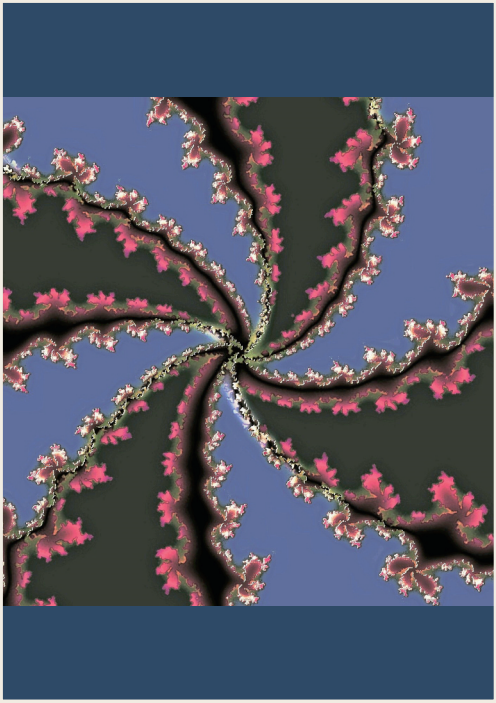
ART BY EXCEL



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Art by Excel

The purpose of this small book is to inspire my readers to create art by Excel, and if that is too pretentious a word then you can at least make some nice pictures. Or just have fun.

I will very shortly explain the different possibilities for producing figures by Excel and include many examples of my own creation. I am quite sure my readers are able to do much more advanced things with the software.

Happy hours (yeah, it requires time!) in using the well-known program for a purpose it was perhaps not initially designed. You are creative, everyone is.

1. Conditional formatting

It is possible to produce figures by mathematical formulas. This means first setting the dimensions of a cell suitable in order to make them serve as pixels.

Calculating a different value for each cell is the next step, and there is no shortage of formulas in the world, and you can invent your own formulas. Numbers belong to people.

The final stage is to make use of the conditional formatting possibility available in Excel. Each sell can be given a color depending on its value. The suddenly you have a picture!

There are some hints for utilizing conditional formatting. It is good to make the numbers invisible by first choosing the cells and applying on them the custom format definition ‘ ;;; ‘. You shall not include the citation marks I use now but just the three semicolons in between.

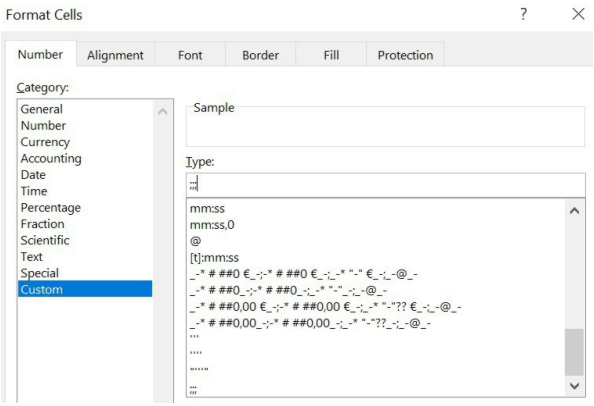

Figure 1. Hiding the numbers by custom formatting of the cells you want to use for you picture.

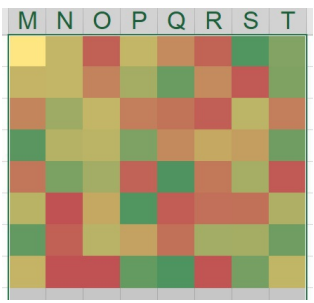

Figure 2. Making the cells serve as pixels by conditional formatting.

Most of all you have to remember to clear the rules for conditional formatting before setting a visual basic macro to work. Otherwise you will need to wait a very long time for the calculation to finish because the poor Excel must check the colors of each cell before proceeding and then check it again after every tiny math operation. You will not be able to endure that for long but you will stop the software and curse your own stupidity after realizing that you have lost the latest updates of you macro.

The values of cells are most easily calculated by writing macros where you include the formulas you use. I will not explain the Visual Basic programming you need for creating macros: There is much information available on that topic in internet.

2. Using shapes of excel

It is also possible to use the shapes of Excel for producing images. You can easily record what you do in working with the shapes and then modify the automatically created Visual Basic code in order to change some features of the picture.

3. Inserting photos in the Excel

You can utilize photos in the same way you use the shapes. You can control the position and size of each photo.

It is sometimes forgotten that Excel can also be used as a photo-editor: You can add and cut away what you like in a photo. I recommend that you get familiar with these possibilities. There are almost unlimited options to choose between.

4. Using photo-editors for final touch

I do not remember that anyone had forbidden the use of photo-editors for further processing the images that have been produced by Excel. That is a topic of its own, and I do not even try to discuss that; There is much literature available.

It is often most efficient to do the final processing by a photo-editor. The outcome is only dependent on your imagination and skills. That's why a photo has long ago lost its power to prove anything, as we all know. But we who are only having fun do not need to care about that. I am not asking you to believe my pictures: I would be happy if you just liked them.

The book shows how Excel can be used for creating art.

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