

# What are the top/bottom rules in Excel used for?

Authored by  
**stats writer**

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## RECOMMENDED CITATION

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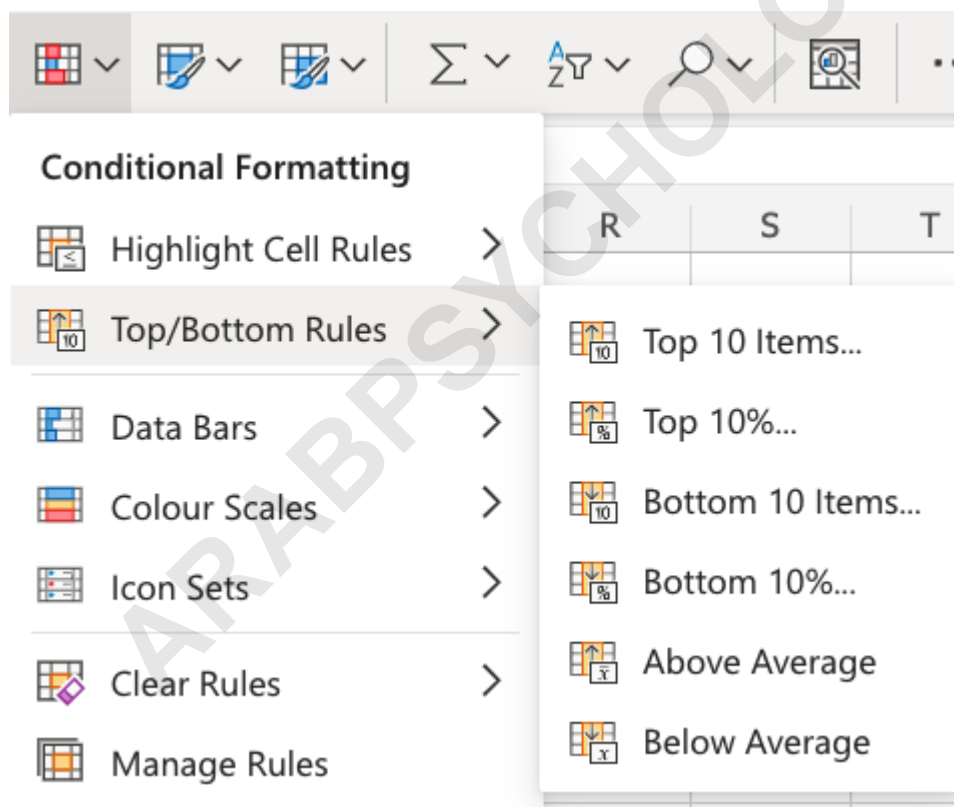
The top/bottom rules in Excel are a set of formatting tools used to quickly identify and highlight the highest or lowest values in a range of data. These rules allow users to easily identify patterns and trends within their data, making it easier to analyze and interpret. They are particularly useful for large datasets and can be applied to various types of data, such as numbers, dates, and text. By applying these rules, users can effectively summarize and visualize their data, increasing efficiency and accuracy in decision-making processes.

## Excel Top/Bottom Rules

### Top/Bottom Rules

Top/Bottom Rules are premade types of conditional formatting in Excel used to change the appearance of cells in a range based on your specified **conditions**.

Here is the Top/Bottom Rules part of the conditional formatting menu:



### Appearance Options

The web browser version of Excel offers the following appearance options for conditionally formatted cells:

Light Red Fill with Dark Red Text  
 Yellow Fill with Dark Yellow Text  
 Green Fill with Dark Green Text  
 Light Red Fill  
 Red Text  
 Red Border

Here is how the options look in a spreadsheet:

	A	B	C
1			
2		Light Red Fill with Dark Red Text	
3		Yellow Fill with Dark Yellow Text	
4		Green Fill with Dark Green Text	
5		Light Red Fill	
6		Red Text	
7		Red Border	
8			

### Top/Bottom 10 Items Example

The "Top 10 Items..." and "Bottom 10 Items..." rules will highlight cells with one of the appearance options based on the cell value being the top or bottom values in a range.

**Note:** The default number of items is 10, but you can specify any whole number up to 1000 for Top/Bottom Items to be highlighted.

	A	B	C	D
1	<b>Name</b>	<b>Type 1</b>	<b>Speed</b>	
2	Bulbasaur	Grass	45	
3	Ivysaur	Grass	60	
4	Venusaur	Grass	80	
5	Charmander	Fire	65	
6	Charmeleon	Fire	80	
7	Charizard	Fire	100	
8	Squirtle	Water	43	
9	Wartortle	Water	58	
10	Blastoise	Water	78	
11	Caterpie	Bug	45	
12	Metapod	Bug	30	
13	Butterfree	Bug	70	
14	Weedle	Bug	50	
15	Kakuna	Bug	35	
16	Beedrill	Bug	75	
17	Pidgey	Normal	56	
18	Pidgeotto	Normal	71	
19	Pidgeot	Normal	101	
20	Rattata	Normal	72	
21	Raticate	Normal	97	
22	Spearow	Normal	70	
23	Fearow	Normal	100	
24	Ekans	Poison	55	
25	Arbok	Poison	80	
26	Pikachu	Electric	90	
27	Raichu	Electric	110	
28	Sandshrew	Ground	40	
29	Sandslash	Ground	65	
30	Nidoran ♀	Poison	41	
31	Nidorina	Poison	56	
32				

You can choose any range for where the Highlight Cell Rule should apply. It can be a few cells, a

single column, a single row, or a combination of multiple cells, rows and columns.

Let's first apply the **Top 10 Items...** rule to the Speed values.

"Top 10 Items..." Rule, step by step:

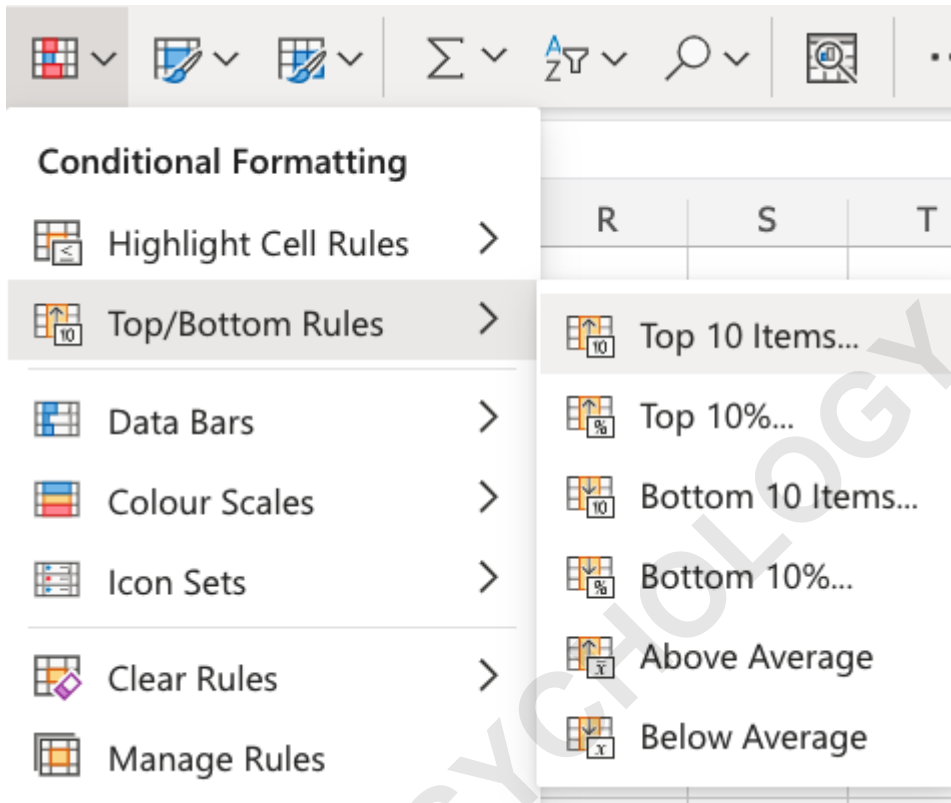
Select the range `C2:C31` for Speed values

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	A	B	C	D
1	Name	Type 1	Speed	
2	Bulbasaur	Grass	45	
3	Ivysaur	Grass	60	
4	Venusaur	Grass	80	
5	Charmander	Fire	65	
6	Charmeleon	Fire	80	
7	Charizard	Fire	100	
8	Squirtle	Water	43	
9	Wartortle	Water	58	
10	Blastoise	Water	78	
11	Caterpie	Bug	45	
12	Metapod	Bug	30	
13	Butterfree	Bug	70	
14	Weedle	Bug	50	
15	Kakuna	Bug	35	
16	Beedrill	Bug	75	
17	Pidgey	Normal	56	
18	Pidgeotto	Normal	71	
19	Pidgeot	Normal	101	
20	Rattata	Normal	72	
21	Raticate	Normal	97	
22	Spearow	Normal	70	
23	Fearow	Normal	100	
24	Ekans	Poison	55	
25	Arbok	Poison	80	
26	Pikachu	Electric	90	
27	Raichu	Electric	110	
28	Sandshrew	Ground	40	
29	Sandslash	Ground	65	
30	Nidoran ♀	Poison	41	
31	Nidorina	Poison	56	
32				

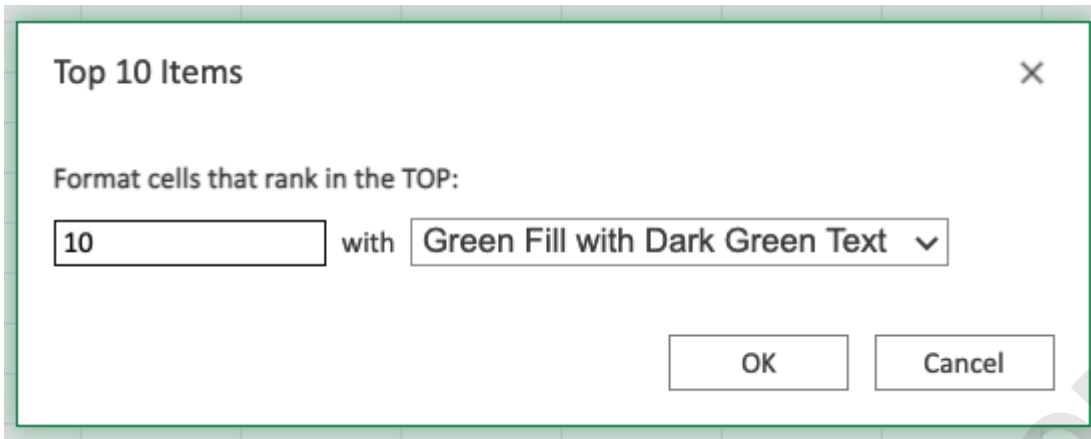


Click on the Conditional Formatting icon in the ribbon, from **Home** menu. Select **Top/Bottom Rules** from the drop-down menu. Select **Top 10 Items...** from the menu.



This will open a dialog box where you can specify the value and the appearance option.

Leave the default value 10 in the input field. Select the appearance option "Green Fill with Dark Green Text" from the dropdown menu.



Now, the 10 cells with the top values will be highlighted in green:

	A	B	C	D
1	Name	Type 1	Speed	
2	Bulbasaur	Grass	45	
3	Ivysaur	Grass	60	
4	Venusaur	Grass	80	
5	Charmander	Fire	65	
6	Charmeleon	Fire	80	
7	Charizard	Fire	100	
8	Squirtle	Water	43	
9	Wartortle	Water	58	
10	Blastoise	Water	78	
11	Caterpie	Bug	45	
12	Metapod	Bug	30	
13	Butterfree	Bug	70	
14	Weedle	Bug	50	
15	Kakuna	Bug	35	
16	Beedrill	Bug	75	
17	Pidgey	Normal	56	
18	Pidgeotto	Normal	71	
19	Pidgeot	Normal	101	
20	Rattata	Normal	72	
21	Raticate	Normal	97	
22	Spearow	Normal	70	
23	Fearow	Normal	100	
24	Ekans	Poison	55	
25	Arbok	Poison	80	
26	Pikachu	Electric	90	
27	Raichu	Electric	110	
28	Sandshrew	Ground	40	
29	Sandslash	Ground	65	
30	Nidoran ♀	Poison	41	
31	Nidorina	Poison	56	
32				

Great! Now, the top 10 Speed values are easily identified.

Let's try the same with the bottom 10 Speed values.

**Note:** Multiple rules can be applied to the same range.

Repeat the steps, but instead choose **Bottom 10 Items...** in the menu and select the "Light Red Fill with Dark Red Text" appearance option.

Now, the slowest values are also highlighted:

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	A	B	C	D
1	Name	Type 1	Speed	
2	Bulbasaur	Grass	45	
3	Ivysaur	Grass	60	
4	Venusaur	Grass	80	
5	Charmander	Fire	65	
6	Charmeleon	Fire	80	
7	Charizard	Fire	100	
8	Squirtle	Water	43	
9	Wartortle	Water	58	
10	Blastoise	Water	78	
11	Caterpie	Bug	45	
12	Metapod	Bug	30	
13	Butterfree	Bug	70	
14	Weedle	Bug	50	
15	Kakuna	Bug	35	
16	Beedrill	Bug	75	
17	Pidgey	Normal	56	
18	Pidgeotto	Normal	71	
19	Pidgeot	Normal	101	
20	Rattata	Normal	72	
21	Raticate	Normal	97	
22	Spearow	Normal	70	
23	Fearow	Normal	100	
24	Ekans	Poison	55	
25	Arbok	Poison	80	
26	Pikachu	Electric	90	
27	Raichu	Electric	110	
28	Sandshrew	Ground	40	
29	Sandslash	Ground	65	
30	Nidoran ♀	Poison	41	
31	Nidorina	Poison	56	
32				

Notice that there are actually 11 items highlighted in red. Why could this be?

Let's sort the table with descending Speed values for a clue:

	A	B	C	D
1	<b>Name</b>	<b>Type 1</b>	<b>Speed</b>	
2	Raichu	Electric	110	
3	Pidgeot	Normal	101	
4	Charizard	Fire	100	
5	Fearow	Normal	100	
6	Raticate	Normal	97	
7	Pikachu	Electric	90	
8	Venusaur	Grass	80	
9	Charmeleon	Fire	80	
10	Arbok	Poison	80	
11	Blastoise	Water	78	
12	Beedrill	Bug	75	
13	Rattata	Normal	72	
14	Pidgeotto	Normal	71	
15	Butterfree	Bug	70	
16	Spearow	Normal	70	
17	Charmander	Fire	65	
18	Sandslash	Ground	65	
19	Ivysaur	Grass	60	
20	Wartortle	Water	58	
21	Pidgey	Normal	56	
22	Nidorina	Poison	56	
23	Ekans	Poison	55	
24	Weedle	Bug	50	
25	Bulbasaur	Grass	45	
26	Caterpie	Bug	45	
27	Squirtle	Water	43	
28	Nidoran ♀	Poison	41	
29	Sandshrew	Ground	40	
30	Kakuna	Bug	35	
31	Metapod	Bug	30	
32				

We can see that both Pidgey and Nidorina have a Speed of 56. So, they are tied for the 10th bottom value.

**Note:** When using the **Top/Bottom 10...** conditional formatting, values that tie will **all** be highlighted.

## Top/Bottom 10% Example

The "Top 10%..." and "Bottom 10%..." rules will highlight cells with one of the appearance options based on the cell value being the top or bottom **percent of values** in a range.

**Note:** The default percent of items is 10, but you can specify any whole number up to 100 for Top/Bottom Percent to be highlighted.

Let's apply Top and Bottom 10% rules to the same dataset with sorted Speed values:

	A	B	C	D
1	<b>Name</b>	<b>Type 1</b>	<b>Speed</b>	
2	Raichu	Electric	110	
3	Pidgeot	Normal	101	
4	Charizard	Fire	100	
5	Fearow	Normal	100	
6	Raticate	Normal	97	
7	Pikachu	Electric	90	
8	Venusaur	Grass	80	
9	Charmeleon	Fire	80	
10	Arbok	Poison	80	
11	Blastoise	Water	78	
12	Beedrill	Bug	75	
13	Rattata	Normal	72	
14	Pidgeotto	Normal	71	
15	Butterfree	Bug	70	
16	Spearow	Normal	70	
17	Charmander	Fire	65	
18	Sandslash	Ground	65	
19	Ivysaur	Grass	60	
20	Wartortle	Water	58	
21	Pidgey	Normal	56	
22	Nidorina	Poison	56	
23	Ekans	Poison	55	
24	Weedle	Bug	50	
25	Bulbasaur	Grass	45	
26	Caterpie	Bug	45	
27	Squirtle	Water	43	
28	Nidoran ♀	Poison	41	
29	Sandshrew	Ground	40	
30	Kakuna	Bug	35	
31	Metapod	Bug	30	
32				

You can choose any range for where the Highlight Cell Rule should apply. It can be a few cells, a

single column, a single row, or a combination of multiple cells, rows and columns.

Let's first apply the **Bottom 10%...** rule to the Speed values.

"Bottom 10%..." Rule, step by step:

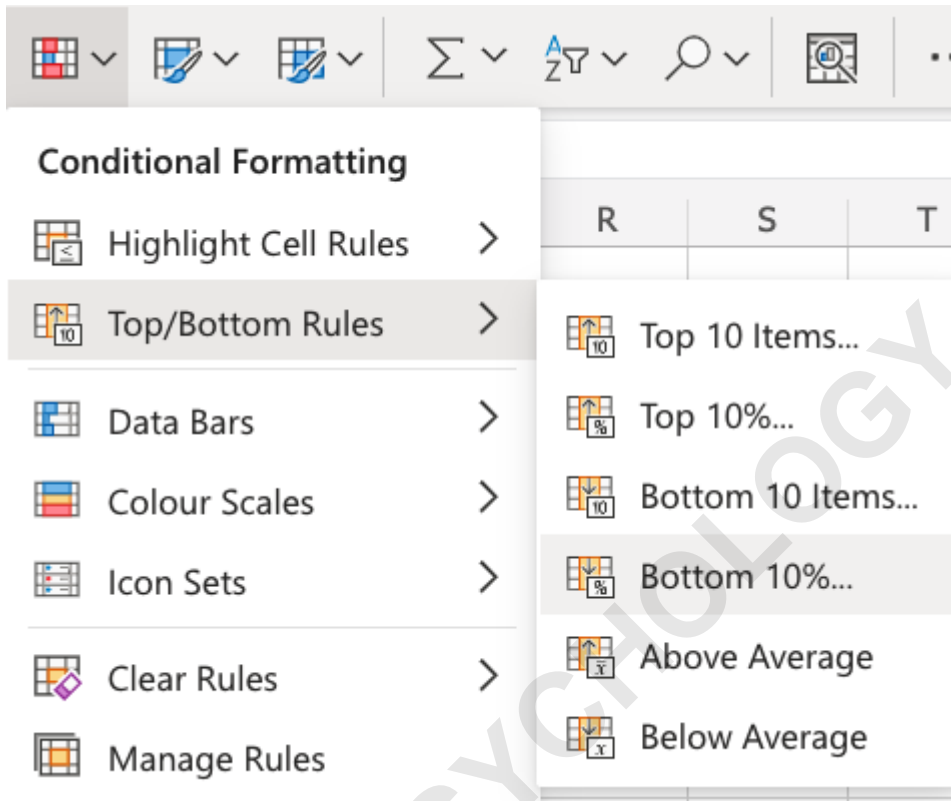
Select the range `C2:C31` for Speed values

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	A	B	C	D
1	Name	Type 1	Speed	
2	Raichu	Electric	110	
3	Pidgeot	Normal	101	
4	Charizard	Fire	100	
5	Fearow	Normal	100	
6	Raticate	Normal	97	
7	Pikachu	Electric	90	
8	Venusaur	Grass	80	
9	Charmeleon	Fire	80	
10	Arbok	Poison	80	
11	Blastoise	Water	78	
12	Beedrill	Bug	75	
13	Rattata	Normal	72	
14	Pidgeotto	Normal	71	
15	Butterfree	Bug	70	
16	Spearow	Normal	70	
17	Charmander	Fire	65	
18	Sandslash	Ground	65	
19	Ivysaur	Grass	60	
20	Wartortle	Water	58	
21	Pidgey	Normal	56	
22	Nidorina	Poison	56	
23	Ekans	Poison	55	
24	Weedle	Bug	50	
25	Bulbasaur	Grass	45	
26	Caterpie	Bug	45	
27	Squirtle	Water	43	
28	Nidoran ♀	Poison	41	
29	Sandshrew	Ground	40	
30	Kakuna	Bug	35	
31	Metapod	Bug	30	
32				

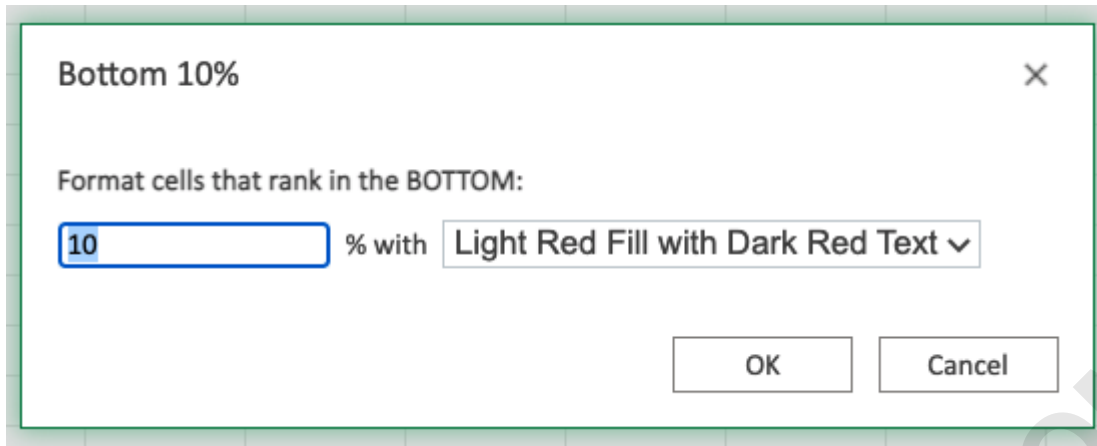


Click on the Conditional Formatting icon in the ribbon, from **Home** menu. Select **Top/Bottom Rules** from the drop-down menu. Select **Bottom 10%...** from the menu.



This will open a dialog box where you can specify the value and the appearance option.

Leave the default value 10 in the input field. Select the appearance option "Light Red Fill with Dark Red Text" from the dropdown menu.



Now, the bottom 10% of cells will be highlighted in red:

	A	B	C	D
1	Name	Type 1	Speed	
2	Raichu	Electric	110	
3	Pidgeot	Normal	101	
4	Charizard	Fire	100	
5	Fearow	Normal	100	
6	Raticate	Normal	97	
7	Pikachu	Electric	90	
8	Venusaur	Grass	80	
9	Charmeleon	Fire	80	
10	Arbok	Poison	80	
11	Blastoise	Water	78	
12	Beedrill	Bug	75	
13	Rattata	Normal	72	
14	Pidgeotto	Normal	71	
15	Butterfree	Bug	70	
16	Spearow	Normal	70	
17	Charmander	Fire	65	
18	Sandslash	Ground	65	
19	Ivysaur	Grass	60	
20	Wartortle	Water	58	
21	Pidgey	Normal	56	
22	Nidorina	Poison	56	
23	Ekans	Poison	55	
24	Weedle	Bug	50	
25	Bulbasaur	Grass	45	
26	Caterpie	Bug	45	
27	Squirtle	Water	43	
28	Nidoran ♀	Poison	41	
29	Sandshrew	Ground	40	
30	Kakuna	Bug	35	
31	Metapod	Bug	30	
32				

Notice that there are 3 highlighted cells.

There are 30 cells in the range, so 10% of that is 3 cells.

**Note:** The number of cells will be rounded **down** to the closest whole number based on the percent.

For example:

6% of 30 is 1.8, which will be rounded **down** to 1 cell  
7% of 30 is 2.1, which will be rounded **down** to 2 cells

Let's try the same with the top 10% Speed values.

Repeat the steps, but instead choose **Top 10%...** in the menu and select the "Green Fill with Dark Green Text" appearance option.

Now, the fastest values are also highlighted:

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	A	B	C	D
1	<b>Name</b>	<b>Type 1</b>	<b>Speed</b>	
2	Raichu	Electric	110	
3	Pidgeot	Normal	101	
4	Charizard	Fire	100	
5	Fearow	Normal	100	
6	Raticate	Normal	97	
7	Pikachu	Electric	90	
8	Venusaur	Grass	80	
9	Charmeleon	Fire	80	
10	Arbok	Poison	80	
11	Blastoise	Water	78	
12	Beedrill	Bug	75	
13	Rattata	Normal	72	
14	Pidgeotto	Normal	71	
15	Butterfree	Bug	70	
16	Spearow	Normal	70	
17	Charmander	Fire	65	
18	Sandslash	Ground	65	
19	Ivysaur	Grass	60	
20	Wartortle	Water	58	
21	Pidgey	Normal	56	
22	Nidorina	Poison	56	
23	Ekans	Poison	55	
24	Weedle	Bug	50	
25	Bulbasaur	Grass	45	
26	Caterpie	Bug	45	
27	Squirtle	Water	43	
28	Nidoran ♀	Poison	41	
29	Sandshrew	Ground	40	
30	Kakuna	Bug	35	
31	Metapod	Bug	30	
32				

Notice that there are actually 4 items highlighted in green.

We can see that both Charizard and Fearow have a Speed of 100. So, they are tied for the 3rd top value.

Both are included in the top 10% and are highlighted.

**Note:** You can remove the Highlight Cell Rules with Manage Rules.

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