD 200,00	USD 200,00	1		
3	Great ball	USD 600,00	USD 600,00	1		
4	Ultra ball	USD 1 200,00	USD 1 200,00	1		
5	Potion	USD 300,00	USD 600,00	2		
6	Super potio	USD 700,00	USD 1 400,00	2		
7	Hyper potio	USD 1 200,00	USD 3 600,00	3		
8	Antidote	USD 100,00	USD 300,00	3		
9						
10	Subtotal	7900				
11	Discount	790			Discount	10
12						
13	Total	7110				

That's it! The Number format was changed from **General** to **Currency**.

Note: It will use your local currency by default.

Now, do the same for **B10**, **B11** and **B13**:

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	Item	Item price	Price	Shop cart		
2	Pokeball	USD 200,00	USD 200,00	1		
3	Great ball	USD 600,00	USD 600,00	1		
4	Ultra ball	USD 1 200,00	USD 1 200,00	1		
5	Potion	USD 300,00	USD 600,00	2		
6	Super potio	USD 700,00	USD 1 400,00	2		
7	Hyper potio	USD 1 200,00	USD 3 600,00	3		
8	Antidote	USD 100,00	USD 300,00	3		
9						
10	Subtotal	USD 7 900,00				
11	Discount	USD 790,00			Discount	10
12						
13	Total	USD 7 110,00				

Did you make it?

Note: The currency can be changed. For example instead of using **USD** like in the example you can decide for **\$** or **EUR**. It is changed in the dropdown menu, clicking the **More Number Formats** in the bottom of the menu. Then, clicking on **Currency**.

Notice that the numbers look like a mess. Let's solve that by decreasing the decimals. This helps to make the presentation more neat.

Decimals

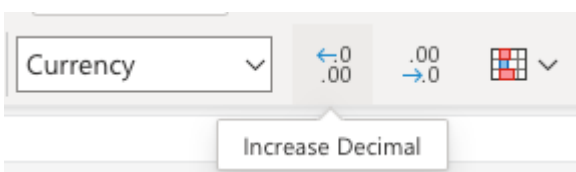
The number of decimals can be increased and decreased.

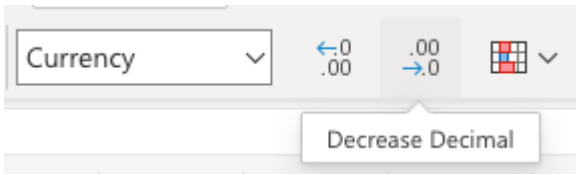
There are two commands:

Increase Decimal Decrease Decimal

Clicking them reduces or increases the number of decimals.

The commands can be found next to the Number format dropdown menu.





Note: Decreasing Decimals can make Excel round up or down numbers as more decimals get removed. This may be confusing if you are working on advanced calculations which require accurate numbers.

Let's clean this up, step by step:

Mark the range **B2:C8** Click the **Decrease Decimal** button two times

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	Item	Item price	Price	Shop cart		
2	Pokeball	USD 200	USD 200	1		
3	Great ball	USD 600	USD 600	1		
4	Ultra ball	USD 1 200	USD 1 200	1		
5	Potion	USD 300	USD 600	2		
6	Super potio	USD 700	USD 1 400	2		
7	Hyper potio	USD 1 200	USD 3 600	3		
8	Antidote	USD 100	USD 300	3		
9						
10	Subtotal	USD 7 900,00				
11	Discount	USD 790,00			Discount	10
12						
13	Total	USD 7 110,00				

Great!

Do the same for **B10**, **B11** and **B13**:

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	Item	Item price	Price	Shop cart		
2	Pokeball	USD 200	USD 200	1		
3	Great ball	USD 600	USD 600	1		
4	Ultra ball	USD 1 200	USD 1 200	1		
5	Potion	USD 300	USD 600	2		
6	Super potio	USD 700	USD 1 400	2		
7	Hyper potio	USD 1 200	USD 3 600	3		
8	Antidote	USD 100	USD 300	3		
9						
10	Subtotal	USD 7 900				
11	Discount	USD 790			Discount	10
12						
13	Total	USD 7 110				

That looks a lot better!

Pro tip: The arrow in the angle in the top left corner by **row 1** and **column A** can be clicked to mark all cells in the sheet. This can be useful if you want to change the Number format or change Decimals for all cells.

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	Item	Item price	Price	Shop cart		
2	Pokeball	USD 200	USD 200	1		
3	Great ball	USD 600	USD 600	1		
4	Ultra ball	USD 1 200	USD 1 200	1		
5	Potion	USD 300	USD 600	2		
6	Super potio	USD 700	USD 1 400	2		
7	Hyper potio	USD 1 200	USD 3 600	3		
8	Antidote	USD 100	USD 300	3		
9						
10	Subtotal	USD 7 900				
11	Discount	USD 790			Discount	10
12						
13	Total	USD 7 110				

Chapter summary

Number formats can be changed to make the spreadsheet more understandable or to prepare cells for functions. You can increase and decrease decimals to make the presentation neat.

★+1 W3schools PathfinderTrack your progress - it's free!

Log in

Sign Up

ARABPSYCHOLOGY.COM