

Example: Managing a Customer Contact List

Scenario:

Imagine you have a customer contact list with 20 phone numbers in column A. Some of the numbers are inconsistently formatted, and you want to correct and analyze them.

Your data in column A looks like this:

1234567890

123-456-7890

(123) 456-7890

123.456.7890

123 456 7890

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Task 1: Conditional Formatting Based on Criteria

You want the background color of the cells to turn red if the phone number doesn't contain exactly 10 digits (ignoring dashes, spaces, and parentheses).

1. **Highlight Column A:** Select cells A1:A20.
2. **Navigate to Conditional Formatting:** Go to 'Home' > 'Conditional Formatting' > 'New Rule.'
3. **Choose Formula:** Select 'Use a formula to determine which cells to format.'
4. **Input Formula:** Enter
=LEN(SUBSTITUTE(SUBSTITUTE(SUBSTITUTE(SUBSTITUTE(A1,"-","")," ",""),"."),""))<>10
5. **Apply Formatting:** Click 'Format,' select a red fill, and click 'OK.'

Any phone numbers that don't contain exactly 10 digits will now have a red background.

Task 2: Use Find and Replace to Reformat Numbers

You want to remove any non-numeric characters from the phone numbers.

1. **Highlight Column A:** Select cells A1:A20.
2. **Press Ctrl + H:** This opens the Find and Replace dialog.
3. **Find and Replace Each Character:** Use multiple rounds to find "-", ".", " ", "(", ")" and replace them with nothing.
4. **Press 'Replace All':** Do this for each character you're removing.

Task 3: Using Pivot Tables for Analysis

You want to analyze the frequency of each area code (first three digits of the phone number) in your list.

1. **Create a New Column B:** In B1, enter `=LEFT(A1, 3)` and drag this formula down to get the area codes from column A.
2. **Insert a Pivot Table:** Highlight column B, then go to 'Insert' > 'PivotTable.'
3. **Place Fields:** Put the 'Area Code' field both in the 'Rows' and 'Values' areas. Make sure the Values area is set to 'Count of Area Code.'

You'll now have a Pivot Table that counts the occurrence of each area code in your list.

By working through this example, you'll have firsthand experience applying **Conditional Formatting**, using **Find and Replace**, and creating **Pivot Tables** in Excel. These advanced techniques help make your data more coherent, easy to read, and ready for analysis.

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