

Parsing Names

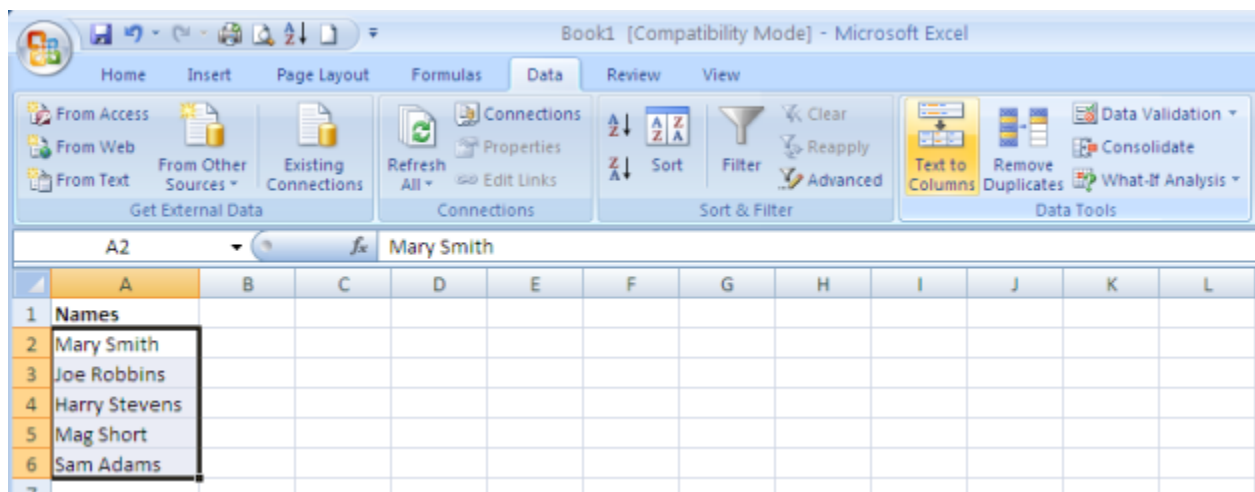
by Dick Evans

Columns of names in Excel are often entered as full names (first and last). This work great for mailing labels where the complete name is used. It is not convenient when the first or last name is needed. One method could be to add a couple of columns and one at a time enter the first and last names—a long and tedious task. There is a better way and Excel can do it.

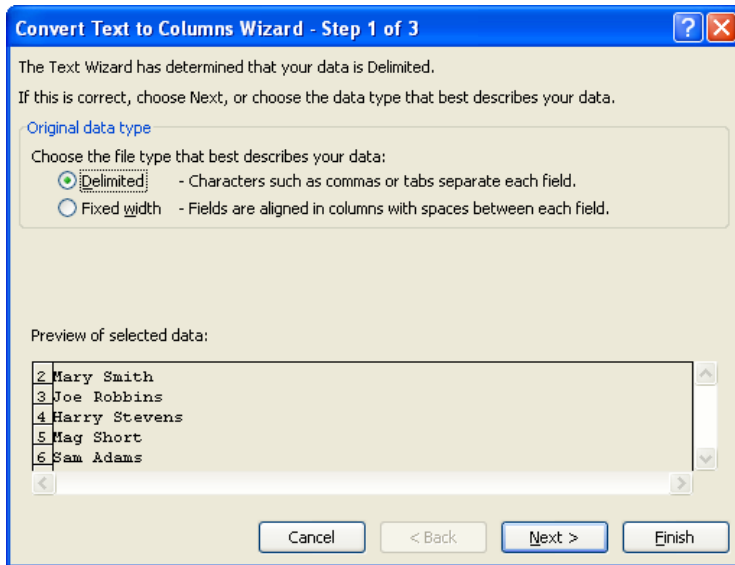
1. Start Excel

	A
1	Names
2	Mary Smith
3	Joe Robbins
4	Harry Stevens
5	Mag Short
6	Sam Adams

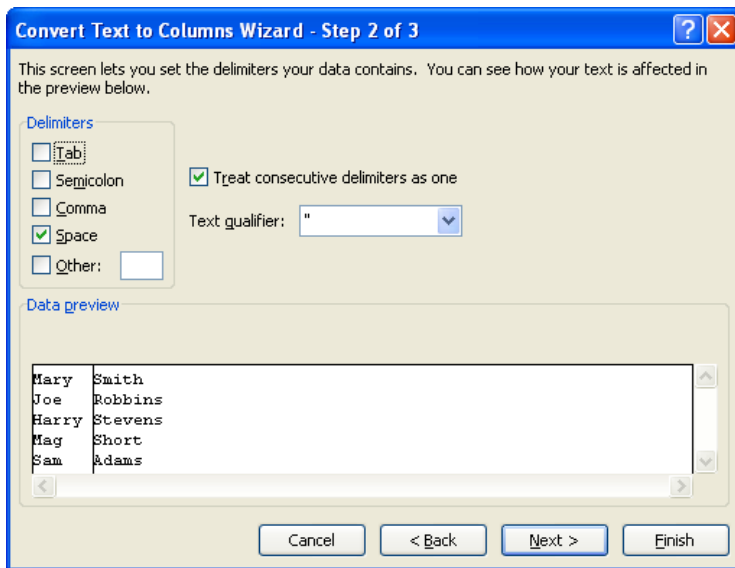
2. Enter a list of names



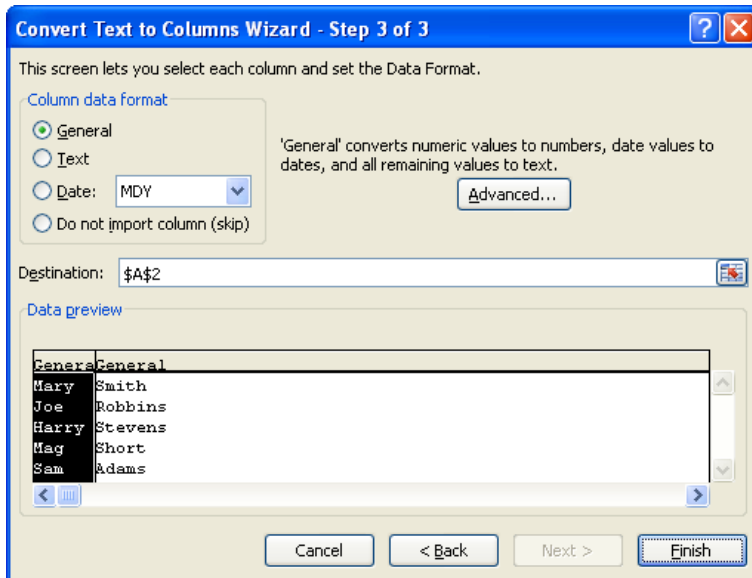
3. Select the names, then **Data > Data Tools > Text to Columns**



4. The Convert Text to Columns Wizard opens. Click **Next**



5. Uncheck Tab and check **Space**, and then click **Next**



6. Click **Finish**

	A	B
1	First	Last
2	Mary	Smith
3	Joe	Robbins
4	Harry	Stevens
5	Mag	Short
6	Sam	Adams

7. Change the headings to reflect the new field names

	A	B	C	D	E
1	First	Last	Name		
2	Mary	Smith	=A2 & " " & B2		
3	Joe	Robbins			
4	Harry	Stevens			
5	Mag	Short			
6	Sam	Adams			

8. If the concatenated name is still desired, enter the following formula in C2

=A2 & " " & B2

This formula told Excel to take the value in cell A2, concatenate it with a single space, and then concatenate that with the value in B2. The + adds two values; the & concatenates them. 1+1=2 and 1&1=11

	A	B	C
1	First	Last	Name
2	Mary	Smith	Mary Smith
3	Joe	Robbins	Joe Robbins
4	Harry	Stevens	Harry Stevens
5	Mag	Short	Mag Short
6	Sam	Adams	Sam Adams

9. Press Enter and then copy the formula down through all the name by double-clicking the fill handle