# Highlight Using Shapes Feature

This short guide will show you how to highlight a certain portion of an Excel spreadsheet by using the Shapes feature, which allows you to use objects (arrows, circles, blocks, etc.) to point out information. You'll also see how to use a literal highlight to accent specific information for others viewing your spreadsheet.

1.) I begin by opening up the Excel spreadsheet that includes the information I wish to highlight. In my example I want to highlight the numbers 500 and 450 that are in the middle of columns **A** and **B**. I want to use a block arrow to point to the row with these numbers.
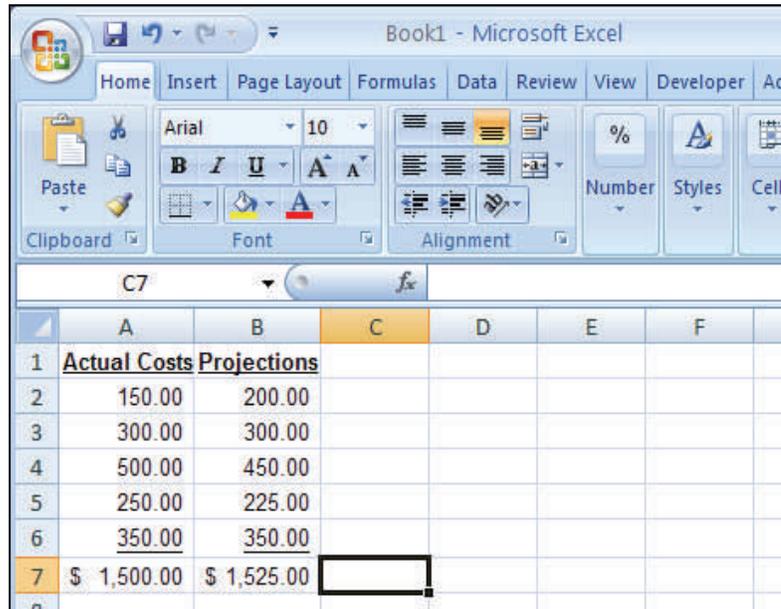
2.) I go to the **Illustrations** section of the **Office Ribbon**'s **Insert** tab, and click on the Shapes icon — — found there.

Lines

Rectangles
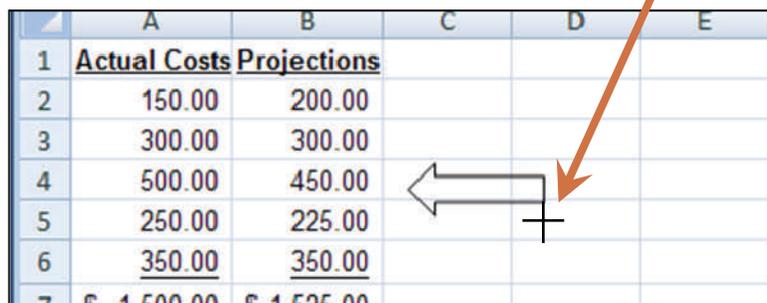
Basic Shapes

Block Arrows
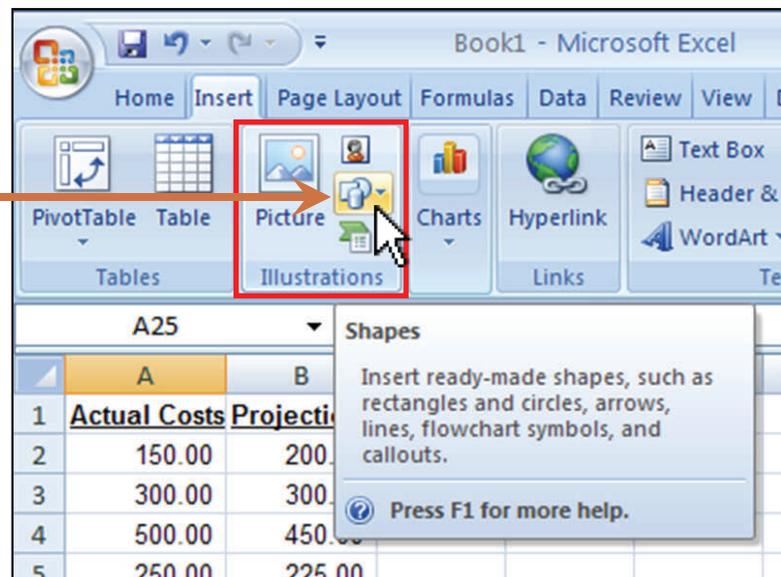
Left Arrow

3.) The **Shapes** dialog box shown at right opens, with many shapes I might want to use. I'm choosing the **Left Arrow**, from the **Block Arrows** selection, since I want to point to the numbers in my worksheet from the right side.
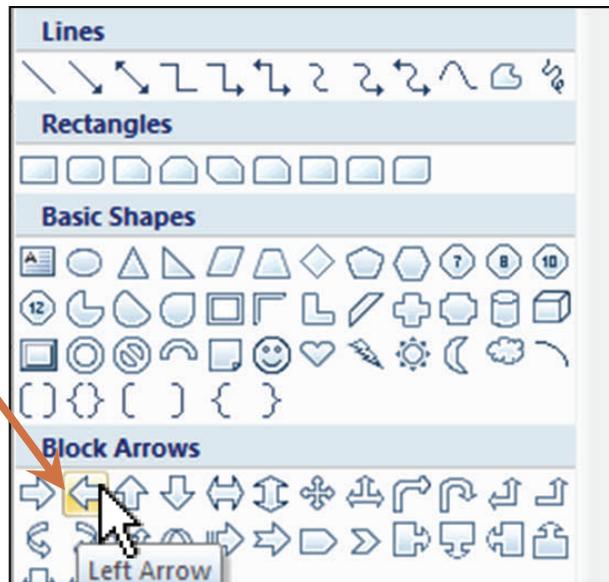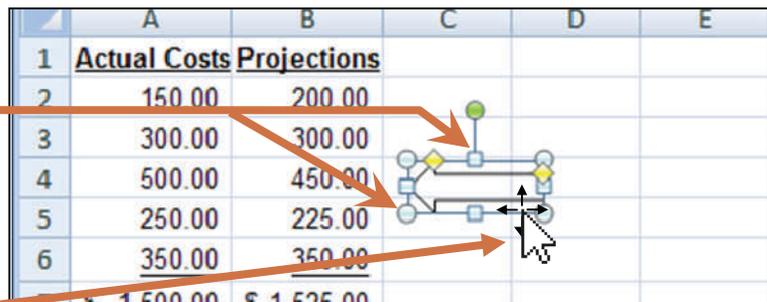
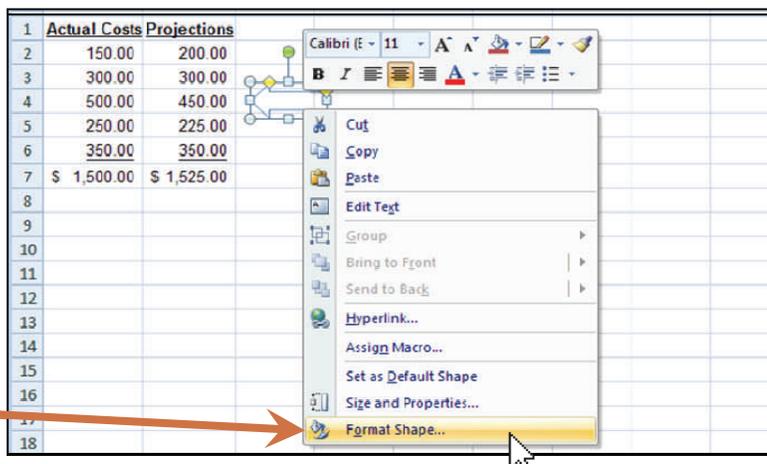**4.)** My cursor changes into a cross.
I move the cursor to the point on the screen where I want the arrow to appear, then hold down the left mouse button and drag the cursor to create the size arrow I want. I let go of the button when it reaches the right size.

	A	B	C	D	E
1	Actual Costs	Projections			
2	150.00	200.00			
3	300.00	300.00			
4	500.00	450.00			
5	250.00	225.00			
6	350.00	350.00			
7	$ 1,500.00	$ 1,525.00			

5.) The drawn arrow can now be further adjusted by clicking and dragging the "size handles" (light blue circles and squares). Or it can moved as a unit by clicking on the shape itself, and dragging it with the resulting cursor symbol with four arrows.

|	A	B	C	D	E
1	Actual Costs	Projections			
2	150.00	200.00			
3	300.00	300.00			
4	500.00	450.00			
5	250.00	225.00			
6	350.00	350.00			
7	1,500.00	$ 1,525.00			

6.) I can also customize my arrow by making its outline heavier; adding color, either to the line drawing or as fill; or making other changes. To access these capabilities, I can either **(a)** right-click on the arrow to open a dialog box, and chose "**Fo**r**mat Shape**" from the menu…

1	Actual Costs	Projections
2	150.00	200.00
3	300.00	300.00
4	500.00	450.00
5	250.00	225.00
6	350.00	350.00
7	$ 1,500.00	$ 1,525.00
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- ✂ Cut
- 📋 Copy
- 📋 Paste
- Edit Text
- Group ▸
- Bring to Front ▸
- Send to Back ▸
- Hyperlink...
- Assign Macro...
- Set as Default Shape
- Size and Properties...
- Format Shape...

6.(a), cont. ...which brings up this multi-function dialog box. Choosing different menu items from the list on the left side of the **Format Shape** box will change the options presented on the right side, and allow me to specify the exact appearance of the arrow. Or…
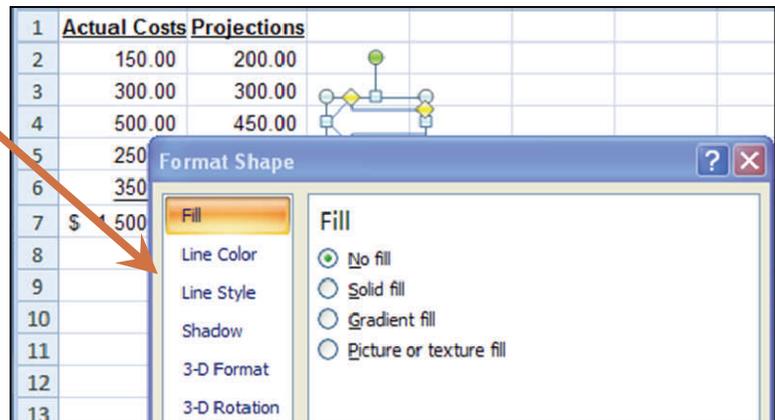
6. (b) I can double-click on the arrow, which presents all these choices in a "**Drawing Tools**" version of the **Office Ribbon**'s **Format** tab, as shown here:
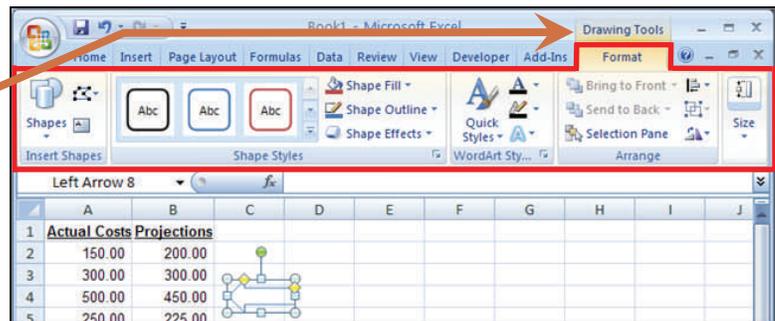
7,) I've decided to use a bolder black outline for my arrow, and to fill it with a red color already offered as a default, by simply clicking on the icons indicated. (If I had wanted a different color, I could have gotten a selection by clicking on the drop-down arrow to the right of the "Fill Color" icon.)
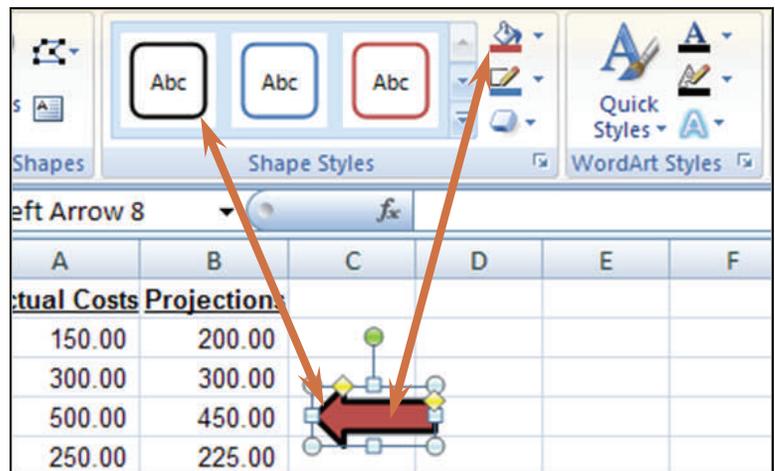
8.) I've added a finishing touch, actually highlighting the numbers by adding a fill color. I clicked on the cell(s) to be colored and then went up to the "Fill Color" icon in the **Font** section of the **Home** tab on the **Office Ribbon**.