

# SIMPLE way to format negative and positive signs in Excel

Instructions on how to format negative and positive signs in Excel. Features were omitted because Excel considered them redundant, how to get them back.

*Formatting negative and positive signs in Excel is a feature we sometimes need. Especially when you want to show the metrics you want to change. But Excel thinks it's unnecessary and removes them. However, if you need TipsMake will guide you on how to format and display negative and positive signs, convert negative numbers to positive, etc. easily.*



Excel is a great spreadsheet, but you may experience negative and positive signs disappearing. Specifically here is the plus sign. When you enter any number with a plus sign in front, it will automatically disappear, similar to

adding a leading zero before a number.

## What is the yin and yang sign format in Excel?

Simply put, the positive and negative sign format in Excel is a feature that allows you to customize the way negative and positive numbers are displayed in the spreadsheet.

That is, through the application of number format codes, you can decide the position, color and symbol of the negative and positive signs.

	A	B	C	D
1		2020	2021	Change
2	Store 1	581	552	-29
3	Store 2	639	674	+35
4	Store 3	632	566	-66
5	Store 4	573	586	+13
6	Store 5	614	576	-38
7	Store 6	601	535	-66
8	Store 7	643	628	-15
9	Store 8	634	582	-52
10	Store 9	557	666	+109

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Displaying positive and negative signs in Excel is extremely convenient. Helps you customize your spreadsheet information so that it is easy to distinguish and identify. Many people use the yin and yang sign format to create visual and aesthetic effects for spreadsheets.

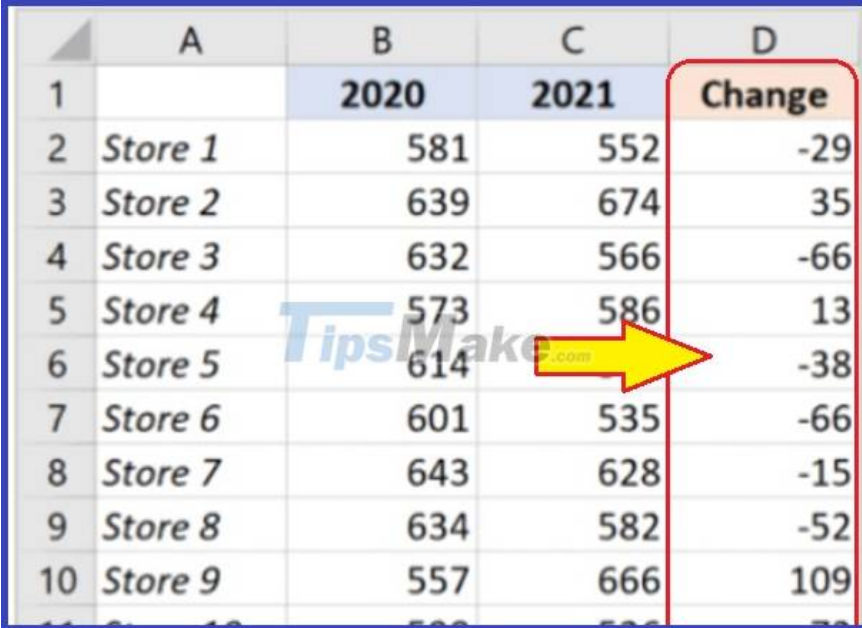
For example, another common use case is that you need to display a + (positive) sign for a phone number.

In this article, I will show you a simple way to display yin and yang signs in Excel.

## How to format negative and positive signs in Excel

Normally, there are many ways to display the - sign in Excel. You can simply enter it directly. The difficulty here is usually that you want both negative (-) and positive (+) signs to appear.

Suppose you have a data file like the example in the picture and you want to add a plus sign to all positive numbers in column D.



	A	B	C	D
1		2020	2021	Change
2	Store 1	581	552	-29
3	Store 2	639	674	35
4	Store 3	632	566	-66
5	Store 4	573	586	13
6	Store 5	614		-38
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We perform the following steps to reformat:

**Step 1** : Select the cell you want to format with positive and negative signs.

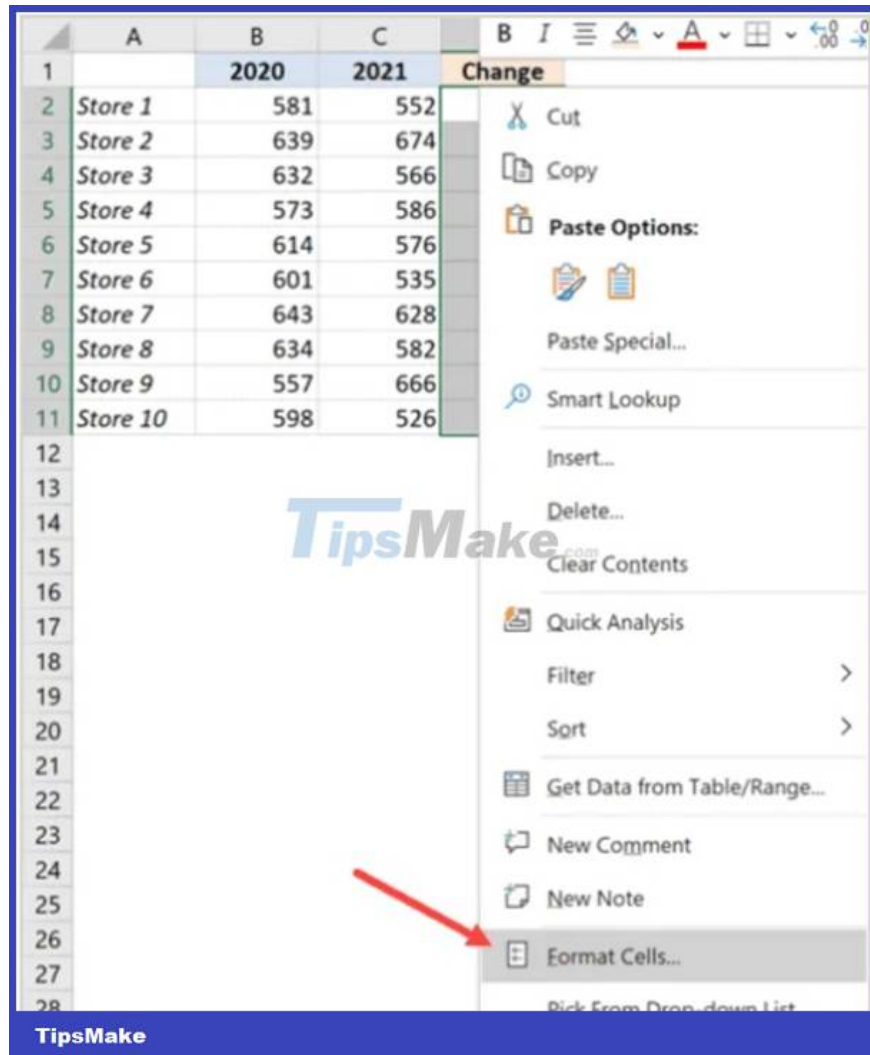
**Step 2** : Right-click and select **Format Cells** .

The image shows a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet with the following data:

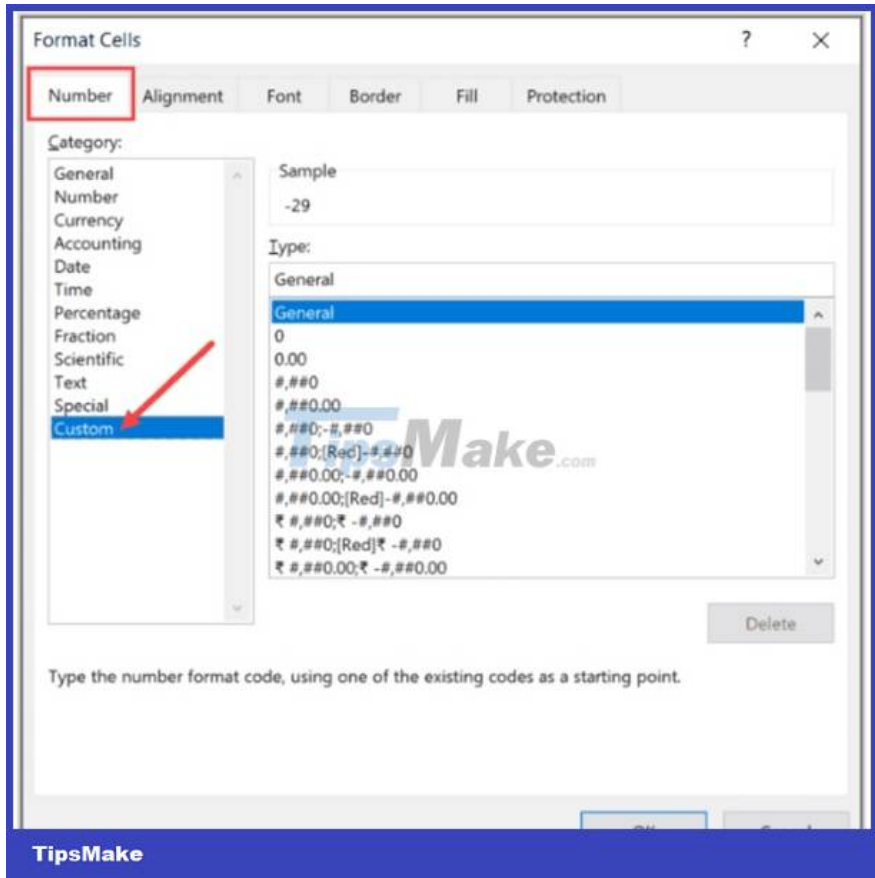
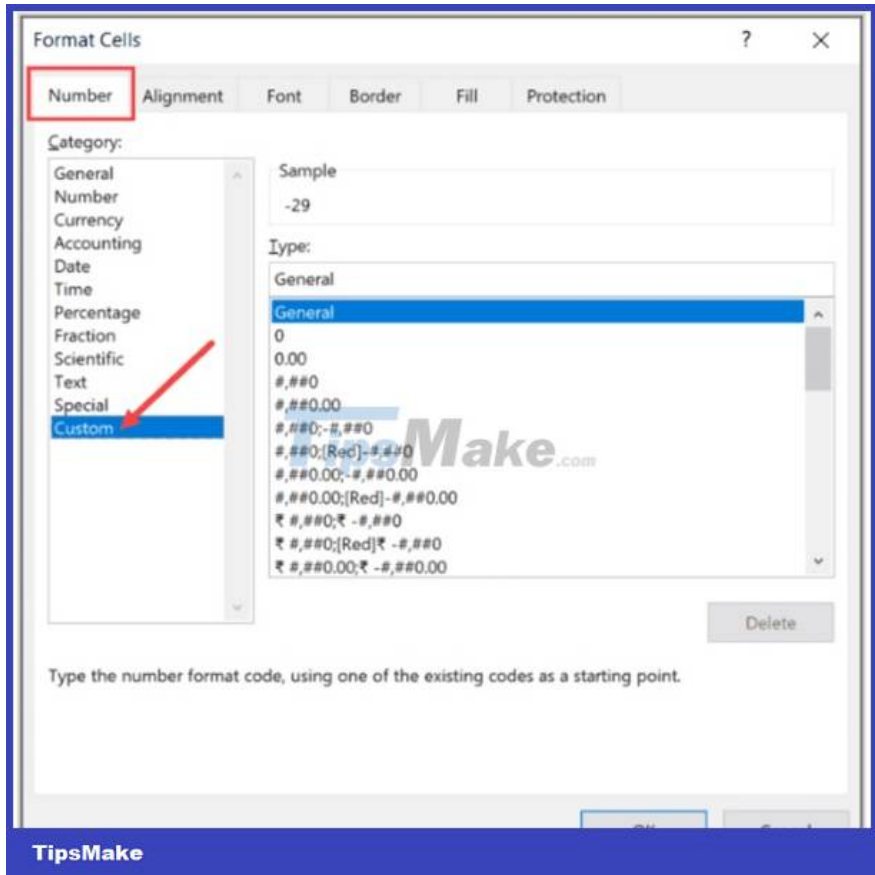
	A	B	C	
1		2020	2021	Change
2	Store 1	581	552	
3	Store 2	639	674	
4	Store 3	632	566	
5	Store 4	573	586	
6	Store 5	614	576	
7	Store 6	601	535	
8	Store 7	643	628	
9	Store 8	634	582	
10	Store 9	557	666	
11	Store 10	598	526	
12				
13				
14				
15				
16				
17				
18				
19				
20				
21				
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24				
25				
26				
27				
28				

The context menu is open over the 'Change' column (C4:C11). The 'Format Cells...' option is highlighted, and a red arrow points to it from the bottom left.

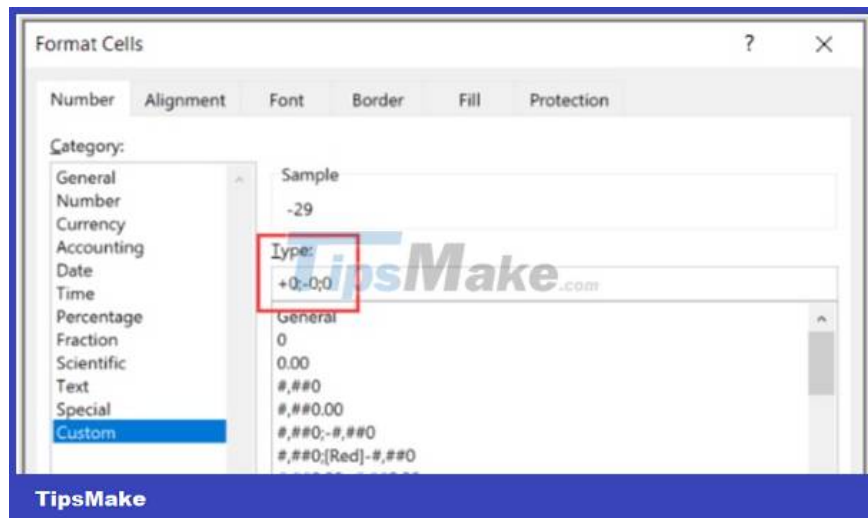
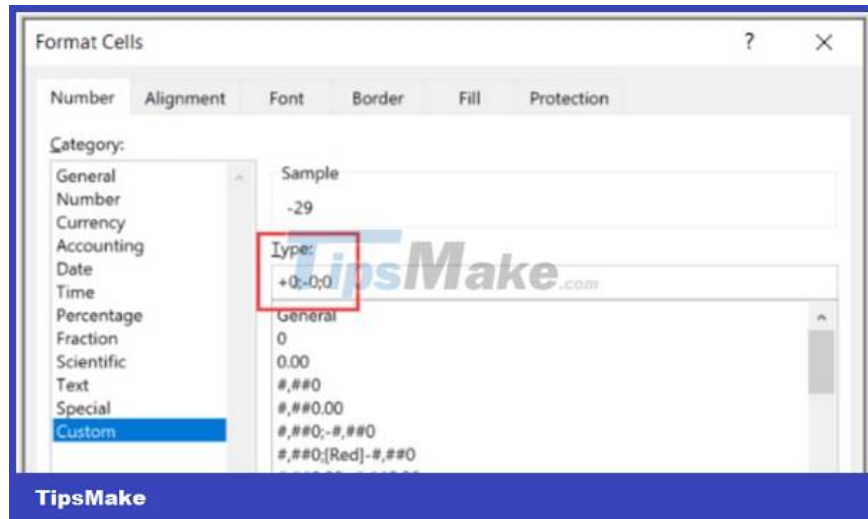
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**Step 3 : In the Format Cells dialog box, select the Number tab and click Custom .**



In the Type box, enter the following information: **+0;-0;0**



**Step 4** : Click **Ok** and the result table with yin and yang signs appears.

	A	B	C	D
1		2020	2021	Change
2	Store 1	581	552	-29
3	Store 2	639	674	+35
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5	Store 4	573	586	+13
6	Store 5	614	576	-38
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Note, its value remains unchanged, just the way it is displayed is as a number with plus and minus signs before it.

Another interesting thing is that you can customize the yin and yang sign format in other Excel such as:

1. Positive numbers have a plus sign and negative numbers in brackets: `+0;(0);0`
2. Positive numbers have a plus sign and negative numbers are red: `+0;[Red]-0;0`
3. Positive numbers are green and negative numbers are red: `[Green]+0;[Red]-0;0`

I will further guide you on converting negative numbers into positive numbers using the ABS function. It will be useful for you in some other cases when you do not need to format yin and yang signs in Excel.

# Convert negative numbers to positive numbers in Excel with ABS

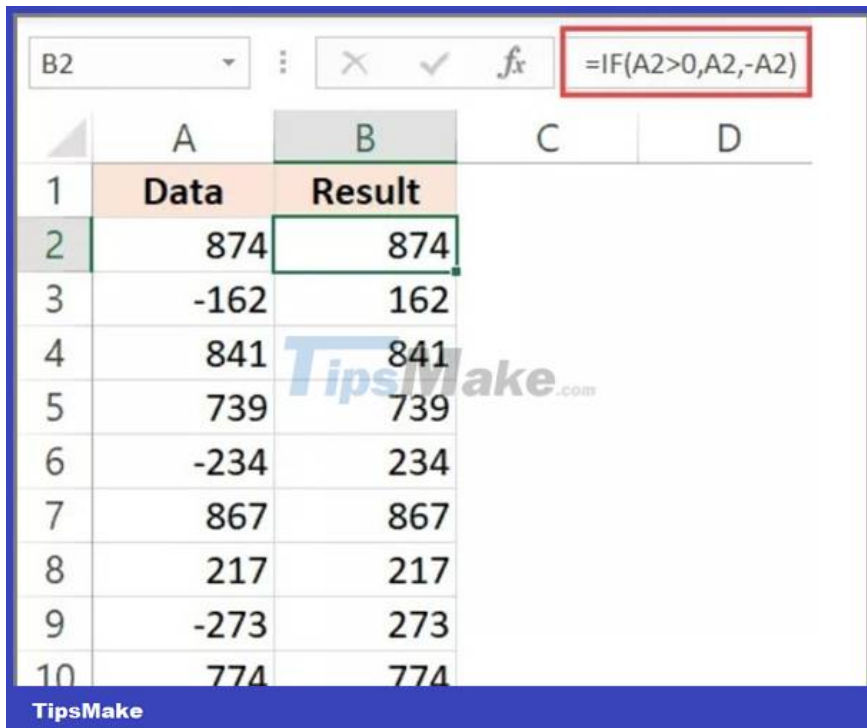
In some cases you need to convert negative numbers to positive numbers in Excel.

From the yin and yang sign format above, you can use 2 common ways to convert as follows:

**Method 1** : Multiply by **-1** to create a positive number

Apply the formula: =IF(A2>0,A2,-A2) to the cell you want to convert to a positive value.

Where A2 is the original value, -A2 is the value that has a negative sign (- with – becomes +).



	A	B	C	D
1	<b>Data</b>	<b>Result</b>		
2	874	874		
3	-162	162		
4	841	841		
5	739	739		
6	-234	234		
7	867	867		
8	217	217		
9	-273	273		
10	774	774		

The image shows an Excel spreadsheet with a table. The formula bar at the top displays the formula `=IF(A2>0,A2,-A2)`. The table has two columns: 'Data' and 'Result'. The 'Data' column contains values: 874, -162, 841, 739, -234, 867, 217, -273, 774. The 'Result' column contains the absolute values of the corresponding 'Data' cells: 874, 162, 841, 739, 234, 867, 217, 273, 774. A watermark 'TipsMake.com' is visible across the table.

	A	B	C	D
1	<b>Data</b>	<b>Result</b>		
2	874	874		
3	-162	162		
4	841	841		
5	739	739		
6	-234	234		
7	867	867		
8	217	217		
9	-273	273		
10	774	774		

For more flexibility, you can use the ABS function.

**Method 2:** Using the **ABS** function :

Similar to above, use the formula: `=ABS(A2)` for the cell you want to convert to a positive value.

B2 : [X] [✓] fx =ABS(A2)

	A	B	C	I
1	<b>Data</b>	<b>Result</b>		
2	874	874		
3	-162	162		
4	841	841		
5	739	739		
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9	-273	273		
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The ABS function is currently only applicable to negative numbers converted to positive numbers. Only applicable to numeric data, text data will report the **#VALUE! error**.

*So I have helped you better understand how to customize the yin and yang sign format in Excel. Hope you like this article, please comment if you have any questions or need further answers!*

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