

Composing Rock 'n' Roll Stories from the Usage Data Blues

Excel, live in concert: Import files of various formats

(Please note that these instructions were developed with Excel 2003 for Windows)

Using this tool, you can answer a common question:

“What do I do with a CSV file?”

What is a CSV file, anyway?

There are several common file formats for data transfer. Two of those are:

- CSV (Comma-separated values)
- Tab-delimited text

These file formats are often received from information providers or downloaded from local systems. Both are “delimited” formats, meaning that the information inside them is separated by a specific character.

Why not just give me the data in a table or an Excel file?

- Delimited formats make small files
 - Easier to store
 - Easier to move around
- The delimiter preserves information structure without taking up much space
- Essentially, a file saved in a delimited format IS in a table – you just can't see it

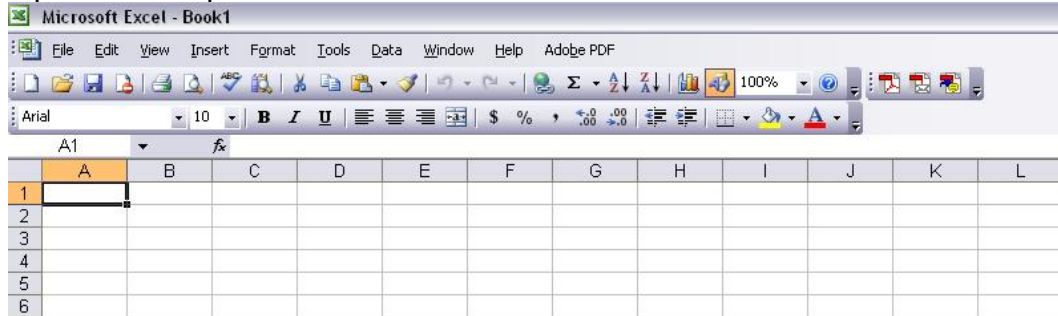
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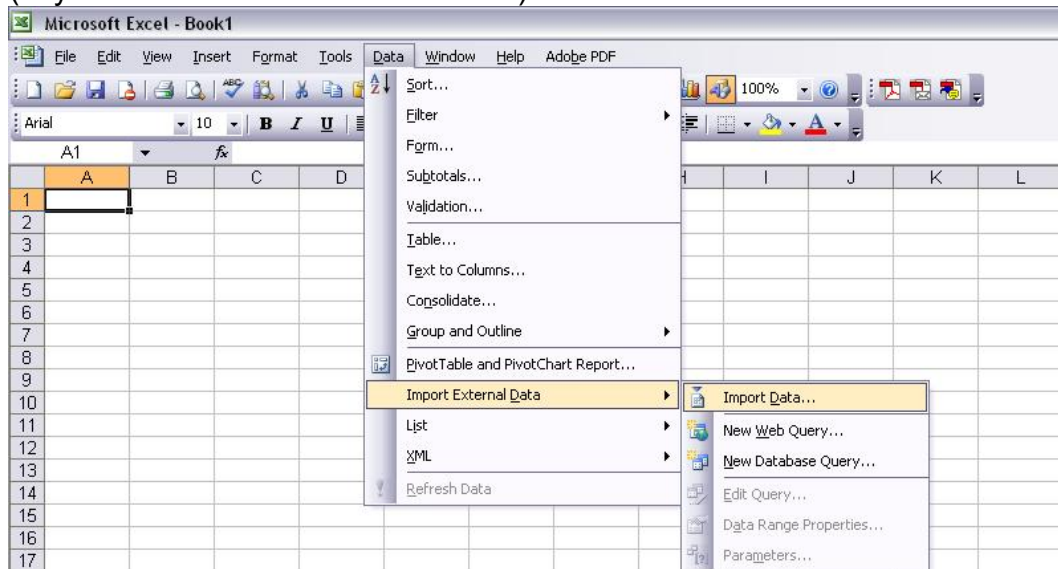
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How can I turn a delimited file into a spreadsheet?

1. Obtain the delimited file you need and save it to your computer
2. There is no need to open or edit this file if you want it in Excel
3. These instructions will work for a .csv, .txt, or any other delimited file format
4. Open a new spreadsheet in Excel:



5. From the Menu, choose Data → Import External Data → Import Data (keyboard shortcut: Alt + d → d → d):

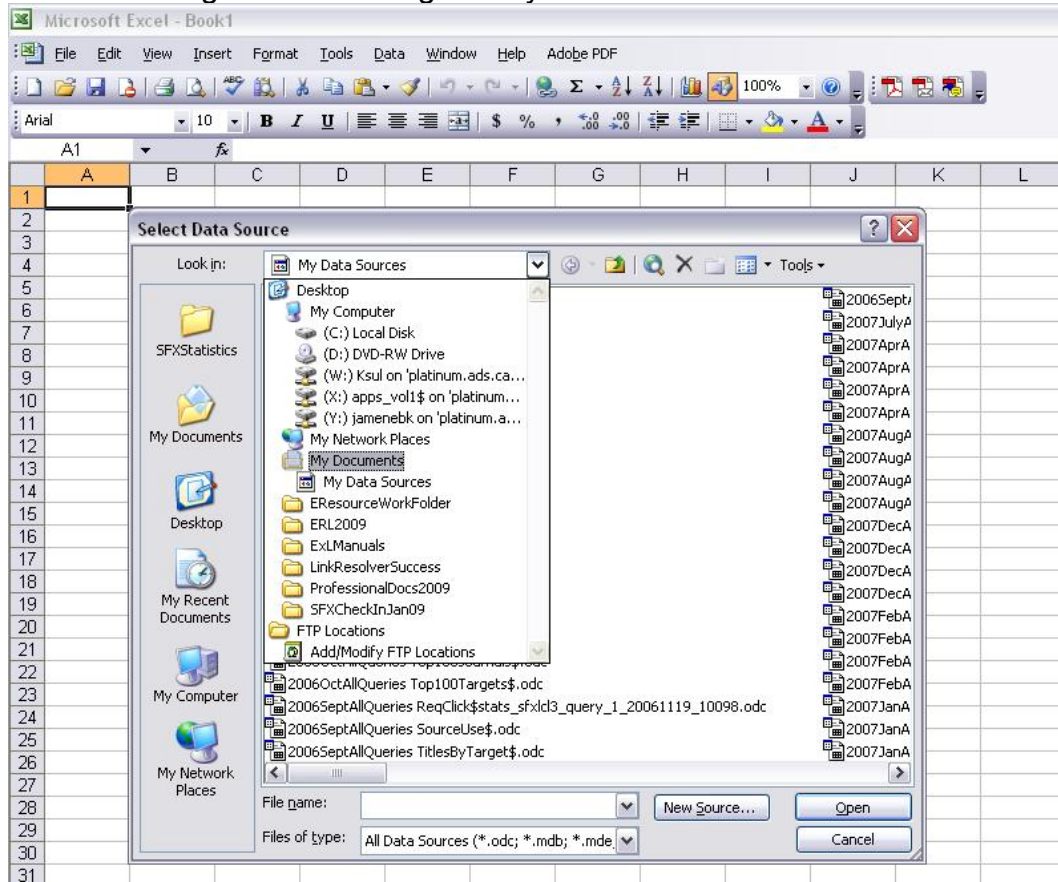


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6. Use the Dialogue box to navigate to your delimited file:

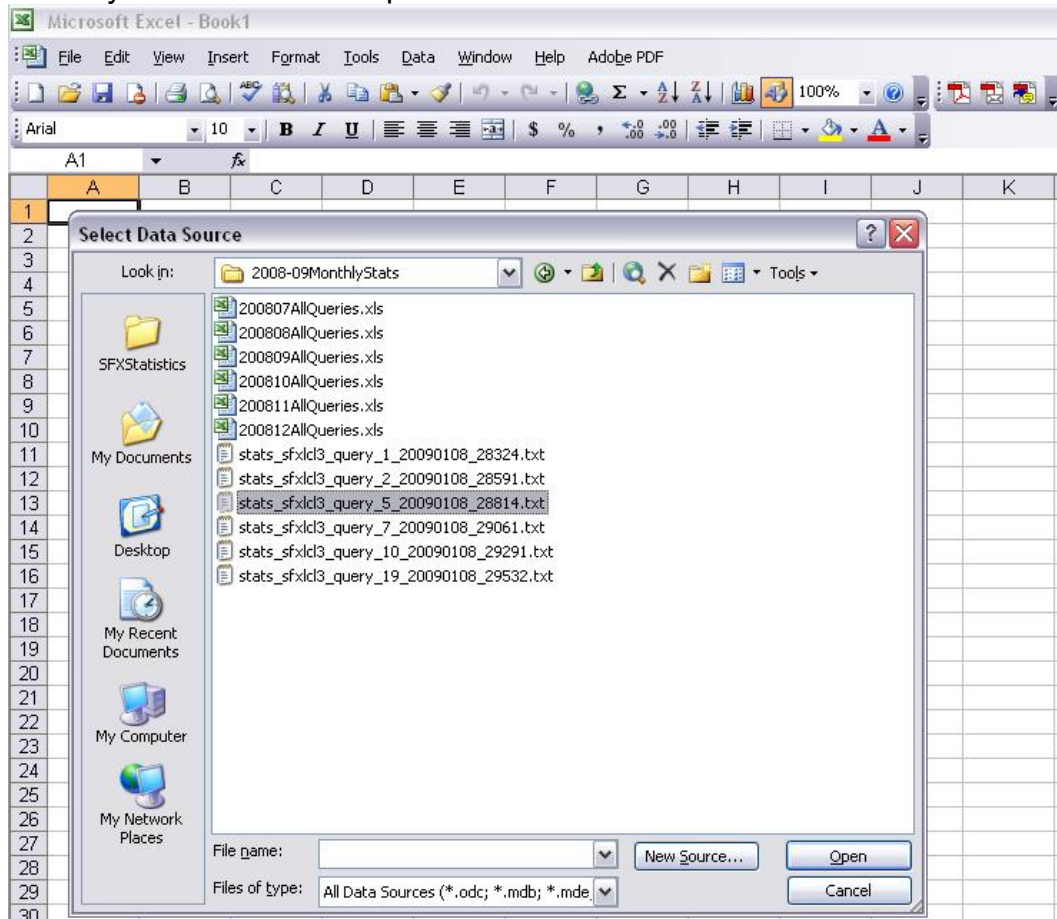


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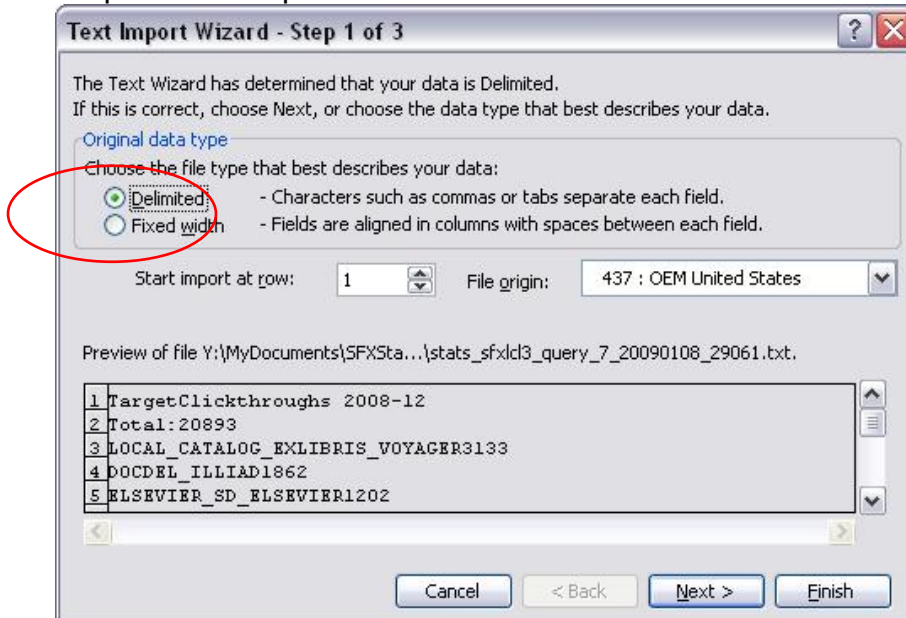
7. Select your file and click Open:



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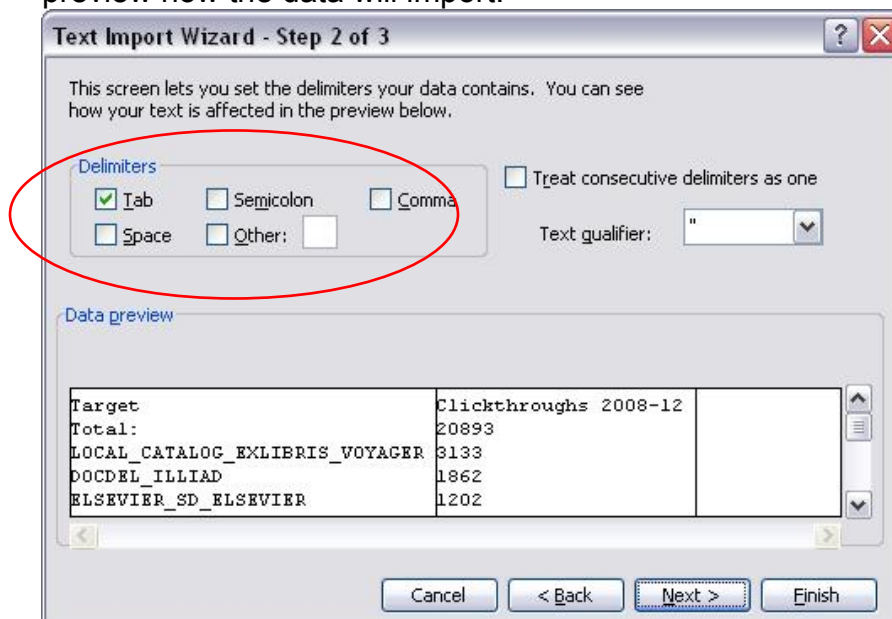
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8. Step 1 of the Import Wizard identifies the file as delimited:



9. Click Next

10. Step 2 of the Import Wizard allows you to change the delimiter settings and preview how the data will import:



11. Usually, you can leave the delimiter settings unchanged

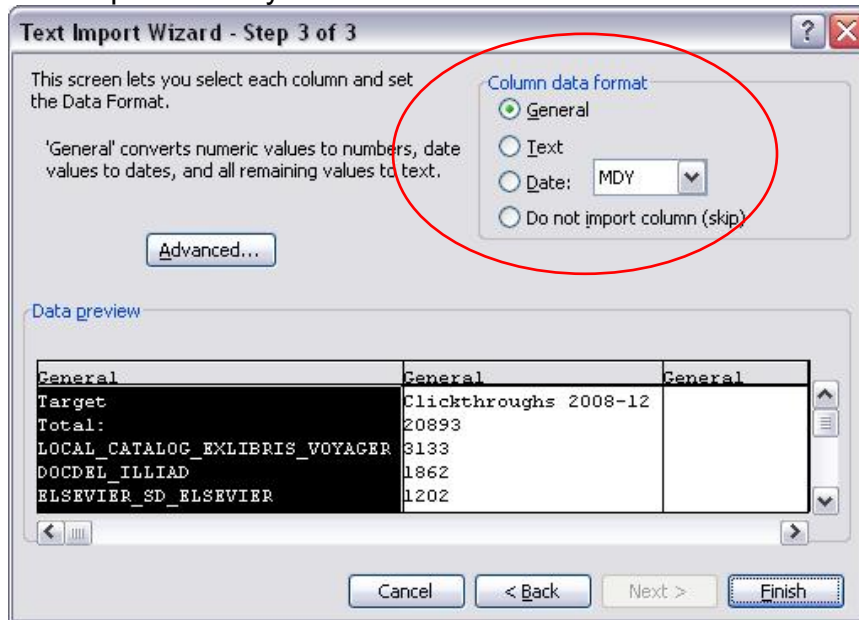
12. Click Next

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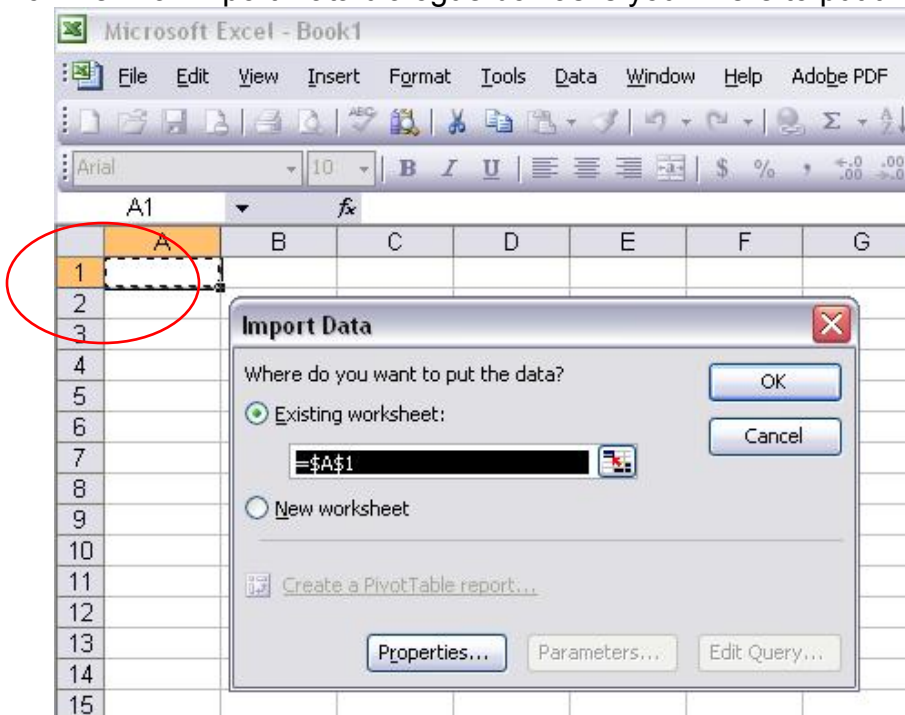
13. Step 3 of the Import Wizard lets you specify the data format of each column and skip columns you don't want:



14. It's okay to leave everything alone. You can always change it later.

15. Click Finish

16. The final Import Data dialogue box asks you where to put the data:



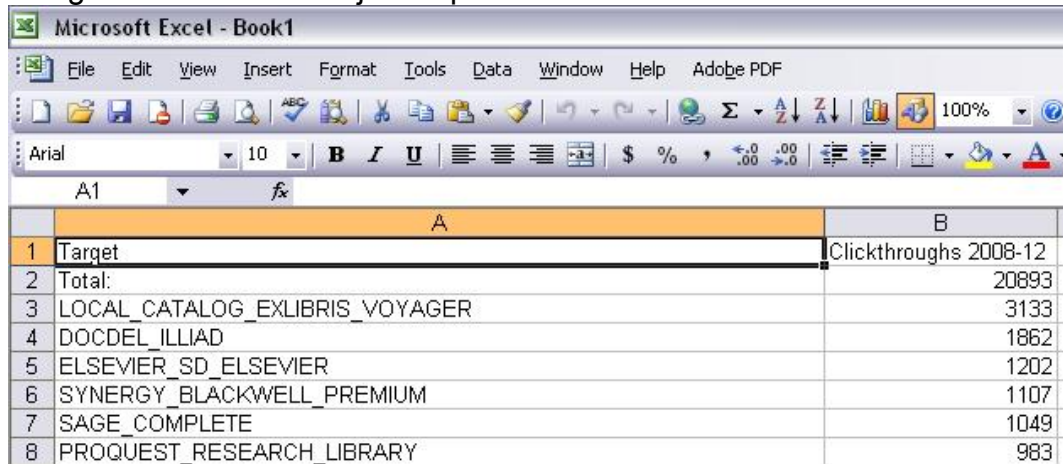
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17. Usually you want the data to go to cell A1, but you can choose a different cell or move the data to a new worksheet. When you're finished, click OK.

18. Congratulations! You've just imported a delimited file:



The screenshot shows the Microsoft Excel 2003 interface. The spreadsheet has two columns, A and B. Column A contains a list of library sources, and column B contains the corresponding number of clickthroughs for each source. The data is as follows:

| | A | B |
|---|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | Target | Clickthroughs 2008-12 |
| 2 | Total: | 20893 |
| 3 | LOCAL_CATALOG_EXLIBRIS_VOYAGER | 3133 |
| 4 | DOCDEL_ILLIAD | 1862 |
| 5 | ELSEVIER_SD_ELSEVIER | 1202 |
| 6 | SYNERGY_BLACKWELL_PREMIUM | 1107 |
| 7 | SAGE_COMPLETE | 1049 |
| 8 | PROQUEST_RESEARCH_LIBRARY | 983 |

19. Don't forget to save your new spreadsheet before you begin manipulating it.