

Instructions for Creating an Excel Macro to Format Numbers to Dollar Format

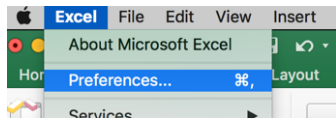
Excel spreadsheets offer a great interface for working with data, usually numbers, in tabular form (or in other words, rows and columns). Everyone can use Excel, from professionals such as accountants or data analysts, to the average nontechnical person trying to balance a virtual checkbook. Here is a simple tutorial to show any Excel user how to format numbers into dollar format—not manually, but automatically using a **macro**.

Quick explanation of a **macro**: it is an action or set of actions you can capture to run repeatedly and is often used to automate repetitive tasks. *Think of it as a simple computer program that you can configure once and will do the job for you whenever you invoke it again in the future!* I will show you how to create a simple macro that **converts any number into dollar format** in an Excel spreadsheet. You do not need any programming or advanced knowledge of computers to do this.

Prerequisites:

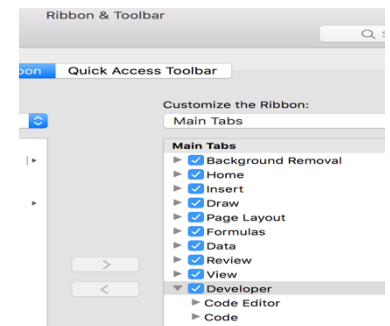
- Microsoft Excel 98 or later (Note: this tutorial is designed specifically for the Excel program for Apple computers, however if you're comfortable enough to navigate the Excel program in Windows, **you can still follow along!**)

Step 1: Enabling macros in your Excel workbook (skip if already enabled)

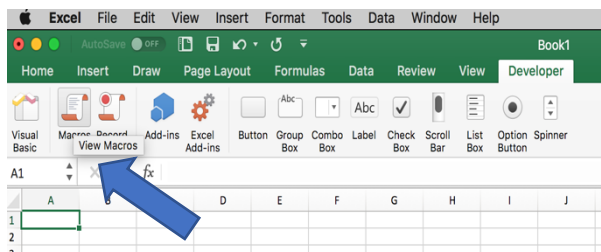


1. Open new workbook in Microsoft Excel
2. Open the Excel program menu and select 'Preferences'

3. In Preferences, select 'Ribbon & Toolbar'
4. In Main Tabs on the right-hand side, find and check the 'Developer' option
5. Click 'Save' and go back to the workbook

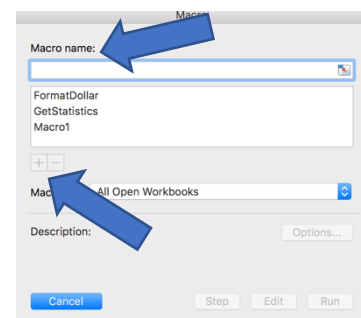


Step 2: Navigating to the macro options



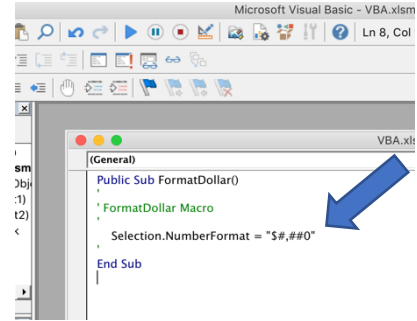
1. Click on the Developer ribbon (now visible on the Excel ribbon bar), and select the option Macros
2. In the popup, under Macro name, type a new name

3. Then click the plus button. This will open up the Microsoft Visual Basic editor.

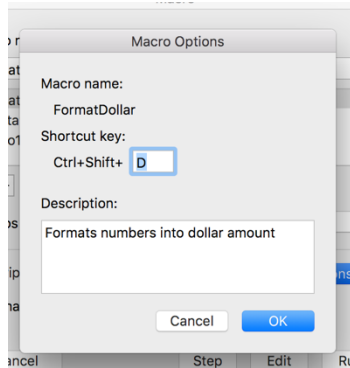


Step 3: Creating the macro (No coding involved; just copy and paste!)

1. Just copy and paste this line of code inside your macro function:
`Selection.NumberFormat = "$#,##0"`
2. Save and exit the editor, and return to the workbook



Step 4: Configuring a keyboard shortcut for macro



1. Click on the option Macros again under the Developer ribbon
2. Highlight your newly created macro and click on the Options button
3. Determine a shortcut. My suggestion is Ctrl+Shift+D (just enter a capital D into the input box and the shortcut prefix will change from Option+Cmd to Ctrl+Shift)
4. (Optional) Feel free to give your macro a short description
5. Hit 'Ok' and go back to the Excel workbook

Step 5: Running the macro on some numbers

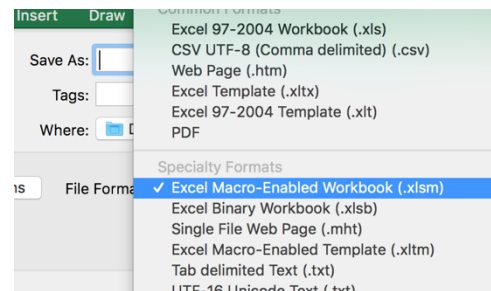
1. Fill a few cells in the Excel spreadsheet with some numbers (with at least 4 digits)
2. Highlight those cells with your cursor. Just click and drag!
3. On your keyboard, execute the shortcut created in step 4 (if you followed my suggestion, it's Ctrl+Shift+D).
4. Voila! Your numbers should now be formatted as dollar amounts!



Step 6: Saving the macro (you're almost done)

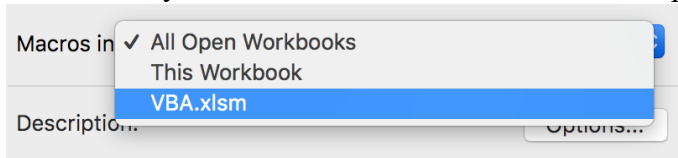
Now there's no use of having this macro if you can't use it in other Excel spreadsheets.

1. Go to File and click 'Save As...'
2. Click on the File Format dropdown and select the Excel Macro-Enabled Workbook (.xlsm) option
3. Name this file accordingly and hit 'Save'.



Step 7: (Optional) Accessing the macro in the future (and in other workbooks)

1. Open the Excel Macro-Enabled Workbook you saved in step 6 (if not opened already)
2. Then open another Excel document (could be blank or an existing spreadsheet with data)
3. Go to Developer ribbon and click on Macros option. In the 'Macros in' dropdown, select the name of your macro-enabled workbook from step 6 (I named mine 'VBA.xlsm')



4. You should see your macro. It will be listed in this format:
<excel_filename>!<macro_name>.
5. To use the macro in this workbook, just repeat step 5.

Conclusion:

You should be able to save precious time with this macro when you want to convert large number of numbers to dollar format in Excel. This is only the tip of the iceberg as to what macros can do for us. For the layperson, look into other useful Excel macros you can use. For the developer, look into Visual Basic programming language and try to create macros for more complex operations!