Excel (XLS, XLSX, CSV) Formats

Setting up the Historic Data · https://dev.forecastpro.com/documentation/forecast-pro-trac/setting-up-the-historic-data/excel-xls-xlsx-csv-formats/

Forecast Pro can read Excel (XLS, XLSX) files and CSV (Comma Separated Values) files saved from Excel.

You must create your spreadsheet file from within your spreadsheet program. Forecast Pro checks data types as it reads the spreadsheet. If it sees text where it expects a number, or a floating-point number where it expects an integer, an error message will be displayed when the data is read in. By default, a blank cell is interpreted as a missing value. This default can be adjusted for leading and trailing blanks on the Formats tab of the Options dialog box. Do not use zeros to represent missing values¾they will be interpreted as numbers and will probably distort your forecasts badly.

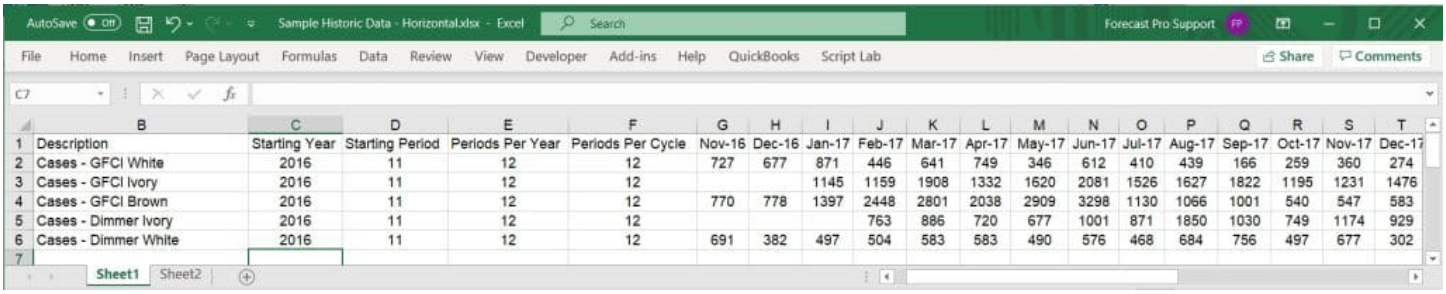
Row format

If your data are already stored by rows, you will want to consider the row format first. You can probably alter your spreadsheet to the Forecast Pro row layout in just a few minutes. In row format each time series occupies a single row on the spreadsheet.

The data are assumed to reside in the leftmost (first) spreadsheet in the workbook unless an alternate sheet has been specified by naming it BFSDATA.

Row 1 of the spreadsheet is devoted to column headings. The keyword “description” *must* be used as the column heading for the description column. The other cells in row 1 are ignored by Forecast Pro. You can use them for titles, calendar information, etc.

Here is an example of a row format spreadsheet. The file is installed with the program and is named *Sample Historic Data – Horizontal.xlsx*.



	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T
1	Description	Starting Year	Starting Period	Periods Per Year	Periods Per Cycle	Nov-16	Dec-16	Jan-17	Feb-17	Mar-17	Apr-17	May-17	Jun-17	Jul-17	Aug-17	Sep-17	Oct-17	Nov-17	Dec-17
2	Cases - GFCI White	2016	11	12	12	727	677	871	446	641	749	346	612	410	439	166	259	360	274
3	Cases - GFCI Ivory	2016	11	12	12			1145	1159	1908	1332	1620	2081	1526	1627	1822	1195	1231	1476
4	Cases - GFCI Brown	2016	11	12	12	770	778	1397	2448	2801	2038	2909	3298	1130	1066	1001	540	547	583
5	Cases - Dimmer Ivory	2016	11	12	12				763	886	720	677	1001	871	1850	1030	749	1174	929
6	Cases - Dimmer White	2016	11	12	12	691	382	497	504	583	583	490	576	468	684	756	497	677	302
7																			

The above example does not use attribute fields to define product groupings. This is often desirable and is discussed in the Defining the Hierarchy.

In our example, each data record consists of six header items in columns A through F, followed by the historic data in the remainder of the row, beginning in column G. Each item is placed in a separate cell.

Columns A through F contain the following six required items.

A. Variable name.
B. Variable description. Up to 256 characters.
C. Starting year. Must be an integer.
D. Starting period. Must be an integer.
E. Periods per year. Must be an integer.
F. Periods per seasonal cycle. Must be an integer.

See Setting up the Historic data for more details on these items.

The time series data begin in column G. The starting year (column C) and starting period (column D) refer to the year and period for column G, whether or not that cell actually contains data. Thus, in the example spreadsheet, the first value for PG1-204-2 is for January 2017 in column I, even though the column C defines the starting year as 2016, and column D defines the starting period as 11.

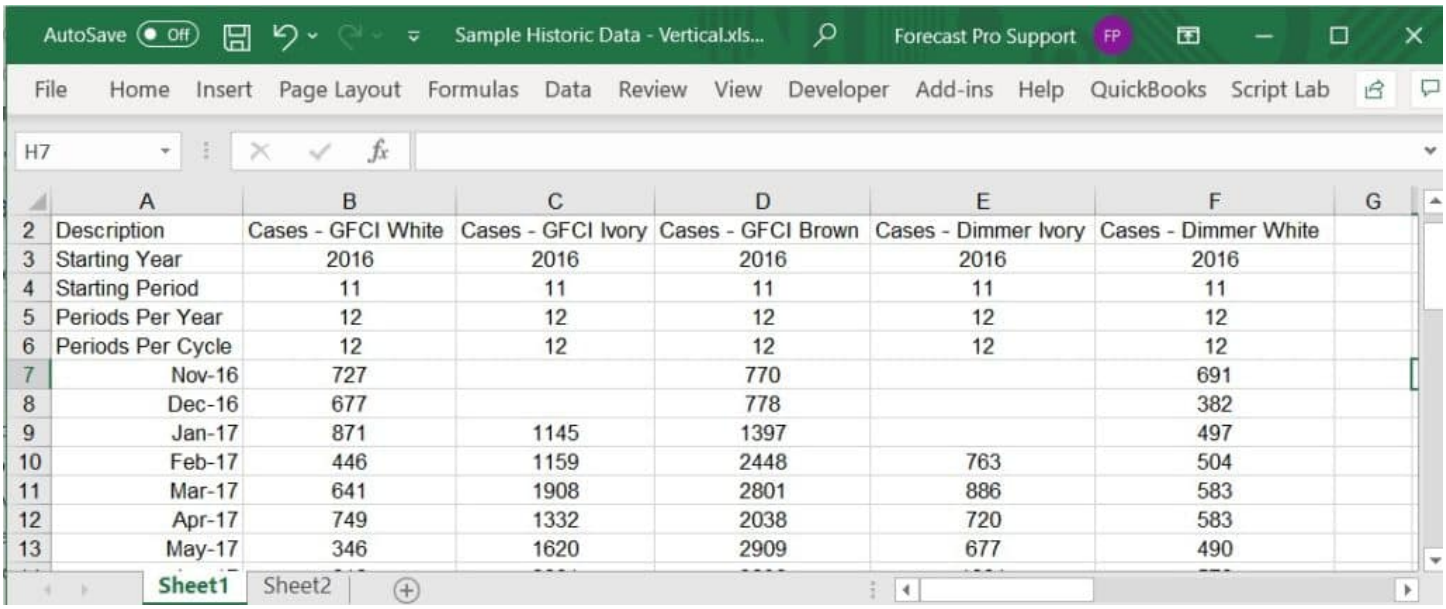
Column format

If your data are already stored by columns, you will want to consider the column format first. You can probably alter your spreadsheet to the Forecast Pro row layout in just a few minutes. In column format each time series occupies a single column on the spreadsheet.

The data are assumed to reside in the leftmost (first) spreadsheet in the workbook unless an alternate sheet has been specified by naming it BFSDATA.

Column A of the spreadsheet is devoted to row headings. The keyword “description” *must* be used as the row heading for the description row. The other cells in column A are ignored by Forecast Pro. You can use them for titles, calendar information, etc.

Here is an example of a column format spreadsheet. The file is installed with the program and is named *Sample Historic Data – Vertical.xlsx*.



	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
2	Description	Cases - GFCI White	Cases - GFCI Ivory	Cases - GFCI Brown	Cases - Dimmer Ivory	Cases - Dimmer White	
3	Starting Year	2016	2016	2016	2016	2016	
4	Starting Period	11	11	11	11	11	
5	Periods Per Year	12	12	12	12	12	
6	Periods Per Cycle	12	12	12	12	12	
7	Nov-16	727		770		691	
8	Dec-16	677		778		382	
9	Jan-17	871	1145	1397		497	
10	Feb-17	446	1159	2448	763	504	
11	Mar-17	641	1908	2801	886	583	
12	Apr-17	749	1332	2038	720	583	
13	May-17	346	1620	2909	677	490	

Sheet1 Sheet2

The above example does not use attribute fields to define product groupings. This is often desirable and is discussed in the Defining the Hierarchy.

In our example, each data record consists of six header items in rows 1 through 6, followed by the historic data in remainder of the rows, beginning in row 7. Each item is placed in a separate cell.

Rows 1 through 6 contain the following six required items.

1. Variable name.
2. Variable description. Up to 256 characters.
3. Starting year. Must be an integer.
4. Starting period. Must be an integer.
5. Periods per year. Must be an integer.
6. Periods per seasonal cycle. Must be an integer.

See Setting up the Historic data for more details on these items.

The time series data begin in row 7. The starting year (row 3) and starting period (row 4) refer to the year and period for row 7, whether or not that cell actually contains data. In the example spreadsheet, the first value for PG1-204-2 is for January 2017 in row 9, even though the header defines the starting period as 11 and the starting year as 2016.

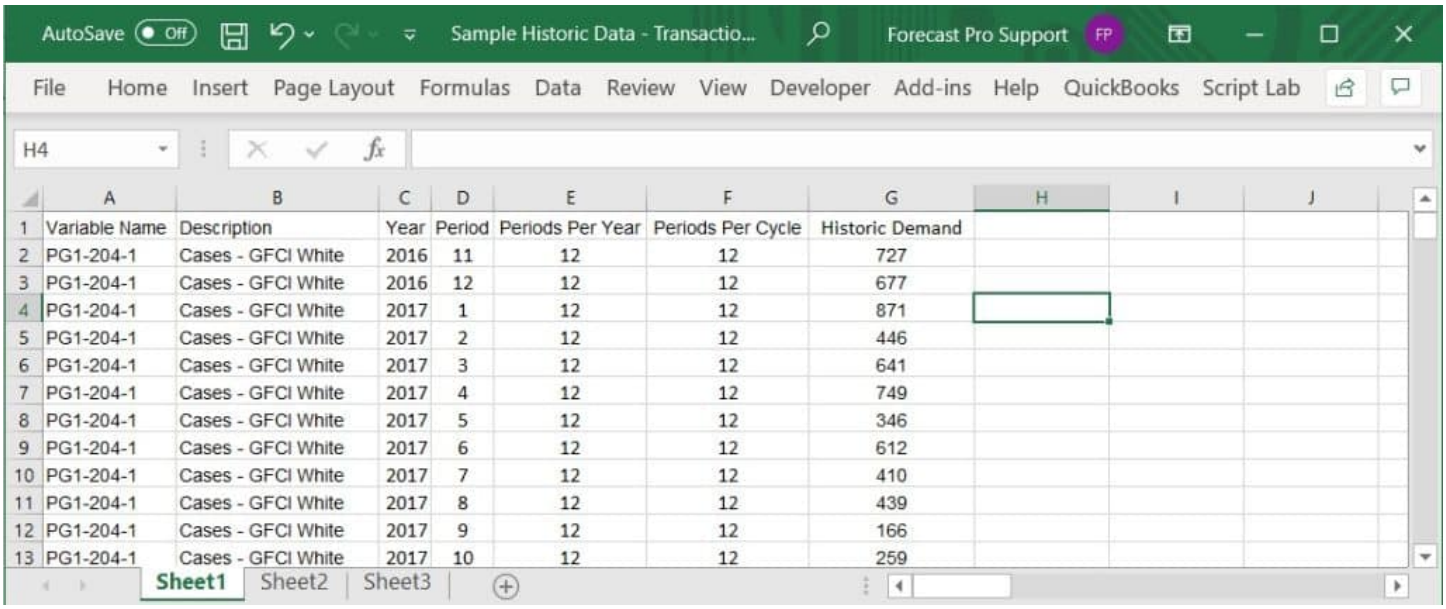
Transaction format

When demand history is stored in a database, it often consists of individual records for each transaction (e.g., each order or shipment) that includes the quantity and the date. If your data are currently available in Excel in this format, you will want to consider the transaction format. The advantage is that it may require less manipulation than other formats to bring the data into Forecast Pro. The disadvantage is that it is harder for a person to view and manipulate the data in Excel.

The data are assumed to reside in the leftmost (first) spreadsheet in the workbook unless an alternate sheet has been specified by naming it BFSDATA.

Row 1 of the spreadsheet is devoted to column headings. The keyword “description” *must* be used as the column heading for the description column. The other cells in row 1 are ignored by Forecast Pro. You can use them for titles, calendar information, etc.

Here is an example of a transaction format spreadsheet. The file is installed with the program and is named S*ample Historic Data – Transactions.xlsx*.



	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1	Variable Name	Description	Year	Period	Periods Per Year	Periods Per Cycle	Historic Demand			
2	PG1-204-1	Cases - GFCI White	2016	11	12	12	727			
3	PG1-204-1	Cases - GFCI White	2016	12	12	12	677			
4	PG1-204-1	Cases - GFCI White	2017	1	12	12	871			
5	PG1-204-1	Cases - GFCI White	2017	2	12	12	446			
6	PG1-204-1	Cases - GFCI White	2017	3	12	12	641			
7	PG1-204-1	Cases - GFCI White	2017	4	12	12	749			
8	PG1-204-1	Cases - GFCI White	2017	5	12	12	346			
9	PG1-204-1	Cases - GFCI White	2017	6	12	12	612			
10	PG1-204-1	Cases - GFCI White	2017	7	12	12	410			
11	PG1-204-1	Cases - GFCI White	2017	8	12	12	439			
12	PG1-204-1	Cases - GFCI White	2017	9	12	12	166			
13	PG1-204-1	Cases - GFCI White	2017	10	12	12	259			

The above example does not use attribute fields to define product groupings. This is often desirable and is discussed in the Defining the Hierarchy.

In our example, each data record consists of six header items in columns A through F, followed by the historic data in column G. Each item is placed in a separate cell.

Columns A through F contain the following six items required items.

A. Variable name.
B. Variable description. Up to 256 characters.
C. Year. Must be an integer.
D. Period. Must be an integer.
E. Periods per year. Must be an integer.
F. Periods per seasonal cycle. Must be an integer.

See Setting up the Historic data for more details on these items.