

What is the process for sorting data in Excel?

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The process for sorting data in Excel is a systematic technique used to arrange data in a specific order based on selected criteria. This process involves selecting the data to be sorted, choosing the sorting method (such as alphabetically, numerically, or by date), and specifying the sort order (ascending or descending). Excel then rearranges the data in the selected range according to the chosen criteria. Additionally, advanced sorting options such as multi-level sorting and custom sorting can be utilized to further organize the data. Once the sorting is complete, the data will be arranged in a more structured and meaningful manner, making it easier to analyze and interpret.

Excel Sort

Excel Sorting

Ranges can be sorted using the **Sort Ascending** and **Sort Descending** commands.

Sort Ascending: from smallest to largest.

Sort Descending: from largest to smallest.

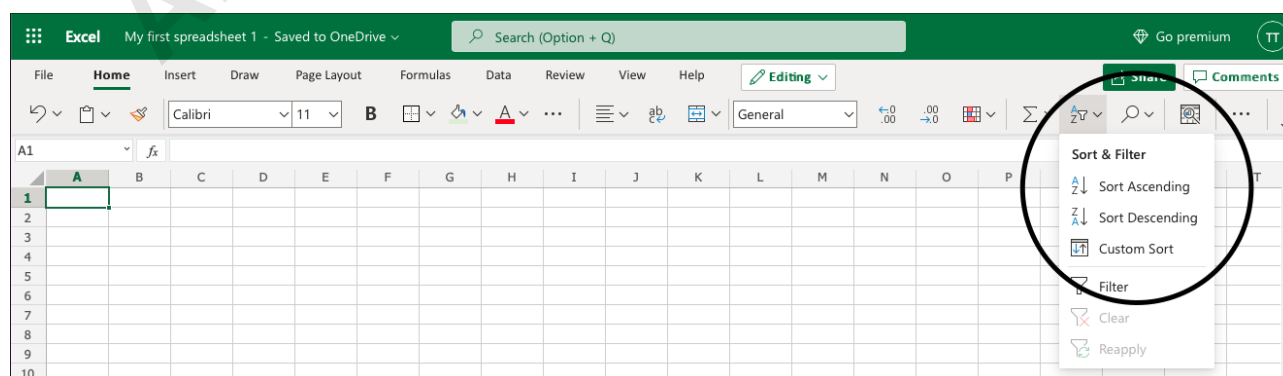
The sort commands work for text too, using A-Z order.

Note: To sort a range that has more than one column, the whole range has to be selected. Sorting just one can break the relationship between columns.

This is shown in an example later in this chapter.



The commands are found in the Ribbon under the **Sort & Filter** menu ()



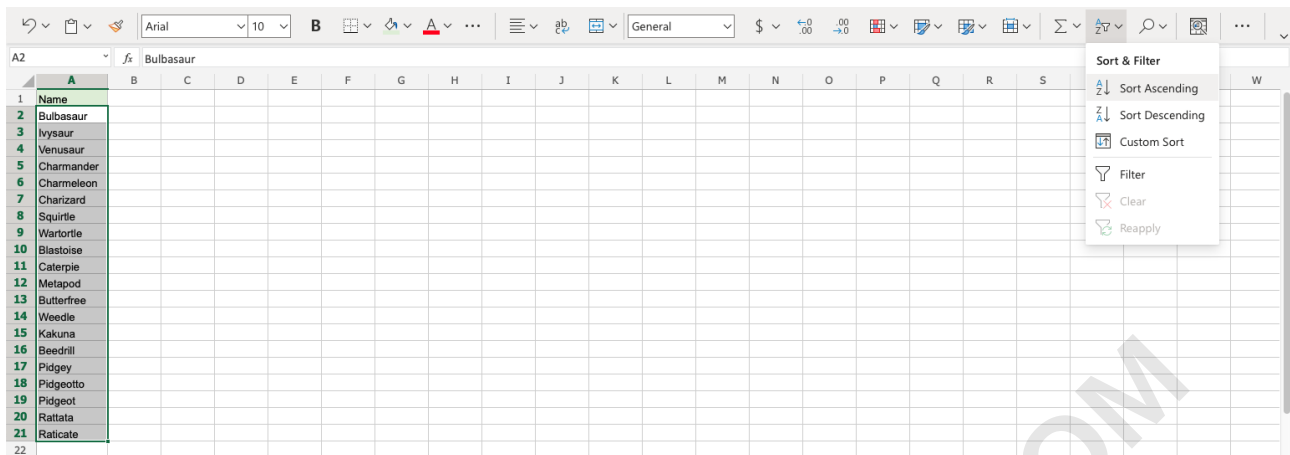
Example Sort (text)

Sort the Pokemons in the range **A2:A21** by their **Name**, ascending from smallest to largest (A-Z).

Select **A2:A21** Open the **Sort & Filter** menu Click **Sort Ascending**

Note: **A1** is not included as it is the header for the column. This is the row that is dedicated to the filter. Including it will blend it with the rest.

	A	B	C
1	Name		
2	Bulbasaur		
3	Ivysaur		
4	Venusaur		
5	Charmander		
6	Charmeleon		
7	Charizard		
8	Squirtle		
9	Wartortle		
10	Blastoise		
11	Caterpie		
12	Metapod		
13	Butterfree		
14	Weedle		
15	Kakuna		
16	Beedrill		
17	Pidgey		
18	Pidgeotto		
19	Pidgeot		
20	Rattata		
21	Raticate		



A2			
fx Beedrill			
	A	B	C
1	Name		
2	Beedrill		
3	Blastoise		
4	Bulbasaur		
5	Butterfree		
6	Caterpie		
7	Charizard		
8	Charmander		
9	Charmeleon		
10	Ivysaur		
11	Kakuna		
12	Metapod		
13	Pidgeot		
14	Pidgeotto		
15	Pidgey		
16	Raticate		
17	Rattata		
18	Squirtle		
19	Venusaur		
20	Wartortle		
21	Weedle		

The **Sort Ascending** function successfully sorted the Pokémon by their **Name** ascending from A-Z.

Try again, this time with **Sort Descending** to see what that looks like!

Example Sort (numbers)

Sort the Pokemons ascending by their **Total stats** from smallest to largest.

Select **A2:A21**

	A	B	C
1	Total stats		
2	318		
3	405		
4	525		
5	309		
6	405		
7	534		
8	314		
9	405		
10	530		
11	195		
12	205		
13	395		
14	195		
15	205		
16	395		
17	251		
18	349		
19	479		
20	253		
21	413		

Open the **Sort & Filter** menu

A2

fx

318

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P
1	Total stats															
2	318															
3	405															
4	525															
5	309															
6	405															
7	534															
8	314															
9	405															
10	530															
11	195															
12	205															
13	395															
14	195															
15	205															
16	395															
17	251															
18	349															
19	479															
20	253															
21	413															

Sort & Filter

Sort Ascending

Sort Descending

Custom Sort

Filter

Clear

Reapply

Click **Sort Ascending**

A2		fx 195	
	A	B	C
1	Total stats		
2	195		
3	195		
4	205		
5	205		
6	251		
7	253		
8	309		
9	314		
10	318		
11	349		
12	395		
13	395		
14	405		
15	405		
16	405		
17	413		
18	479		
19	525		
20	530		
21	534		

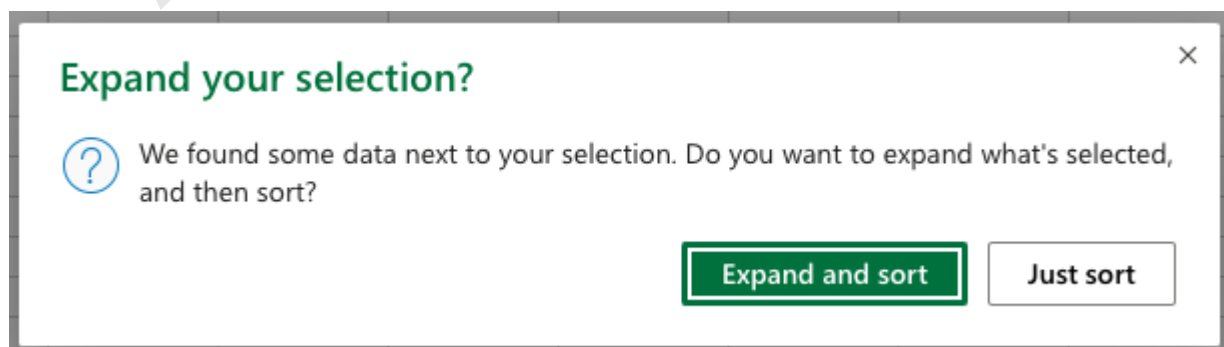
Great! The Pokemons were successfully sorted by their **Total stats** from smallest to largest. The sort commands work for both text and numbers.

A Non-Working Example (sorting one column in a range)

In this example we have two columns with related data. Column **A** is the Pokemons **Names** and Column **B** is their **Total stats**. Try sorting just one of the columns (**A2:A21**) ascending by their **Names**.

A2		<i>fx</i>	Bulbasaur
	A	B	C
1	Name	Total	
2	Bulbasaur	318	
3	Ivysaur	405	
4	Venusaur	525	
5	Charmander	309	
6	Charmeleon	405	
7	Charizard	534	
8	Squirtle	314	
9	Wartortle	405	
10	Blastoise	530	
11	Caterpie	195	
12	Metapod	205	
13	Butterfree	395	
14	Weedle	195	
15	Kakuna	205	
16	Beedrill	395	
17	Pidgey	251	
18	Pidgeotto	349	
19	Pidgeot	479	
20	Rattata	253	
21	Raticate	413	

The attempt to sort results in a warning.



It is not recommended to sort the names alone because it will break the relationship between the Pokemons **Names** and their **Total stats**.

Click "Just sort" to see what happens.

	A	B	C
1	Name	Total	
2	Beedrill	318	
3	Blastoise	405	
4	Bulbasaur	525	
5	Butterfree	309	
6	Caterpie	405	
7	Charizard	534	
8	Charmander	314	
9	Charmeleon	405	
10	Ivysaur	530	
11	Kakuna	195	
12	Metapod	205	
13	Pidgeot	395	
14	Pidgeotto	195	
15	Pidgey	205	
16	Raticate	395	
17	Rattata	251	
18	Squirtle	349	
19	Venusaur	479	
20	Wartortle	253	
21	Weedle	413	

This breaks the relationship with Column **A** and **B**. The Pokemons now have wrong Total stats.

Clicking the other option in the warning "Expand and Sort" makes the sort function include Column **B** and sorts them in relation to each other.

Sorting More Than One Column

Select the whole range when sorting ranges with more than one column.

Note: When sorting multiple columns, it will always sort by the first column (leftmost).

A2		Bulbasaur										
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
1	Name	Total										
2	Bulbasaur	318										
3	Ivysaur	405										
4	Venusaur	525										
5	Charmander	309										
6	Charmeleon	405										
7	Charizard	534										
8	Squirtle	314										
9	Wartortle	405										
10	Blastoise	530										
11	Caterpie	195										
12	Metapod	205										
13	Butterfree	395										
14	Weedle	195										
15	Kakuna	205										
16	Beedrill	395										
17	Pidgey	251										
18	Pidgeotto	349										
19	Pidgeot	479										
20	Rattata	253										
21	Raticate	413										

Sort & Filter
Sort Ascending
Sort Descending
Custom Sort
Filter
Clear
Reapply

Select **A2:B21** and sort the range ascending.

A2		Beedrill										
	A	B	C									
1	Name	Total										
2	Beedrill	395										
3	Blastoise	530										
4	Bulbasaur	318										
5	Butterfree	395										
6	Caterpie	195										
7	Charizard	534										
8	Charmander	309										
9	Charmeleon	405										
10	Ivysaur	405										
11	Kakuna	205										
12	Metapod	205										
13	Pidgeot	479										
14	Pidgeotto	349										
15	Pidgey	251										
16	Raticate	413										
17	Rattata	253										
18	Squirtle	314										
19	Venusaur	525										
20	Wartortle	405										
21	Weedle	195										

By selecting range **A2:B21** it sorts correctly, keeping the relationship between the data (Column **A** and **B**).

In the next chapter you will learn about **Filter**.

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