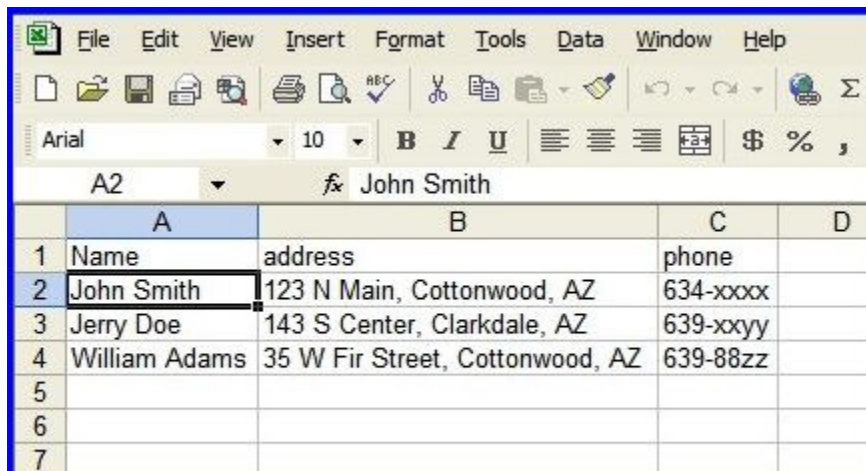


Sometimes when beginning spreadsheet users set up a database (names & addresses for example) they do not split the fields into the desired separation for future sorting. See Figure 1.



The screenshot shows a spreadsheet with the following data:

	A	B	C	D
1	Name	address	phone	
2	John Smith	123 N Main, Cottonwood, AZ	634-xxxx	
3	Jerry Doe	143 S Center, Clarkdale, AZ	639-xyyy	
4	William Adams	35 W Fir Street, Cottonwood, AZ	639-88zz	
5				
6				
7				

Figure 1

Here both first and last name are in the same column (field) and the street address, city and state are in the same column.

This arrangement prevents sorting by last name, by city, by street or state.

But the thought of redoing a large database file seems overwhelming and they just live with the file or forget it.

But if your spreadsheet program is Excel, you can fix these problems with some simple steps.

First look at the names in the example, they are separated by a 'space'. The addresses have spaces, but the main parts are separated by a 'comma'. Because of this uniform separation, the task is simple. (If the separation was not uniform, you may have to repeat some steps to complete the tasks.)

We will start with the names. First we need a blank column between column A and column B to accept the last name. (If you had used a middle name, or initial, you would need to add two blank columns between A and B, one for the middle name and one for the last name.) Note: Hyphenated last names like Jones-Smith are handled as a single name.

To add a single column between A and B, select column B and go to the menu "Insert" and choose "Columns". See Figure 2. Note: To add two columns, you would highlight two columns (B and C) before choosing the INSERT – COLUMN command.

The result is a new blank column inserted just ahead of the column that you selected. See Figure 2 on the next page.

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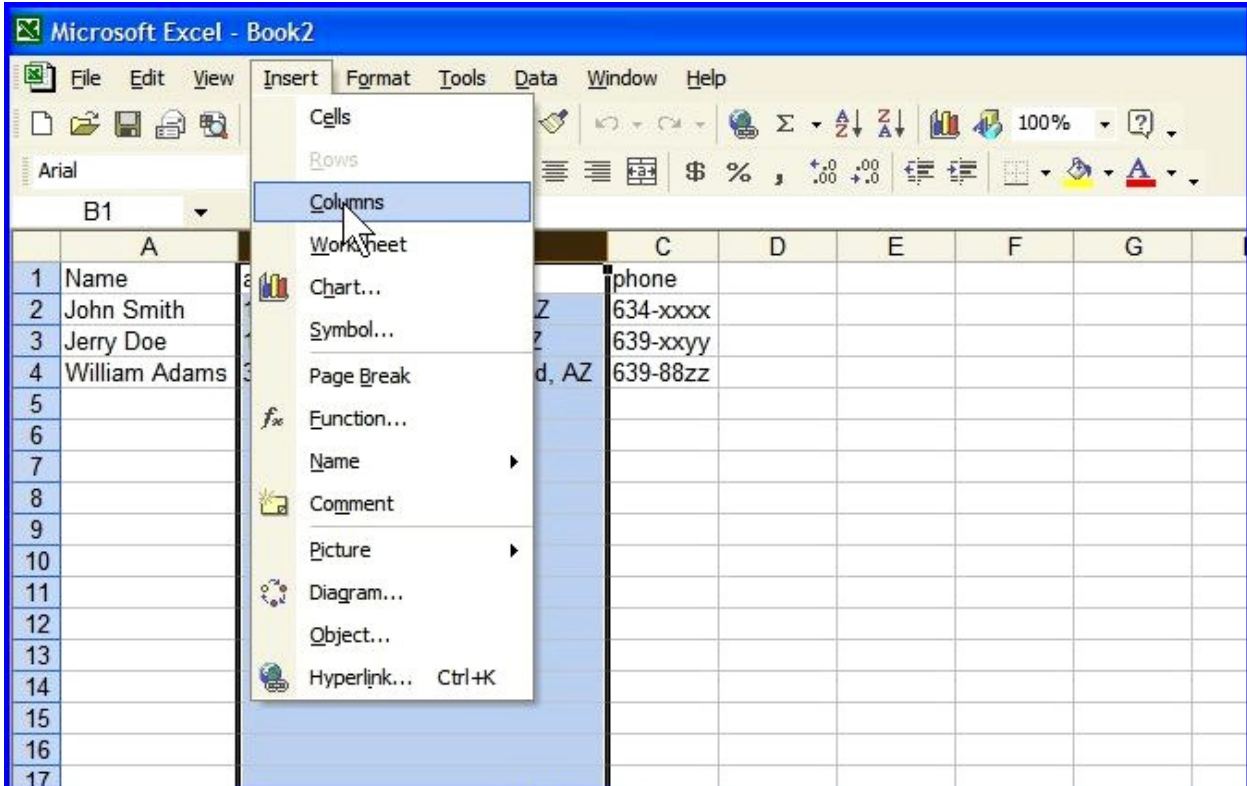


Figure 2

Now with the required number of blank columns to split the “Name”, are available as seen in Figure 3

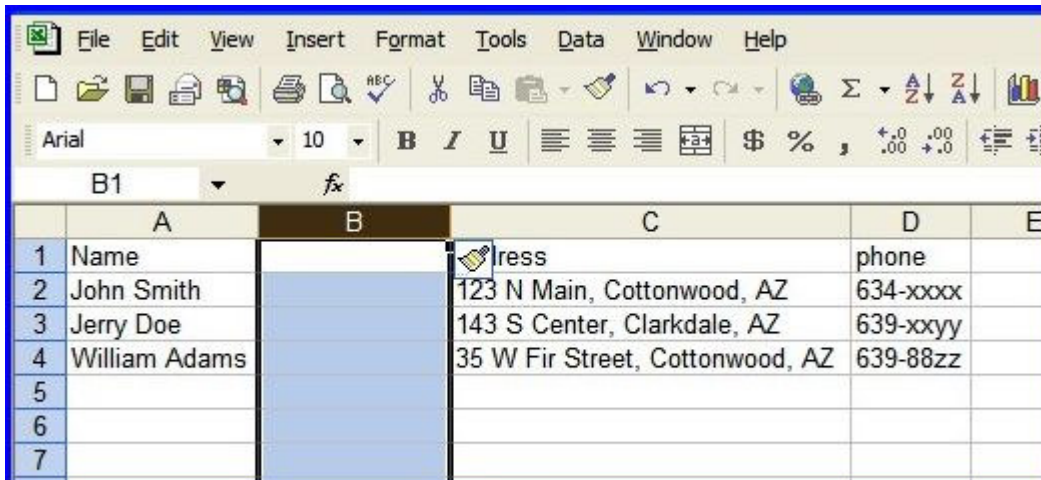


Figure 3

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Now select all of the names in column A, see Figure 4 and go to the menu item “Data” and select the option for “Text to Columns”. Note: John Smith was selected even though it does not appear colored in.

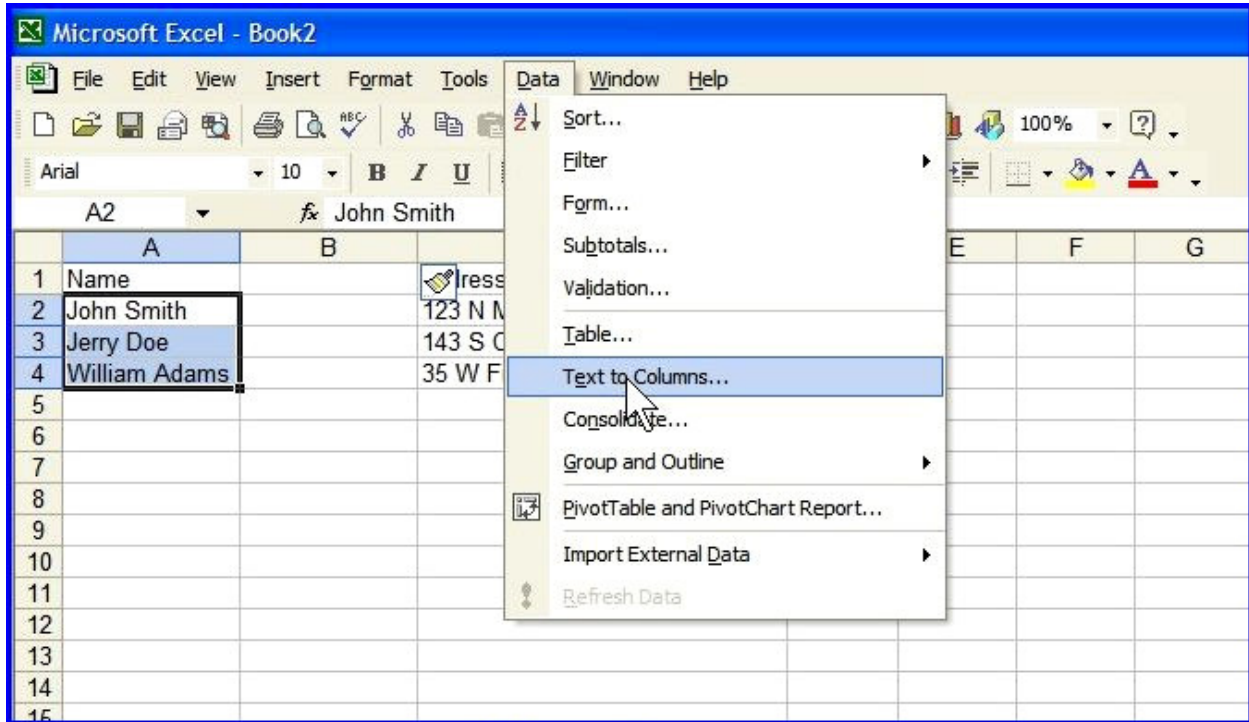


Figure 4

The dialog box shown in Figure 5 will come up.

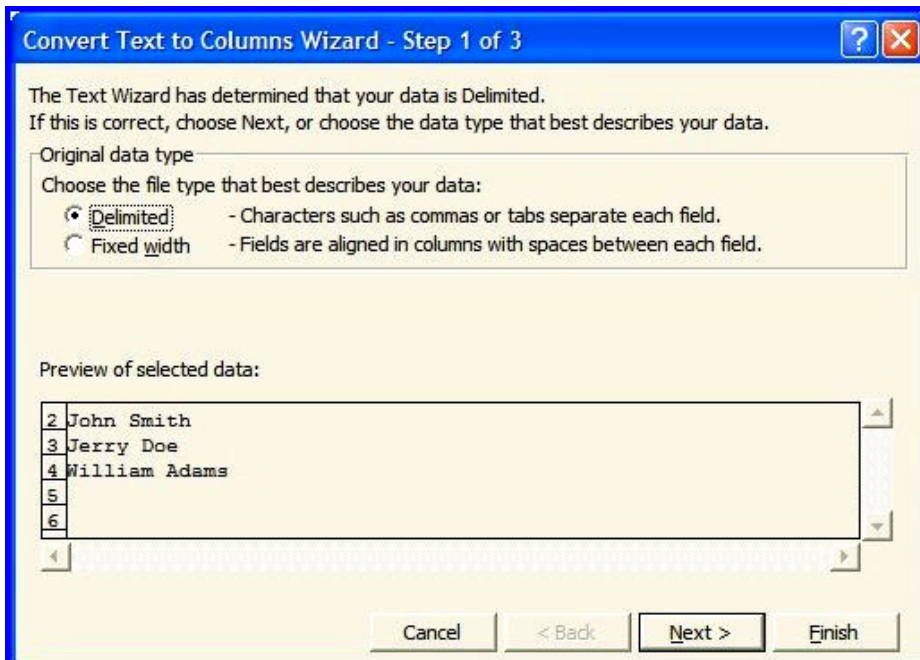
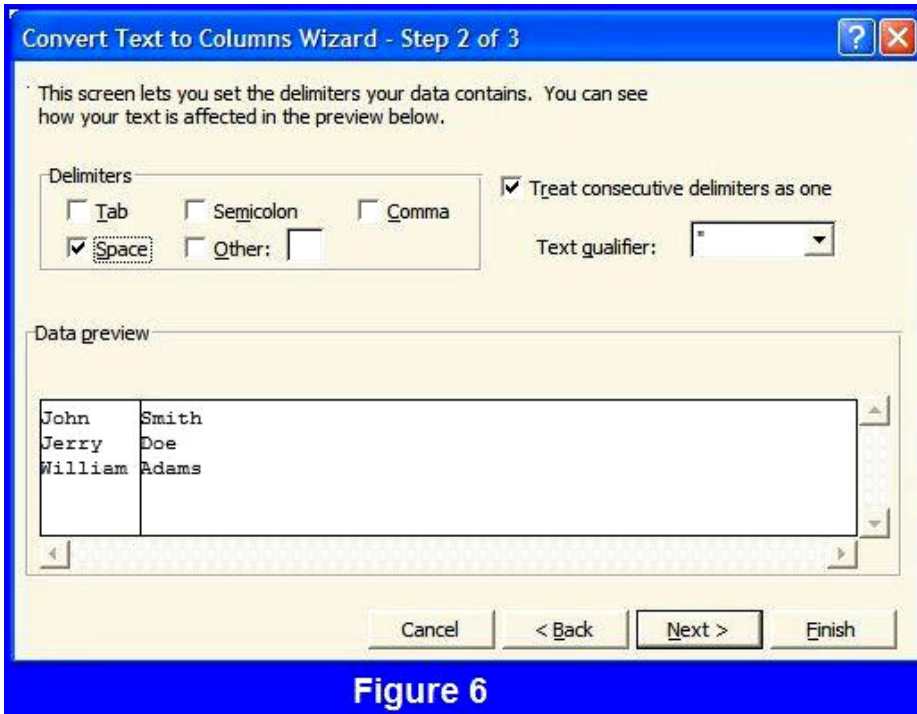


Figure 5

Because our data is separated (Delimited) by the space character, we will choose the first file type option.

Then on to the “Next” button.

The next dialog box to appear is shown in Figure 6.



Here we select the “space” as our Delimiter.

Note the option to treat consecutive delimiters as one helps if you had both a space and a comma in the data.

Note the proposed separation is shown. If this is what you want, go to Next.

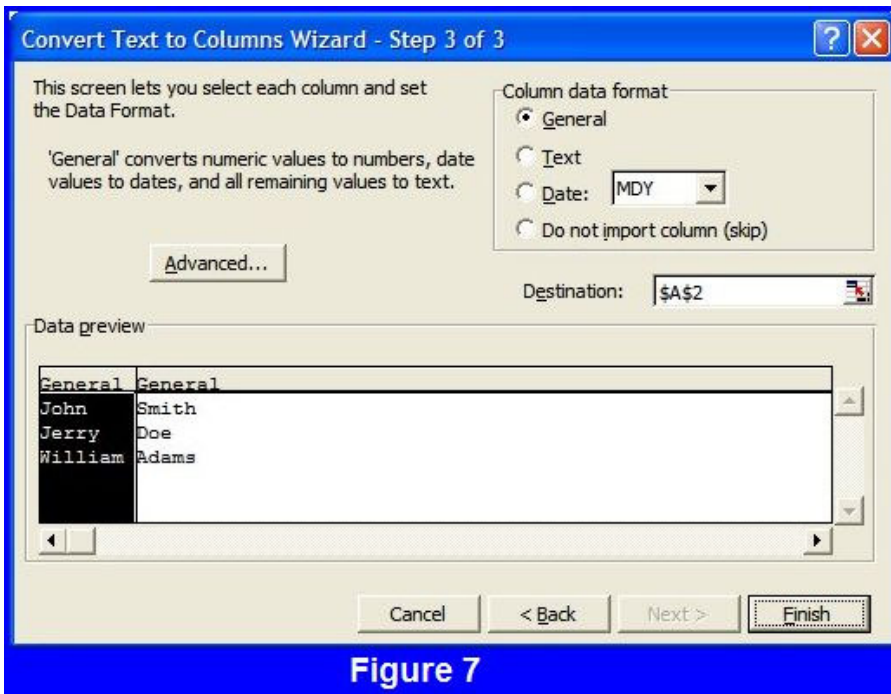


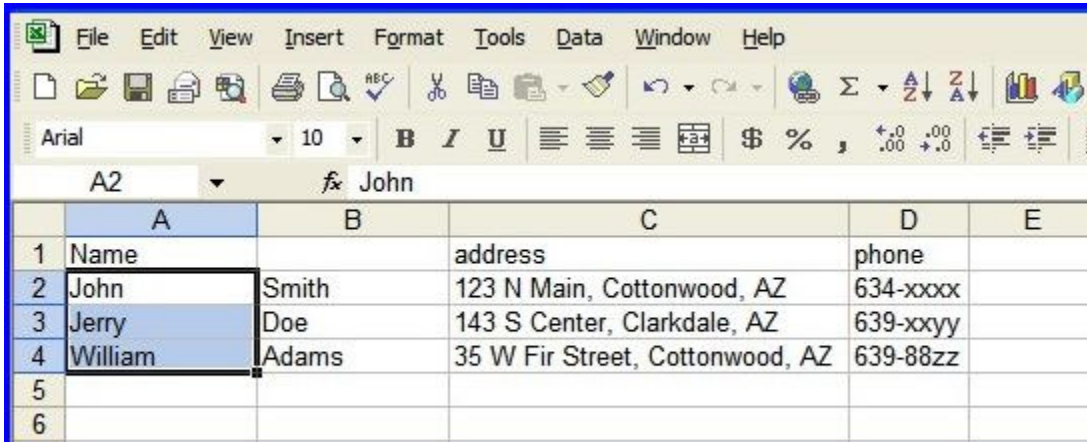
Figure 7 shows the final dialog box. The General format is normally the best choice. But if you had numbers, or dates, you select the column you want to change and then make your format changes.

What is the “Do not import column (skip)” for?

Say you edited a set of names that included middle names and you no longer wanted the

middle names. You could select that column and skip it so that you only ended up with first and last names.

With the click on the “Finish” button you get the results shown in Figure 8.

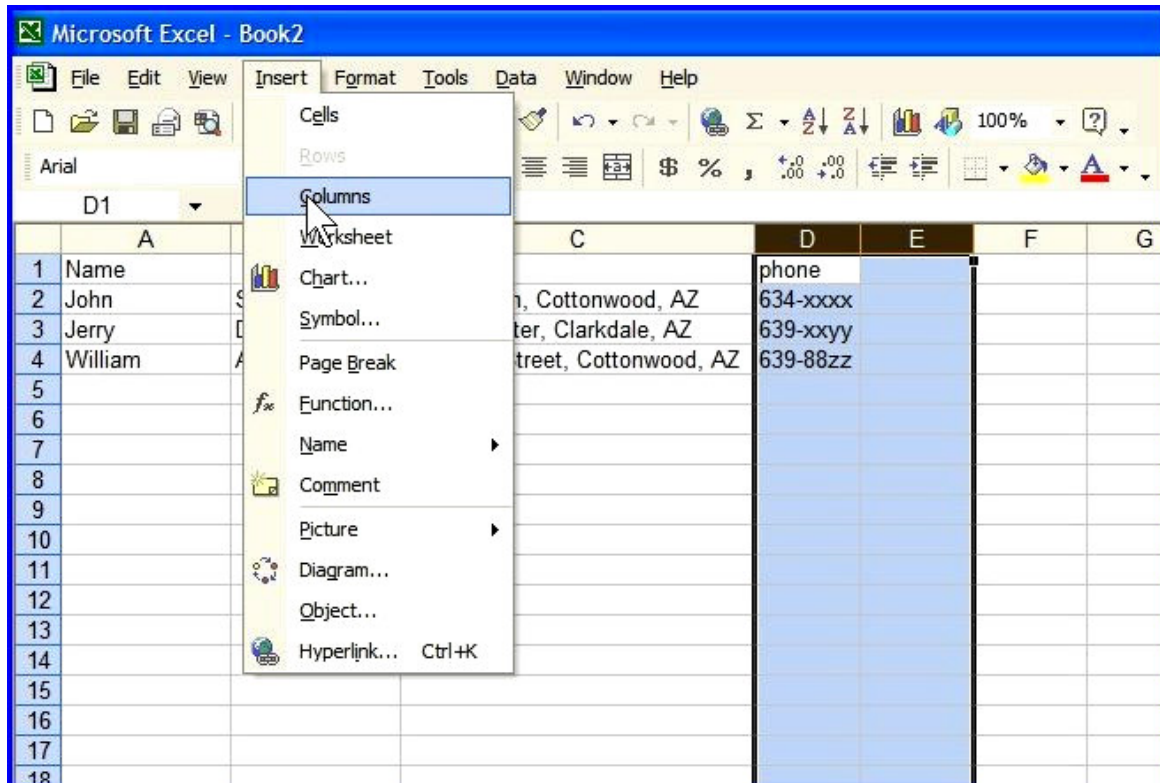


	A	B	C	D	E
1	Name		address	phone	
2	John	Smith	123 N Main, Cottonwood, AZ	634-xxxx	
3	Jerry	Doe	143 S Center, Clarkdale, AZ	639-xyyy	
4	William	Adams	35 W Fir Street, Cottonwood, AZ	639-88zz	
5					
6					

Figure 8

Now let's tackle the address column. Note that here we need two new blank columns, one for city and one for state (yes I forgot the zip code). Also a reminder, the delimiter here is the comma as I do not want to separate the parts of the street address.

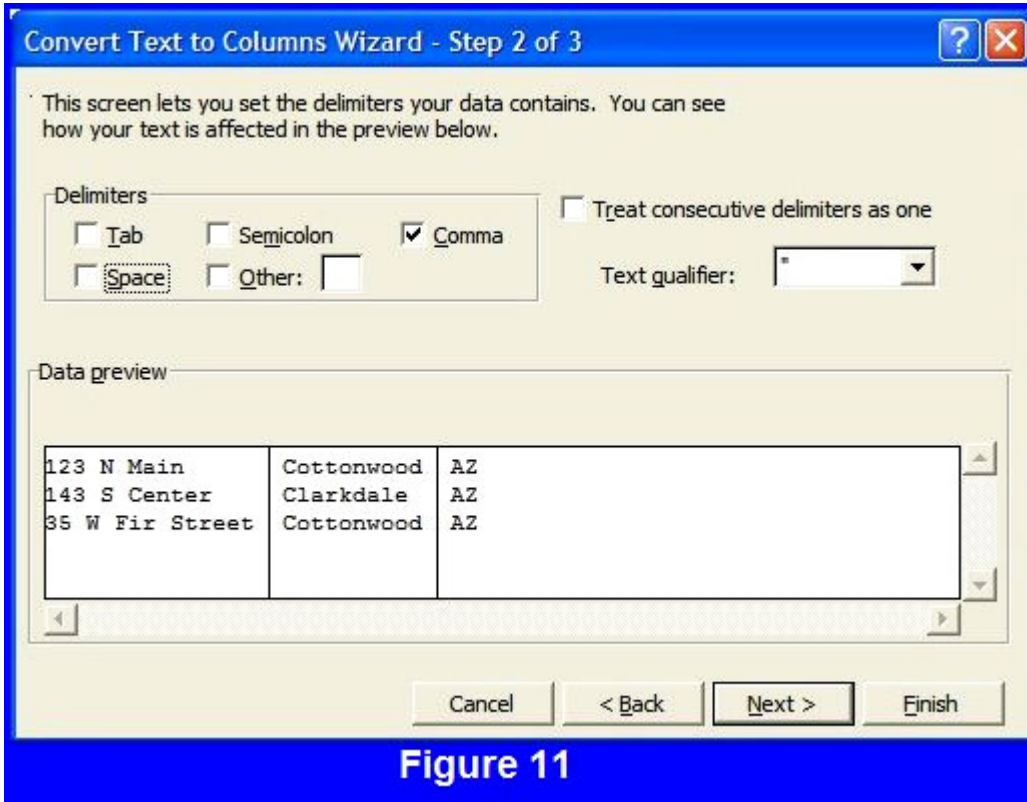
Here I selected two column right after column C. Then went to the Insert menu and chose Columns.



	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	Name			phone			
2	John		, Cottonwood, AZ	634-xxxx			
3	Jerry		ter, Clarkdale, AZ	639-xyyy			
4	William		treet, Cottonwood, AZ	639-88zz			
5							
6							
7							
8							
9							
10							
11							
12							
13							
14							
15							
16							
17							
18							

Figure 9

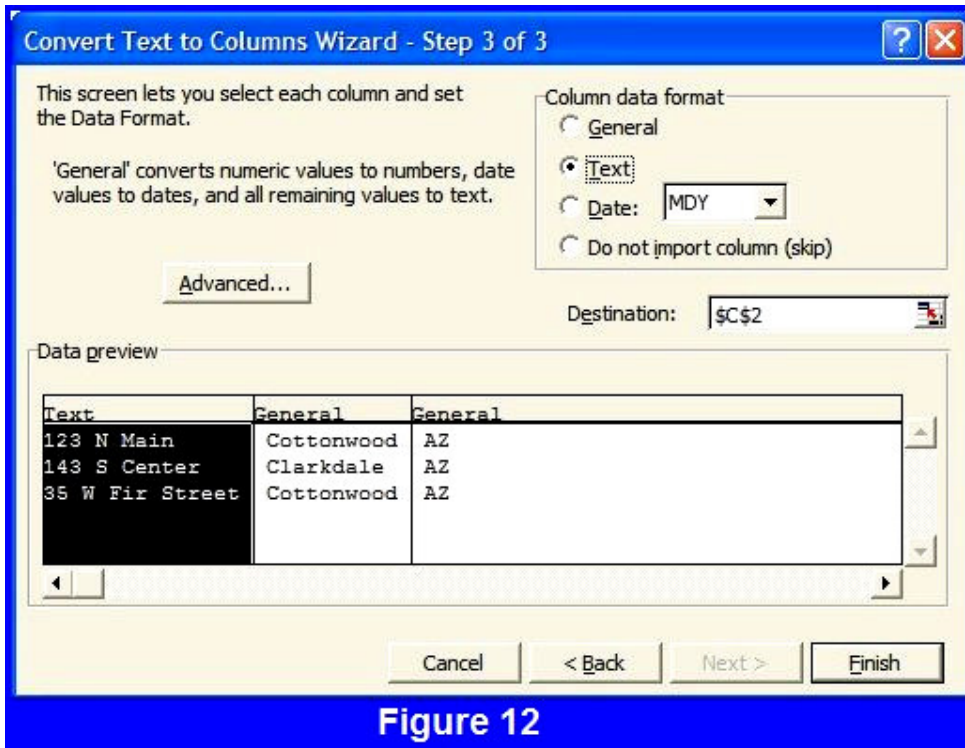
I then selected all of the addresses in column C and went to the “data” menu and picked “Text to column” again. (Very much like I did in figures 4 & 5.)



The result is the dialog box shown in Figure 11.

Now I chose the “Comma” as the delimiter and go to “Next”

The next dialog box is:

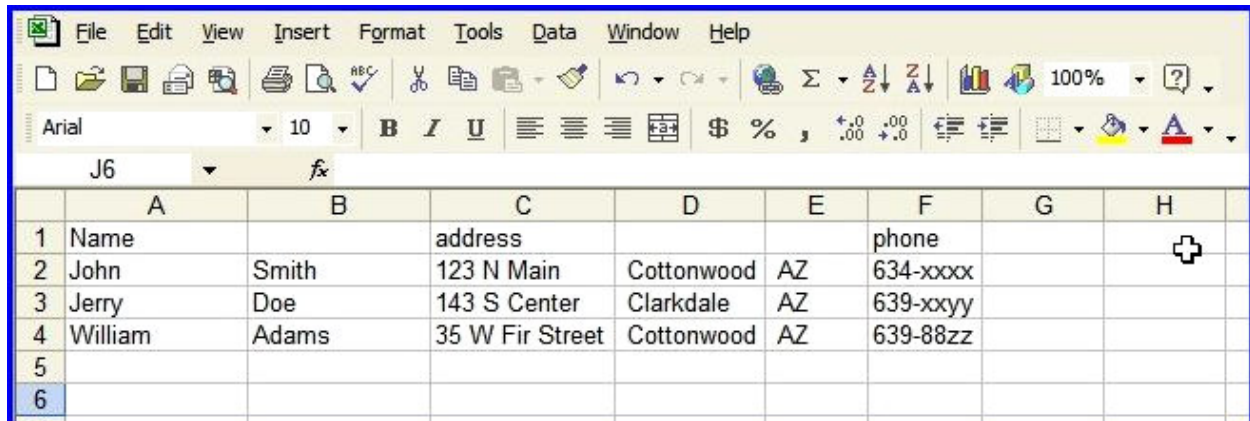


Note here that I selected the first column and made it “Text” format.

I don't want Excel to think the numbers should be used in any equations.

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Now we press the “Finish” button and get the results shown in Figure 13.



The screenshot shows a spreadsheet application window with a menu bar (File, Edit, View, Insert, Format, Tools, Data, Window, Help) and a toolbar. The spreadsheet grid has columns A through H and rows 1 through 7. The data is as follows:

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	Name		address			phone		
2	John	Smith	123 N Main	Cottonwood	AZ	634-xxxx		
3	Jerry	Doe	143 S Center	Clarkdale	AZ	639-xyyy		
4	William	Adams	35 W Fir Street	Cottonwood	AZ	639-88zz		
5								
6								
7								

Figure 13

Now if you change the column headers in Row 1 you have your conversion completed.

I have also discovered how to use equations to convert all the text to either all upper case (JOHN SMITH) or all lower case (john smith) or just first letters capitalized (John Smith). I will be writing another technical note on that later. All Upper Case does come in handy for name tags etc. while the other options can just be used to clean up a database.