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# 3.5 Formatting Pivot Tables with Slicers

## Formatting pivot tables

Pivot tables can be customised for readability:

* **Design formats** – Use the *Design* tab to apply banded rows, bold headings and colour themes.
* **Conditional formatting** – Highlight cells based on rules (for example, highlight revenues above a threshold).
* **Number formatting** – Format currency, percentages or dates directly in the pivot table.

## Slicers

**Slicers** are visual filters that provide buttons for selecting items. To add a slicer:

1. Click inside the pivot table.
2. Go to **PivotTable Analyze > Insert Slicer**.
3. Choose fields to filter; slicer boxes appear on the worksheet.
4. Click buttons to filter; hold **Ctrl** to select multiple items.

Slicers improve dashboards by allowing quick, intuitive filtering【268199141166436†L173-L176】.

## Timelines

For date fields, insert a **Timeline** (PivotTable Analyze > Insert Timeline). It provides a horizontal slider to filter dates by months, quarters or years.

## Example

Format a pivot table summarising expenses with banded rows, add a slicer for department and a timeline for month. Users can filter the view by department and month while maintaining the desired formatting.

## Summary

Formatting pivot tables enhances clarity and professionalism. Slicers and timelines create interactive dashboards, empowering users to filter data visually【268199141166436†L173-L176】.

## Reflection questions

1. What are the benefits of using slicers instead of standard filter dropdowns?
2. How do timelines differ from slicers?
3. Describe how to apply conditional formatting to highlight high values in a pivot table.

## References