

Lesson 1-12: Sort a range by columns

Students often come to my classes with long “wish lists”. Usually by the end of the course they have ticked all of their requirements off and don’t have to ask any of the questions they had arrived with.

An item that seems to be on everybody’s wish list is a way to sort data by columns. This lesson will teach you a simple technique to achieve this.

Note that this technique will work for ranges but not for tables. If you need to sort a table by columns you’ll have to convert it to a range first. That’s exactly what we’ll do in this lesson.

- 1 Open *Inventory-9* from your sample files folder.
- 2 Convert the table into a range.

This was covered in: *Lesson 1-9: Format a table using table styles and convert a table into a range.*

- 3 Add a blank row at the top of the range.
- 4 Add numbers to enable a sort order of: *No, Category, Supplier, Product Name, Price, Stock, Value.*

The blank row you have just added is a dummy row to set the sort order.

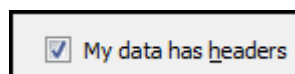
Type numbers into row 1 that numerically describe the desired sorted position for each column:

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	1	4	3	2	5.00	6	7
2	No	Product Name	Supplier	Category	Price	Stock	Value

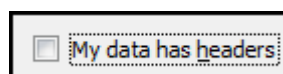
Note that the value in cell E1 only appears to be different to the others because it has inherited the two decimal place format from the *Price* field in the table.

- 5 Sort the table by reference to row one.
 1. Click anywhere inside the range.
 2. Press <Ctrl>+<A> to select every cell in the range (including the dummy header row).
 3. Click: Data→Sort & Filter→Sort.

Notice that row 1 is no longer included in the selected range. This is because the *My data has headers* box is checked.



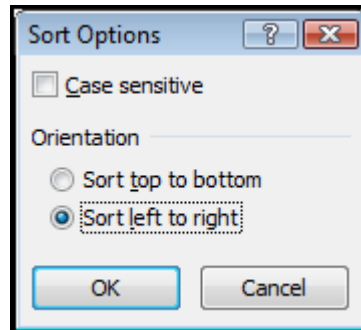
4. Uncheck the *My data has headers* check box.



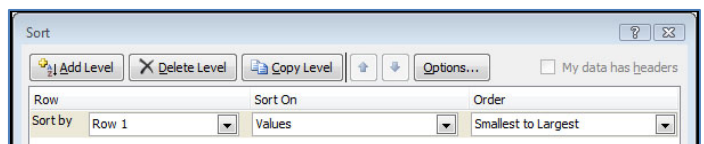
The entire range (including row 1) is now selected.

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5. Remove any existing sort condition(s) by clicking the *Delete Level* button.
6. Click the *Options...* button.
The *Sort Options* dialog is displayed.
7. Click the *Sort left to right* option button.



8. Click the OK button.
9. Click the *Add Level* button.
10. Set a new sort to sort on *Row 1, Values, Smallest to Largest*.



11. Click the OK button.

The worksheet is now sorted in the same order as the dummy sort row.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	1	2	3	4	5.00	6	7
2	No	Category	Supplier	Product Na	Price	Stock	Value

- 6 Delete row 1.
- 7 Convert the range back into a table.

This was covered in: *Lesson 1-8: Convert a range into a table and add a total row.*

- 8 Save your work as *Inventory-10*.