Used to spot trends and patterns in data

We can either format a single row at once ow multiple at once

**1. Built-in Rule Types**

Excel gives you several ready-made categories:

1. **Highlight Cell Rules**
   * Greater Than / Less Than
   * Between
   * Equal To
   * Text that Contains
   * A Date Occurring (today, yesterday, next week, etc.)
   * Duplicate / Unique Values
2. **Top/Bottom Rules**
   * Top 10 Items (can adjust the number)
   * Top 10% / Bottom 10%
   * Above Average / Below Average

**2. Data Visualizations**

Instead of just coloring cells, you can show patterns:

* **Data Bars** → Mini bar charts inside the cell.
* **Color Scales** → Gradient colors (e.g., green for high values, red for low).
* **Icon Sets** → Symbols like arrows, traffic lights, flags, ratings.

**3. Custom Formulas *(the real power)***

You can use formulas with TRUE/FALSE logic to control formatting.  
Examples:

* =ISBLANK(A1) → Highlight empty cells.
* =A1<>B1 → Highlight mismatches.
* =AND(A1>100, B1="Yes") → Complex conditions.

**4. Format Options You Can Control**

Conditional formatting can change:

* Font color
* Fill color
* Bold / Italic / Underline
* Borders
* Number format (e.g., show percentages, add currency symbols)

**5. Apply to Dynamic Ranges**

You can make it automatically extend to new data by:

* Using tables (Ctrl + T)
* Referring to entire columns
* Using dynamic named ranges

**6. Layering Multiple Rules**

* You can stack rules on top of each other.
* Order matters (Excel applies them top to bottom unless you stop processing after a match).

**7. Other Useful Tricks**

* Highlight every other row (with =MOD(ROW(),2)=0).
* Color weekends in a calendar.
* Show expired dates in red.
* Visualize trends over time with color gradients.
* Compare two lists and mark what’s missing.