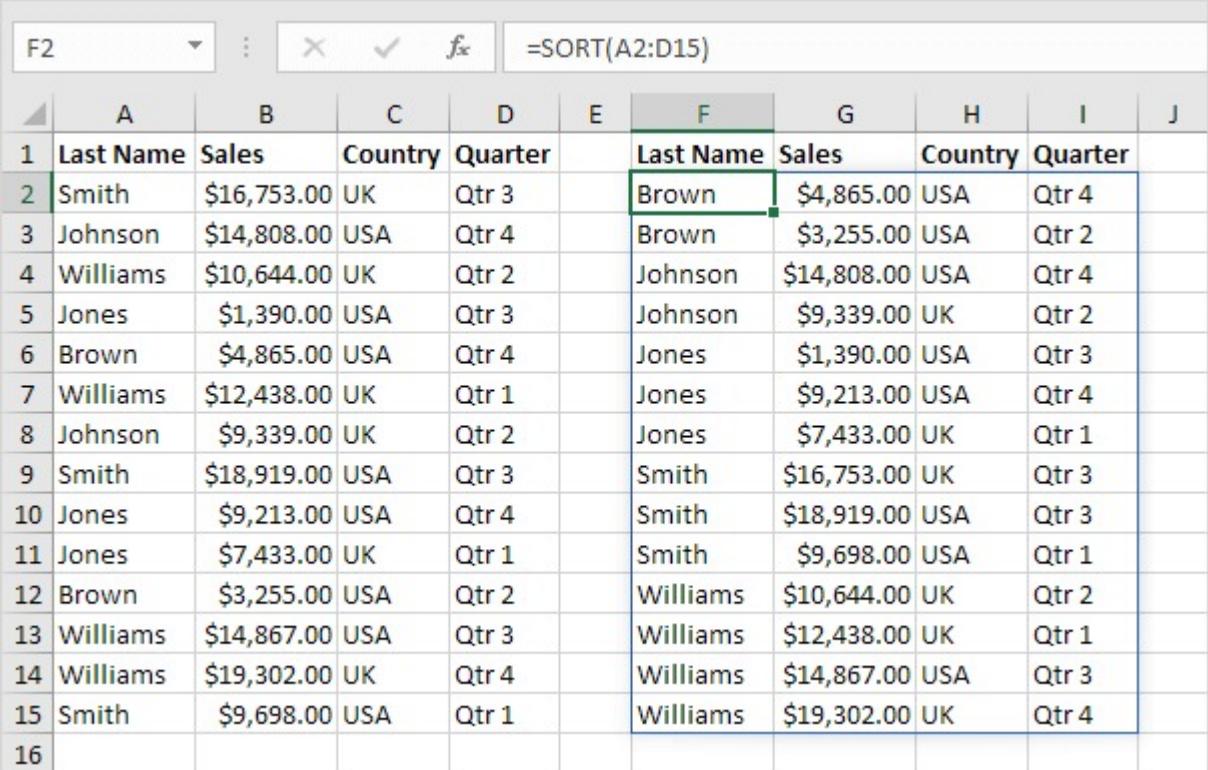# SORT function in Excel

Use the magic SORT function in Excel 365/2021 to sort your Excel data by one column or multiple columns. Let's give it a try.

1. The simple SORT function below has only 1 argument (A2:D15). By default, the SORT function sorts by the first column, in ascending order.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1	Last Name	Sales	Country	Quarter		Last Name	Sales	Country	Quarter	
2	Smith	$16,753.00	UK	Qtr 3		Brown	$4,865.00	USA	Qtr 4	
3	Johnson	$14,808.00	USA	Qtr 4		Brown	$3,255.00	USA	Qtr 2	
4	Williams	$10,644.00	UK	Qtr 2		Johnson	$14,808.00	USA	Qtr 4	
5	Jones	$1,390.00	USA	Qtr 3		Johnson	$9,339.00	UK	Qtr 2	
6	Brown	$4,865.00	USA	Qtr 4		Jones	$1,390.00	USA	Qtr 3	
7	Williams	$12,438.00	UK	Qtr 1		Jones	$9,213.00	USA	Qtr 4	
8	Johnson	$9,339.00	UK	Qtr 2		Jones	$7,433.00	UK	Qtr 1	
9	Smith	$18,919.00	USA	Qtr 3		Smith	$16,753.00	UK	Qtr 3	
10	Jones	$9,213.00	USA	Qtr 4		Smith	$18,919.00	USA	Qtr 3	
11	Jones	$7,433.00	UK	Qtr 1		Smith	$9,698.00	USA	Qtr 1	
12	Brown	$3,255.00	USA	Qtr 2		Williams	$10,644.00	UK	Qtr 2	
13	Williams	$14,867.00	USA	Qtr 3		Williams	$12,438.00	UK	Qtr 1	
14	Williams	$19,302.00	UK	Qtr 4		Williams	$14,867.00	USA	Qtr 3	
15	Smith	$9,698.00	USA	Qtr 1		Williams	$19,302.00	UK	Qtr 4	
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F2 = =SORT(A2:D15)

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Note: this dynamic array function, entered into cell F2, fills multiple cells. Wow! This behavior in Excel 365/2021 is called spilling.

2. Use the second argument of the SORT function to sort by a different column. The SORT function below sorts by the second column.

F2		✗ ✓	f_x	=SORT(A2:D15,2)				

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1	Last Name	Sales	Country	Quarter		Last Name	Sales	Country	Quarter	
2	Smith	$16,753.00	UK	Qtr 3		Jones	$1,390.00	USA	Qtr 3	
3	Johnson	$14,808.00	USA	Qtr 4		Brown	$3,255.00	USA	Qtr 2	
4	Williams	$10,644.00	UK	Qtr 2		Brown	$4,865.00	USA	Qtr 4	
5	Jones	$1,390.00	USA	Qtr 3		Jones	$7,433.00	UK	Qtr 1	
6	Brown	$4,865.00	USA	Qtr 4		Jones	$9,213.00	USA	Qtr 4	
7	Williams	$12,438.00	UK	Qtr 1		Johnson	$9,339.00	UK	Qtr 2	
8	Johnson	$9,339.00	UK	Qtr 2		Smith	$9,698.00	USA	Qtr 1	
9	Smith	$18,919.00	USA	Qtr 3		Williams	$10,644.00	UK	Qtr 2	
10	Jones	$9,213.00	USA	Qtr 4		Williams	$12,438.00	UK	Qtr 1	
11	Jones	$7,433.00	UK	Qtr 1		Johnson	$14,808.00	USA	Qtr 4	
12	Brown	$3,255.00	USA	Qtr 2		Williams	$14,867.00	USA	Qtr 3	
13	Williams	$14,867.00	USA	Qtr 3		Smith	$16,753.00	UK	Qtr 3	
14	Williams	$19,302.00	UK	Qtr 4		Smith	$18,919.00	USA	Qtr 3	
15	Smith	$9,698.00	USA	Qtr 1		Williams	$19,302.00	UK	Qtr 4	
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Note: only edit the formula in cell F2. Excel will do the rest.

3. Use the third argument of the SORT function to sort in a different order. The SORT function below sorts by the first column, in descending order.

F2		✗ ✓	f_x	=SORT(A2:D15,1,-1)				

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1	Last Name	Sales	Country	Quarter		Last Name	Sales	Country	Quarter	
2	Smith	$16,753.00	UK	Qtr 3		Williams	$10,644.00	UK	Qtr 2	
3	Johnson	$14,808.00	USA	Qtr 4		Williams	$12,438.00	UK	Qtr 1	
4	Williams	$10,644.00	UK	Qtr 2		Williams	$14,867.00	USA	Qtr 3	
5	Jones	$1,390.00	USA	Qtr 3		Williams	$19,302.00	UK	Qtr 4	
6	Brown	$4,865.00	USA	Qtr 4		Smith	$16,753.00	UK	Qtr 3	
7	Williams	$12,438.00	UK	Qtr 1		Smith	$18,919.00	USA	Qtr 3	
8	Johnson	$9,339.00	UK	Qtr 2		Smith	$9,698.00	USA	Qtr 1	
9	Smith	$18,919.00	USA	Qtr 3		Jones	$1,390.00	USA	Qtr 3	
10	Jones	$9,213.00	USA	Qtr 4		Jones	$9,213.00	USA	Qtr 4	
11	Jones	$7,433.00	UK	Qtr 1		Jones	$7,433.00	UK	Qtr 1	
12	Brown	$3,255.00	USA	Qtr 2		Johnson	$14,808.00	USA	Qtr 4	
13	Williams	$14,867.00	USA	Qtr 3		Johnson	$9,339.00	UK	Qtr 2	
14	Williams	$19,302.00	UK	Qtr 4		Brown	$4,865.00	USA	Qtr 4	
15	Smith	$9,698.00	USA	Qtr 1		Brown	$3,255.00	USA	Qtr 2	
16										

Note: use 1 to sort in ascending order, use -1 to sort in descending order.

4. To sort by multiple columns, simply supply an array constant. For example, sort by Last Name first and Sales second.

| F2 | ▼ | ⋮ | × | ✓ | *fx* | =SORT(A2:D15,{1,2}) |

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1	Last Name	Sales	Country	Quarter		Last Name	Sales	Country	Quarter	
2	Smith	$16,753.00	UK	Qtr 3		Brown	$3,255.00	USA	Qtr 2	
3	Johnson	$14,808.00	USA	Qtr 4		Brown	$4,865.00	USA	Qtr 4	
4	Williams	$10,644.00	UK	Qtr 2		Johnson	$9,339.00	UK	Qtr 2	
5	Jones	$1,390.00	USA	Qtr 3		Johnson	$14,808.00	USA	Qtr 4	
6	Brown	$4,865.00	USA	Qtr 4		Jones	$1,390.00	USA	Qtr 3	
7	Williams	$12,438.00	UK	Qtr 1		Jones	$7,433.00	UK	Qtr 1	
8	Johnson	$9,339.00	UK	Qtr 2		Jones	$9,213.00	USA	Qtr 4	
9	Smith	$18,919.00	USA	Qtr 3		Smith	$9,698.00	USA	Qtr 1	
10	Jones	$9,213.00	USA	Qtr 4		Smith	$16,753.00	UK	Qtr 3	
11	Jones	$7,433.00	UK	Qtr 1		Smith	$18,919.00	USA	Qtr 3	
12	Brown	$3,255.00	USA	Qtr 2		Williams	$10,644.00	UK	Qtr 2	
13	Williams	$14,867.00	USA	Qtr 3		Williams	$12,438.00	UK	Qtr 1	
14	Williams	$19,302.00	UK	Qtr 4		Williams	$14,867.00	USA	Qtr 3	
15	Smith	$9,698.00	USA	Qtr 1		Williams	$19,302.00	UK	Qtr 4	
16										

5. The advanced SORT function below sorts by Last Name first (in ascending order) and by Sales second (in descending order). Pretty cool, huh?

| F2 | ▼ | ⋮ | × | ✓ | *fx* | =SORT(A2:D15,{1,2},{1,-1}) |

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1	Last Name	Sales	Country	Quarter		Last Name	Sales	Country	Quarter	
2	Smith	$16,753.00	UK	Qtr 3		Brown	$4,865.00	USA	Qtr 4	
3	Johnson	$14,808.00	USA	Qtr 4		Brown	$3,255.00	USA	Qtr 2	
4	Williams	$10,644.00	UK	Qtr 2		Johnson	$14,808.00	USA	Qtr 4	
5	Jones	$1,390.00	USA	Qtr 3		Johnson	$9,339.00	UK	Qtr 2	
6	Brown	$4,865.00	USA	Qtr 4		Jones	$9,213.00	USA	Qtr 4	
7	Williams	$12,438.00	UK	Qtr 1		Jones	$7,433.00	UK	Qtr 1	
8	Johnson	$9,339.00	UK	Qtr 2		Jones	$1,390.00	USA	Qtr 3	
9	Smith	$18,919.00	USA	Qtr 3		Smith	$18,919.00	USA	Qtr 3	
10	Jones	$9,213.00	USA	Qtr 4		Smith	$16,753.00	UK	Qtr 3	
11	Jones	$7,433.00	UK	Qtr 1		Smith	$9,698.00	USA	Qtr 1	
12	Brown	$3,255.00	USA	Qtr 2		Williams	$19,302.00	UK	Qtr 4	
13	Williams	$14,867.00	USA	Qtr 3		Williams	$14,867.00	USA	Qtr 3	
14	Williams	$19,302.00	UK	Qtr 4		Williams	$12,438.00	UK	Qtr 1	
15	Smith	$9,698.00	USA	Qtr 1		Williams	$10,644.00	UK	Qtr 2	
16										

6. Finally, use the SORTBY function in Excel to sort a range based on the values in a corresponding range.

| D2 | ▼ | ⋮ | × | ✓ | *fx* | =SORTBY(A2:A7,B2:B7,-1) |

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	Name	Age							
2	Rachel	23		Marilyn					
3	Justin	38		Carol					
4	Gabriel	26		Andrew					
5	Carol	61		Justin					
6	Marilyn	75		Gabriel					
7	Andrew	44		Rachel					
8									

Note: use 1 to sort in ascending order, use -1 to sort in descending order.

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