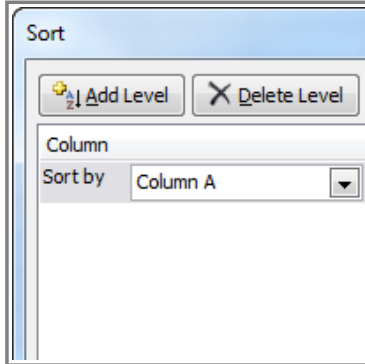**Excel 2010**
Sorting Data

Introduction

With over 17 billion cells in a single worksheet, Excel 2010 gives you the ability to work with an **enormous amount of data**. Arranging your data alphabetically, from smallest to largest, or other criteria, can help you find the information you're looking for more quickly.

In this lesson, you will learn how to **sort** data to better view and organize the contents of your spreadsheet.

Basic Sorting

Sorting is a common task that allows you to change or customize the order of your spreadsheet data. For example, you could organize an office birthday list by employee, birthdate, or department, making it easier to find what you're looking for. Custom sorting takes it a step further, giving you the ability to sort multiple levels (such as department first, then birthdate, to group birthdates by department), and more.

>>> Watch the video to learn about sorting in Excel 2010.

Watch the video (3:45). Need help?

To Sort in Alphabetical Order:

1. Select a cell in the column you want to sort by. In this example, we will sort by Last Name.

	C	D	E
1	**Last Name**	**Payment**	**T-Shirt Color**
2	Olivera	1-Oct	White
3	Richards	4-Oct	Dark Red
4	Hanlon	5-Oct	Heather Grey
5	Means	5-Oct	Dark Red

Selecting a column to sort

2. Select the **Data** tab, and locate the **Sort and Filter** group.

3. Click the ascending command ↓ to **Sort A to Z**, or the descending command ↓ to **Sort Z to A**.
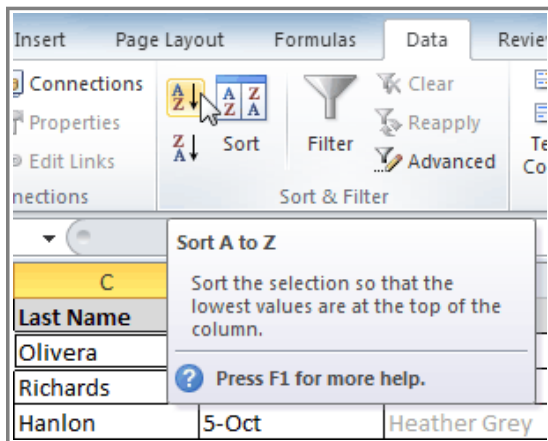
Sorting in ascending alphabetical order

4. The data in the spreadsheet will be organized alphabetically.

	C	D	E
1	**Last Name**	**Payment**	**T-Shirt Color**
2	Ackerman	1-Oct	Heather Grey
3	Albee	13-Oct	Heather Grey
4	Bell	11-Oct	Dark Red
5	Benson	11-Oct	White
6	Chen	5-Oct	Dark Red
7	Del Toro	13-Oct	White
8	Ellison	Pending	Dark Red
9	Flores	6-Oct	White
10	Hanlon	5-Oct	Heather Grey
11	Kelly	11-Oct	Dark Red
12	Kelly	11-Oct	Heather Grey
13	Lazar	14-Oct	White
14	MacDonald	Pending	Dark Red
15	Means	5-Oct	Dark Red
16	Naser	14-Oct	Dark Red
17	Nichols	6-Oct	Dark Red

Sorted by last name, from A to Z

Sorting options can also be found on the Home tab, condensed into the **Sort & Filter** command.

To Sort in Numerical Order:

1. Select a cell in the column you want to sort by.

	A	B	C
1	Homeroom #	First Name	Last Name
2	110	Kris	Ackerman
3	105	Nathan	Albee
4	220-B	Samantha	Bell
5	110	Matt	Benson

Selecting a column to sort

2. From the **Data** tab, click the ascending command ⬆ to **Sort Smallest to Largest**, or the descending command ⬇ to **Sort Largest to Smallest**.

3. The data in the spreadsheet will be organized numerically.

	A	B	C
1	Homeroom #	First Name	Last Name
2	105	Nathan	Albee
3	105	Christiana	Chen
4	105	Sidney	Kelly
5	105	Derek	MacDonald
6	105	Melissa	White
7	105	Esther	Yaron
8	110	Kris	Ackerman
9	110	Matt	Benson
10	110	Gabriel	Del Toro
11	110	Regina	Olivera
12	135	Anisa	Naser
13	135	James	Panarello
14	135	Lia	Richards
15	135	Jordan	Weller
16	135	Chantal	Weller
17	135	Alex	Yuen

Sorted by homeroom number, from smallest to largest

To Sort by Date or Time:

1. Select a cell in the column you want to sort by.

	D	E	F
1	Payment	T-Shirt Color	T-Shirt Size
2	13-Oct	Heather Grey	Medium
3	5-Oct	Dark Red	Medium
4	11-Oct	Dark Red	Medium
5	Pending	Dark Red	Large

Selecting a column to sort

2. From the **Data** tab, click the ascending command ↕ to **Sort Oldest to Newest**, or the descending command ↕ to **Sort Newest to Oldest**.

3. The data in the spreadsheet will be organized by date or time.

|	D	E	F
1	**Payment**	**T-Shirt Color**	**T-Shirt Size**
2	1-Oct	Heather Grey	Large
3	1-Oct	White	Large
4	4-Oct	Dark Red	X-Large
5	5-Oct	Dark Red	Medium
6	5-Oct	Heather Grey	Large
7	5-Oct	Dark Red	Medium
8	5-Oct	Heather Grey	X-Large
9	6-Oct	White	X-Large
10	6-Oct	Dark Red	X-Large
11	7-Oct	Heather Grey	Small
12	7-Oct	Dark Red	Small
13	7-Oct	Heather Grey	Small
14	7-Oct	Heather Grey	Small
15	11-Oct	Dark Red	Medium
16	11-Oct	White	Medium
17	11-Oct	Dark Red	Medium

Sorted by payment date, from oldest to newest

Custom Sorting

## To Sort in the Order of Your Choosing:

You can use a **Custom List** to identify your own sorting order, such as days of the week, or, in this example, t-shirt sizes from smallest to largest (Small, Medium, Large, and X-Large).

1. From the **Data** tab, click the **Sort** command to open the **Sort** dialog box.
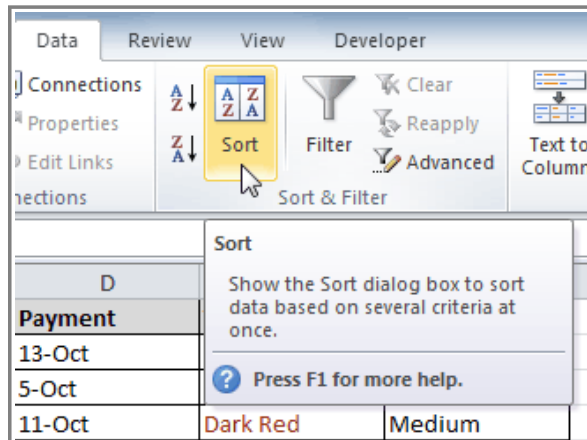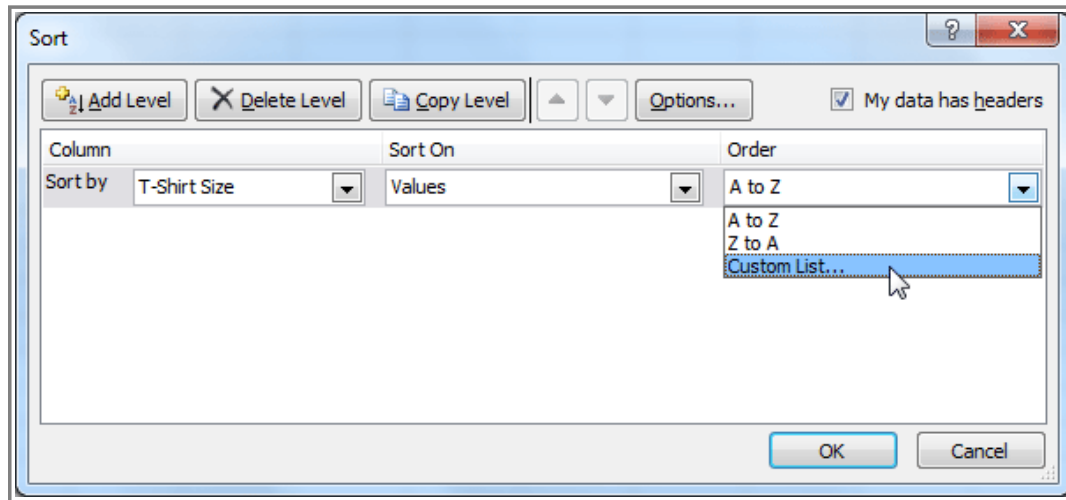
Opening the Sort dialog box

2. Identify the column you want to **Sort by** by clicking the drop-down arrow in the **Column** field. In this example, we will choose T-Shirt Size.
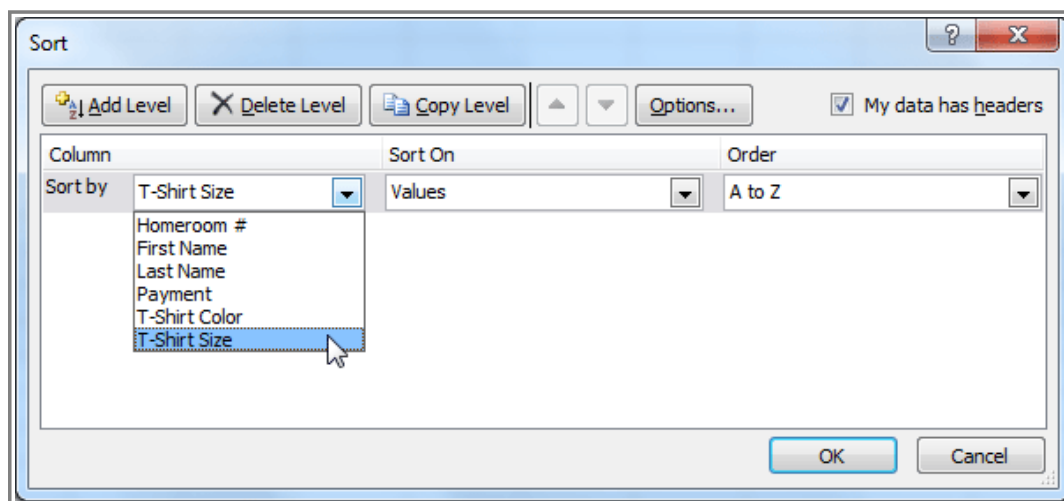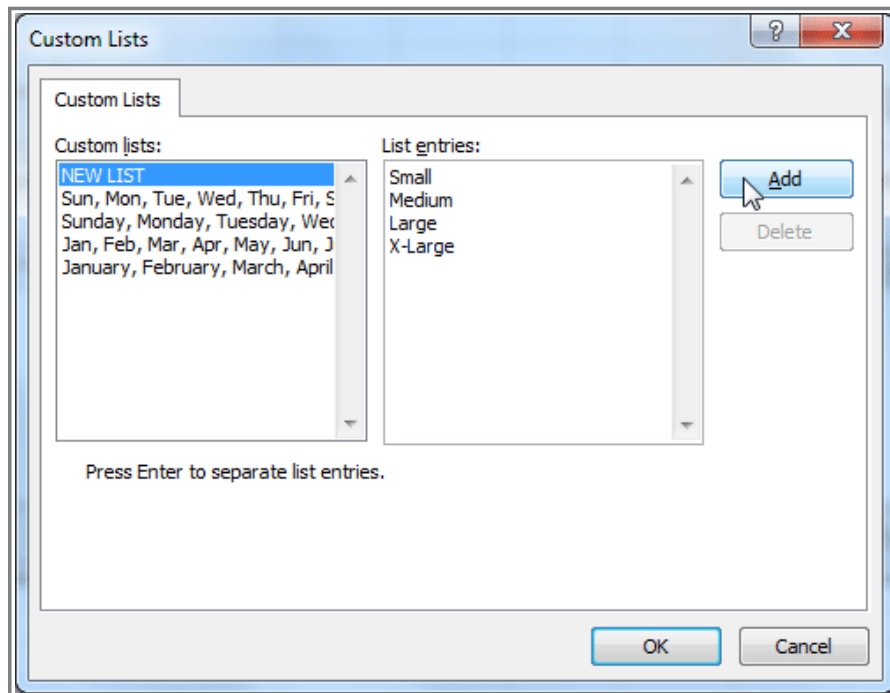

Selecting a column to sort by

3. Make sure **Values** is selected in the **Sort On** field.
4. Click the drop-down arrow in the **Order** field, and choose **Custom List...**
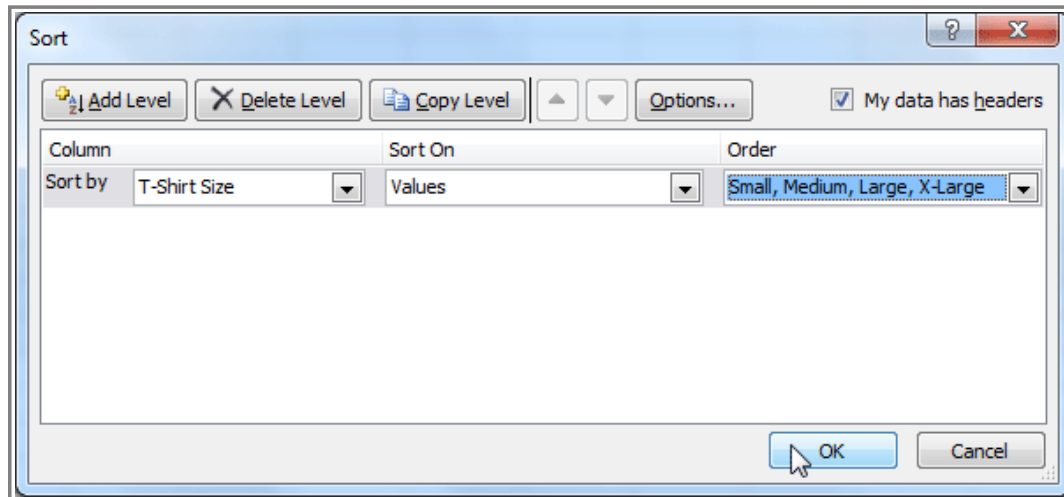
Choosing to order by Custom List

5. Select **NEW LIST**, and enter how you want your data sorted in the **List entries** box. We will sort t-shirt sizes from smallest to largest.

6. Click **Add** to save the list, then click **OK**.

Creating a custom list

7. Click **OK** to close the Sort dialog box and sort your data.

Clicking OK to sort

8. The spreadsheet will be sorted in order of Small, Medium, Large, and X-Large.

	C	D	E	F
1	**Last Name**	**Payment**	**T-Shirt Color**	**T-Shirt Size**
6	Naser	14-Oct	Dark Red	Small
7	Lazar	14-Oct	White	Small
8	Ellison	Pending	Dark Red	Small
9	Peyton-Gomez	Pending	White	Small
10	Chen	5-Oct	Dark Red	Medium
11	Means	5-Oct	Dark Red	Medium
12	Benson	11-Oct	White	Medium
13	Bell	11-Oct	Dark Red	Medium
14	Albee	13-Oct	Heather Grey	Medium
15	Del Toro	13-Oct	White	Medium
16	Panarello	15-Oct	White	Medium
17	Ackerman	1-Oct	Heather Grey	Large
18	Olivera	1-Oct	White	Large
19	Weller	5-Oct	Heather Grey	Large
20	Yuen	4-0ct	White	Large
21	MacDonald	Pending	Dark Red	Large
22	Richards	4-Oct	Dark Red	X-Large
23	Hanlon	5-Oct	Heather Grey	X-Large

Sorted by t-shirt size, from smallest to largest

To Sort by Cell Color, Font Color, or Cell Icon:

1. From the **Data** tab, click the **Sort** command to open the **Sort** dialog box.
2. Identify the column you want to **Sort by** by clicking the drop-down arrow in the **Column** field.

3. Choose whether you want to sort by Cell Color, Font Color, or Cell Icon in the **Sort On** field. In this example, will sort on **Font Color**.
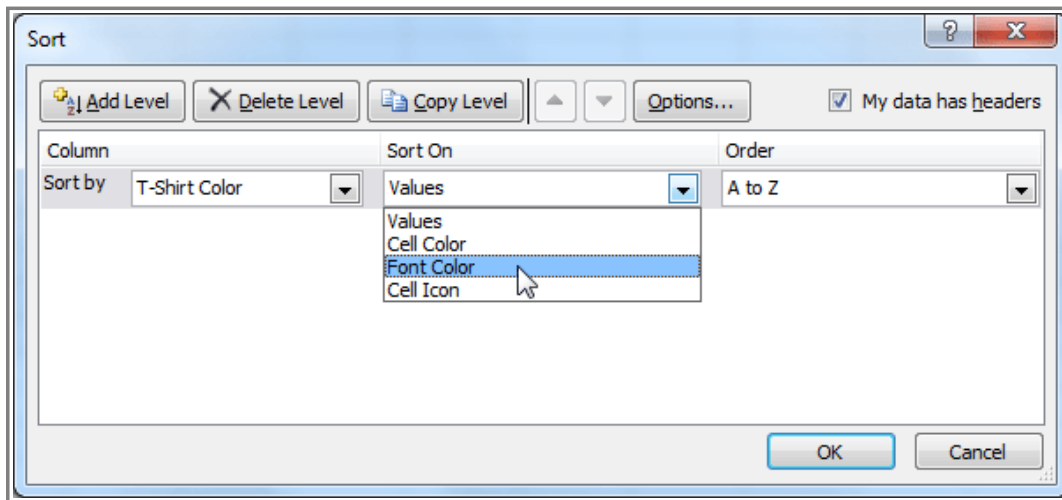
Choosing to sort on Font Color

4. In the **Order** field, click the drop-down arrow to choose a color, then decide whether you want it ordered **On Top** or **On Bottom**.
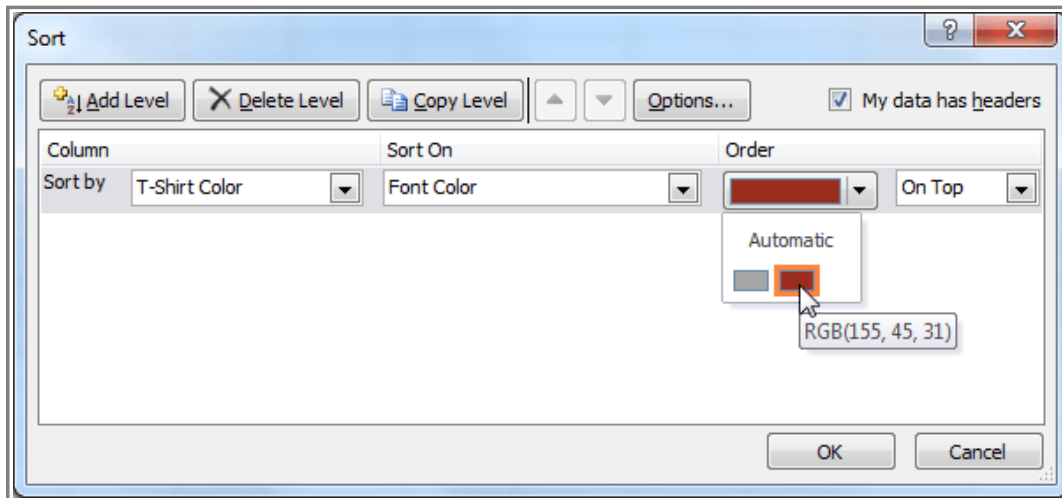
Selecting a font color

5. Click **OK**. The data is now sorted by attribute rather than text.

|	C	D	E
1	**Last Name**	**Payment**	**T-Shirt Color**
2	Richards	4-Oct	Dark Red
3	Means	5-Oct	Dark Red
4	Chen	5-Oct	Dark Red
5	Nichols	6-Oct	Dark Red
6	Yaron	7-Oct	Dark Red
7	Bell	11-Oct	Dark Red
8	Kelly	11-Oct	Dark Red
9	Naser	14-Oct	Dark Red
10	Ellison	Pending	Dark Red
11	MacDonald	Pending	Dark Red
12	Ackerman	1-Oct	Heather Grey
13	Olivera	1-Oct	White

Sorted by font color

Sorting Multiple Levels

Another feature of custom sorting, **sorting multiple levels** allows you to identify which columns to sort by and when, giving you more control over the organization of your data. For example, you could sort by more than one cell color (such as red, then yellow, then green, to indicate different levels of priority); or, as seen here, sort students by homeroom number, then by last name.
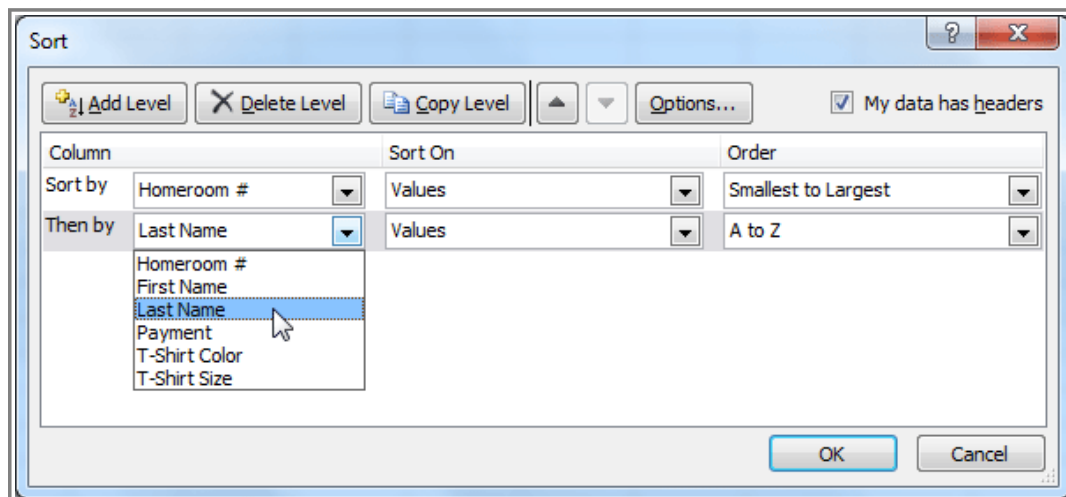
To Add a Level:

1. From the **Data** tab, click the **Sort** command to open the **Sort** dialog box.
2. Identify the first item you want to **Sort by**. In this example, we will sort Homeroom # from Smallest to Largest.
3. Click **Add Level** to add another item.
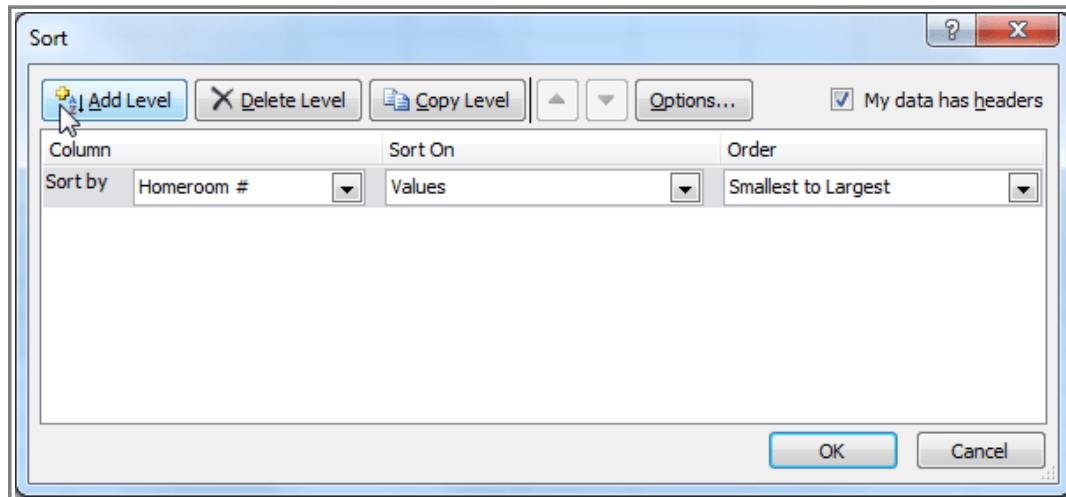
Adding a level

4. Identify the item you want to sort by next. We will sort Last Name from A to Z.

Choosing criteria for a second level

5. Click **OK**.
6. The spreadsheet will be sorted so that homeroom numbers are in order, and within each homeroom, students are listed alphabetically by last name.

	A	B	C
1	**Homeroom #**	**First Name**	**Last Name**
2	105	Nathan	Albee
3	105	Christiana	Chen
4	105	Sidney	Kelly
5	105	Derek	MacDonald
6	105	Melissa	White
7	105	Esther	Yaron
8	110	Kris	Ackerman
9	110	Matt	Benson
10	110	Gabriel	Del Toro
11	110	Regina	Olivera
12	135	Anisa	Naser
13	135	James	Panarello
14	135	Lia	Richards
15	135	Jordan	Weller
16	135	Chantal	Weller
17	135	Alex	Yuen

Sorted by multiple levels

Copy Level will add a level by duplicating the one you have selected, and allowing you to modify the sorting criteria. This is useful if you need to sort multiple levels that share some criteria, such as the same Column, Sort On, or Order.

To Change the Sorting Priority:

1. From the **Data** tab, click the **Sort** command to open the **Custom Sort** dialog box.
2. Select the **level** you want to re-order.
3. Use the **Move Up** or **Move Down** arrows. The higher the level is on the list, the higher its priority.
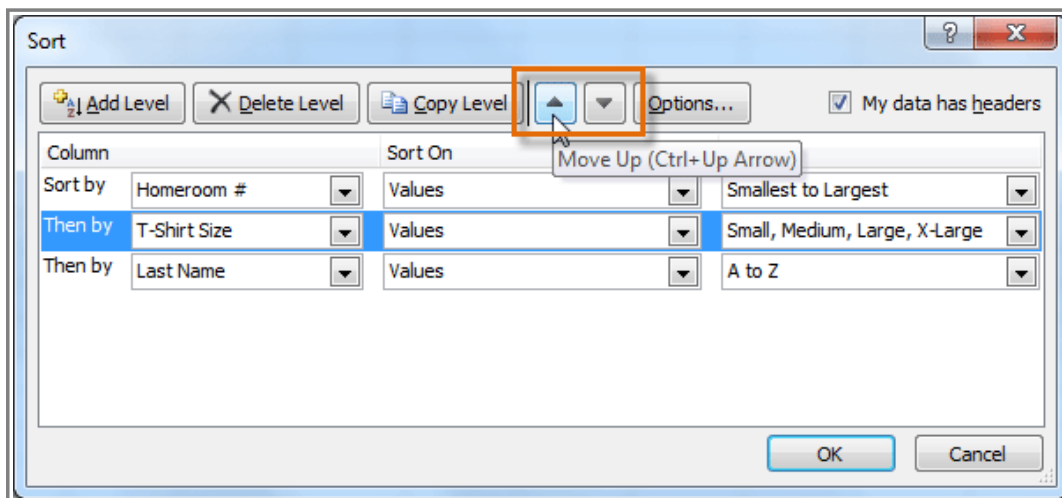
Changing the sorting priority

4. Click **OK**.

Challenge!

1. Open an existing Excel workbook. If you want, you can use this example.
2. Sort a column in ascending ↓ or descending ↓ order. If you are using the example, sort by Homeroom #.
3. Add a second level, and sort it according to cell color, font color, or cell icon. If you are using the example, add a second and third level to sort by the red and grey fonts used in T-Shirt Color.
4. Add another level, and sort it using a Custom List. If you are using the example, sort by T-Shirt Size in the order of Small, Medium, Large, and X-Large.
5. Change the sorting priority. If you are using the example, re-order the list to sort by T-Shirt Color (red), then by T-Shirt Color (grey), then by T-Shirt Size, then by Homeroom #.