



Table Guidelines for Excel

Tables are the most important structural elements in Excel that need to be made accessible.

Tables in Excel can be defined by formatting cells within a spreadsheet so that it can be made accessible to people using screen readers like JAWS or NVDA. Tables should be used for tabular data and not layout.

Cell A1 is where information on your worksheet must start. This cell must contain either:

- the first header cell for your first table,
- a title for your first table, or

Cell A1 should never be left blank.

Ensure Proper Table Structure

Don't Merge Cells

Like Microsoft Word, don't merged cells **WITHIN** a table. Doing so will interfere with row and column header identification.

Historic Data - High Level Summary					
	Fiscal Years				
TIME PERIOD AND ELIGIBILITY GROUP	2007	2008	2009	2010	Totals (2007-2010)
EXPENDITURES AND UPL	\$ 1,029,726,791	\$ 1,194,691,949	\$ 1,344,270,362	\$ 1,476,426,137	\$ 5,045,115,238
ELIGIBLE MEMBER MONTHS	2,925,756	2,968,538	3,020,974	3,095,763	12,011,031
PER MEMBER PER MONTH COSTS	\$ 351.95	\$ 402.45	\$ 444.98	\$ 476.92	\$ 420.04

Don't Use More Than One Header Row or Header Column

Don't use more than one header row or header column as it makes it harder if not impossible for everyone to understand the information. And especially when someone uses a screen reader to access the information.

Historic Data - High Level Summary					
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	2007	2008	2009	2010	
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Remove Empty Rows and Columns Within a Table

Empty rows and columns **within** tables can be confusing to a person that uses a screen reader because:

- People uses empty rows and columns to identify the edges of the table.
- It is difficult to understand the relationship of the data.

Also, hiding rows and columns **within** tables can be deceptive, particularly if those rows or columns are used in calculating results that appear elsewhere in the table.

If a table has empty rows and columns, delete them.

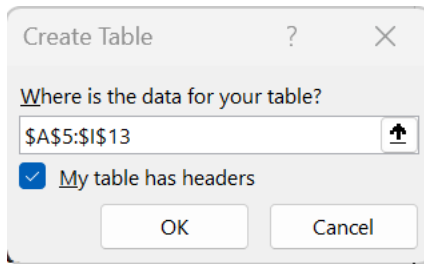
NOTE: If you need to add space, resize the width or height of the desired rows and columns.

Format As Table

To create a **REAL** table from a set of rows and columns, do the following:

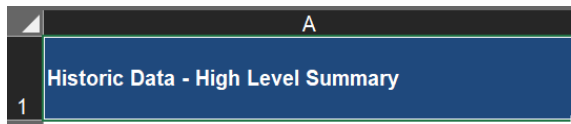
1. Ensure table starts in Column A.
2. Select the range of cells needed for the table.
3. Go to the **Home** tab **Styles** group, click on the **Format as Table** drop-down button, and select a table that meets color contrast guidelines. Use alternating row colors to improve readability for everyone.

4. A **Create Table** dialog box appears. Check the **My table has headers** checkbox and then click on the **OK** button.

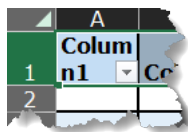


Other formatting to consider:

- Increase the height of the rows to achieve desired spacing.



- Make the columns wider so words aren't split onto multiple lines of text.

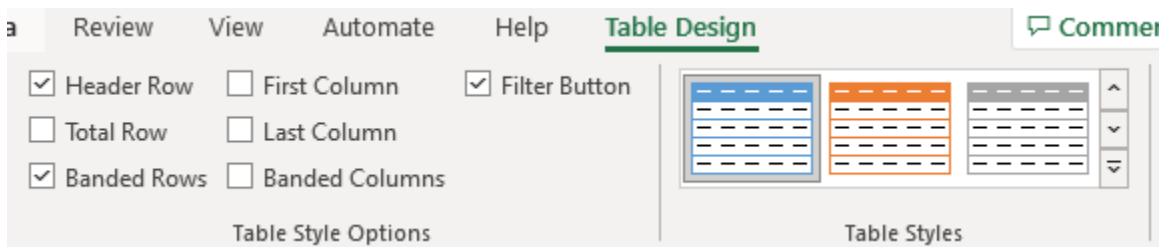


- Left justify columns containing text data.
- Right justify columns containing numeric data.

Setting Column or Row Headers

You can adjust the custom table styles to accommodate your simple table design.

1. Click on a cell in your table.
2. Click on the **Table Design** tab.
3. In the **Table Style Options** group, check the **Header Row** or **First Column** check box or both if needed.



Name Table

Naming tables help people who use a screen reader navigate between all tables in an excel workbook. Table names must be unique within a workbook.

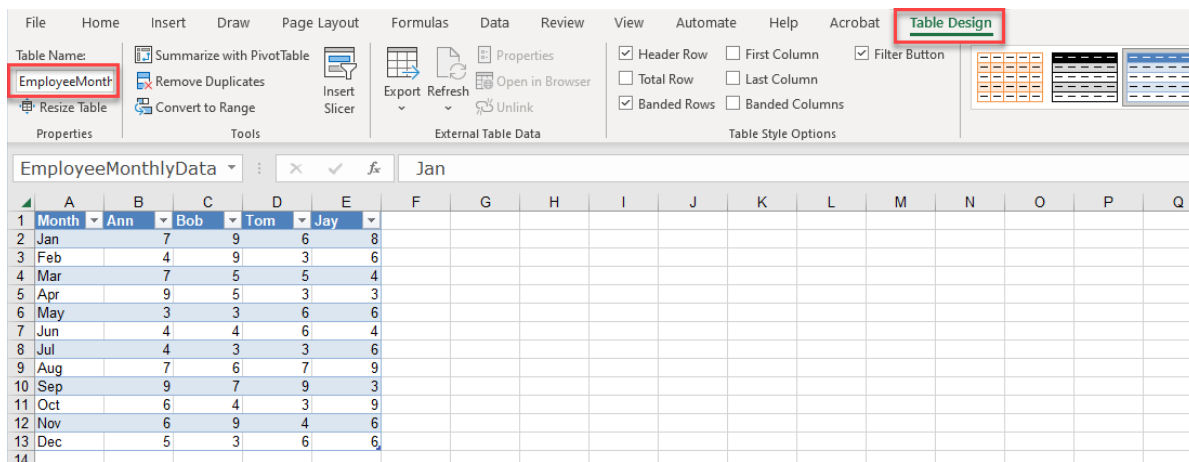
To name a table:

1. Go to the **Table Design** tab.
2. In the **Table Name** text field, type a descriptive name **without any spaces**.
3. Then press the **TAB** key to commit the changes.

To navigate to the different tables:

1. Press the **CTRL+G** keys.
2. The **Go To** dialog box opens. Click on the desired table and then click the **OK** button.

You will be taken to the table that was selected.



The screenshot shows the Microsoft Excel interface with the **Table Design** tab selected. The **Table Name** field is highlighted with a red box and contains the text **EmployeeMonth**. The table below is named **EmployeeMonthlyData** and is filtered for the month of **Jan**. The table has 13 rows and 5 columns: **Month**, **Ann**, **Bob**, **Tom**, and **Jay**.

Month	Ann	Bob	Tom	Jay
Jan	7	9	6	8
Feb	4	9	3	6
Mar	7	5	5	4
Apr	9	5	3	3
May	3	3	6	6
Jun	4	4	6	4
Jul	4	3	3	6
Aug	7	6	7	9
Sep	9	7	9	3
Oct	6	4	3	9
Nov	6	9	4	6
Dec	5	3	6	6

One Table Per Worksheet

One table per worksheet provides the best experience for people using screen reader and helps others find all the information in each worksheet. Please avoid more than one table per worksheet.

More Than One Table Per Worksheet

To use multiple tables on a single worksheet:

- Verify that each table has a [unique name](#).
- Align all tables in column A.
- Provide an explanation of the tables in the row(s) after the title and before the first table.
- Include one empty row **between** each table.