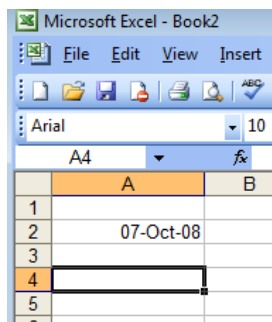


**Question:** Does Excel keep a different value in the cell for dates, and how can I accurately compare it to text of a date?

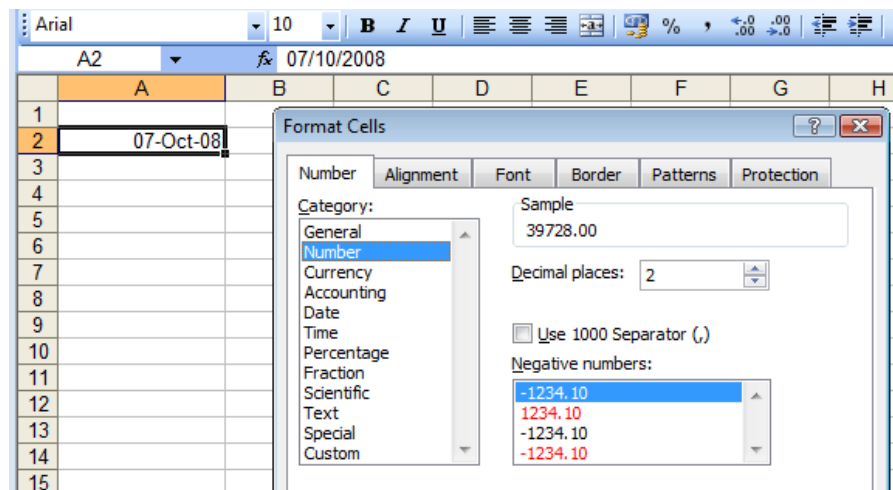
**Answer:** Yes it does, and the TEXT function can help

**Process:** Excel 2003 and 2007

In this example, we have typed in the date **07-Oct-08** into cell A2.

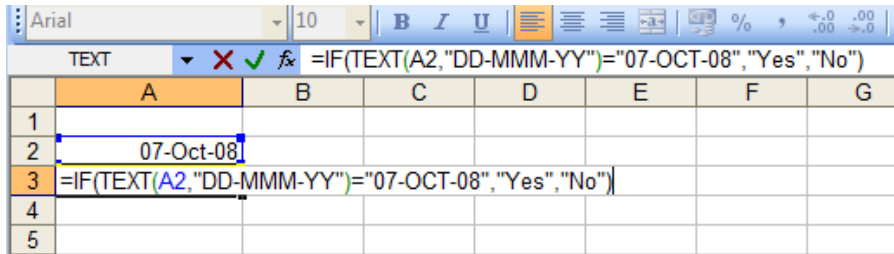


Even though it has been typed into the cell as **07-Oct-08**, and is shown as 07/10/2008 in the Formula Bar, Excel stores dates as a number of days from 0-Jan-1900 - in this instance, 07/10/2008 is actually stored as 39728 (**Hint:** if you want to see the actual Excel serial number, right click on the cell and choose **Format..** and on the **Number** tab, select **Number** as the category - in the **Sample** window on the right hand side, you'll see the serial number the date is stored as)



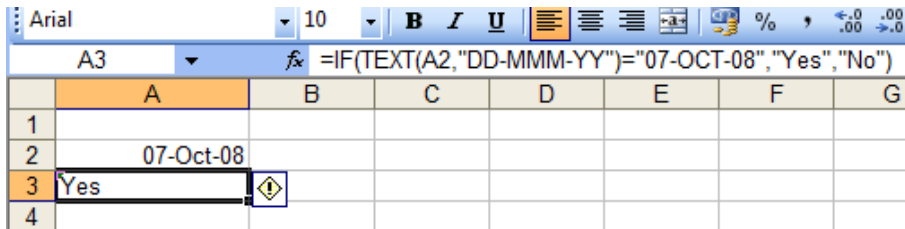
If I wanted to use an IF function to return "Yes" if cell A2 = 07/10/2008, it would actually return FALSE: while the cell shows the date, the actual contents of the cell is 39728. We can use the **Text** function, however, to make our IF statement more accurate.

- 1 Select cell A3
- 2 Enter the following formula, then press **Enter**:  
`=IF(TEXT(A2,"DD-MMM-YY")="07-OCT-08","Yes","No")`



	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1							
2	07-Oct-08						
3	=IF(TEXT(A2,"DD-MMM-YY")="07-OCT-08","Yes","No")						
4							
5							

The TEXT function converts the contents of the cell (i.e. the serial date 39782) to the date format DD-MMM-YY. The IF function compares this output to 07-Oct-09 as a logical test, which will then return TRUE.



	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1							
2	07-Oct-08						
3	Yes						
4							

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