

FOSE1025 — Scientific Computing

Week 7 Lecture 1: Cleaning Data

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Programme

1 Cleaning Text Data in Excel

2 Cleaning Data in MATLAB

Reading

- LinkedIn Learning — Excel 2016: Cleaning up Your Data
<https://www.linkedin.com/learning/excel-2016-cleaning-up-your-data>
- MATLAB Characters and Strings
<https://au.mathworks.com/help/matlab/characters-and-strings.html>
- MATLAB for Data Processing and Visualization: Preprocessing Data
<https://matlabacademy.mathworks.com/R2020a/portal.html?course=>

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Text as Unstructured Data

- Much of the information you find is input in text.
- People can understand text very easily ...
- ... but not machines!
- Text is often called a kind of **unstructured data**.
- Excel and MATLAB can help find structure from text.



Some Useful Text Functions

CH-05.xlsx From <https://www.linkedin.com/learning/excel-2016-cleaning-up-your-data/use-text-functions>

Name	Description
LOWER PROPER UPPER	Converts all text to lowercase Capitalizes only letters than start the entry or follow a space or punctuation Converts all text to uppercase
REPLACE SUBSTITUTE REPT	Replaces characters within text, based on content, not on character position Replaces characters within text, based on character position, not on content Repeats text a given number of times
LEFT MID RIGHT	Returns the leftmost characters from a text value Returns a specific number of characters from a text string starting at the position you specify Returns the rightmost characters from a text value
FIND SEARCH EXACT	Finds one text value within another (case-sensitive) Finds one text value within another (not case-sensitive) Checks to see if two text values are identical
LEN TEXT VALUE	Returns the number of characters in a text string Formats a number and converts it to text Converts a text argument to a number
CLEAN TRIM	Removes all nonprintable characters from text Removes spaces from text
CONCATENATE CONCAT DOLLAR FIXED TEXTJOIN	Joins several text items into a cell (on older Excel versions) Joins several text items into a cell (on newer Excel versions) Converts a number to text, using the \$ (dollar) currency format Formats a number as text with a fixed number of decimals Joins several text items into a cell using a delimiter

Concatenating Text

Several ways to concatenate text:

- Using the `&` operator

```
=A1 & " " & B1
```

- CONCAT (in Excel versions from 2016, Mobile, Web)

```
=CONCAT(" Stream population for ", A2, " ",  
        A3, " is ", A4, "/mile.")
```

```
=CONCAT(B2:C8)
```

- CONCATENATE (in older Excel versions)
- TEXTJOIN (in Excel versions from 2019, Web — joins text using a text delimiter)

```
=TEXTJOIN(" ", TRUE, "The", "sun", "will", "come"  
        "up", "tomorrow.")
```

```
=TEXTJOIN(", ", TRUE, A2:A8)
```

Parsing Text Using Text to Columns Feature

- Some columns have complex text that needs to be parsed.
- Excel can parse the text of a column and split it into several columns.
- It's a bit like when you import a text file.

CH-05.xlsx; watch the video <https://www.linkedin.com/learning/excel-2016-cleaning-up-your-data/split-data-into-columns-with-the-text-to-columns-feature>

	D	E	F	G
1	Contact			City, State Zip
2	Baker, Mark			Boulder, CO 80304
3	Hansen, Sheila R.			Kenton, OH 43326
4	Fier, Marilyn			Indianapolis, IN 49875
5	Morris, Mark T.			Bardstown, KY 40004
6	Björling, Jussi			Nyack, NY 10348
7	Long, Ryan L.			Arvada, CO 80002
8	Fitzgerald, Jackie			Wheat Ridge, CO 80033
9	Muti, Riccardo			Pueblo, CO 81008
10	Tidwell, Liesl			Cupertino, CA 94014
11	Eaton, Jeffrey			Westminster, CO 80234
12	Chambers, Karen Q.			Cincinnati, OH 45220
13	Perez, Barney			Walnut Creek, CA 94596
14	Watanuki, Cathy M.			Lincoln, NE 68621
15	Porter, George			San Francisco, CA 94111

The Magic of Flash Fill

- Flash Fill is one of Excel's most powerful and least known features.
- Uses AI techniques to try to predict how you want to parse the text.
- Looks like magic, and sometimes might not work for your task.

CH-05.xlsx; watch the video <https://www.linkedin.com/learning/excel-2016-cleaning-up-your-data/use-flash-fill-for-faster-combining-and-splitting>

	A	B	C
1	Contact		
2	AMY RYAN	Ryan, Amy	
3	MAX WAGNER	Wagner, Max	
4	JACKIE FITZGERALD	Fitzgerald, Jackie	
5	SHEILA HANSEN	Hansen, Sheila	
6	MARY TODD-JONES	Jones, Mary	
7	ERIC O'BRIEN	O'brien, Eric	
8	AMY TIDWELL	Tidwell, Amy	
9	ID McDONALD	McDonald, In	

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MATLAB's text functions

<https://au.mathworks.com/help/matlab/characters-and-strings.html>

- MATLAB has two main types for text:
 - Character array — in older versions of MATLAB.
 - String array — more powerful, available since 2016.

Character or string?

- Current versions of MATLAB provide both types but you normally want to work with string arrays only.
- To find out the type of each column (among other things), use **summary**.

Setting the Type in a Table Column

Examples in this slide use the file `mlb_players.csv`

- A common problem with MATLAB (and Excel) is that the default settings when reading a CSV file might not be correct.
 - For example, `readtable` by default may store text as a character array, not a string array.
- If we use MATLAB's import tool we can specify the data type (see lecture week 6).
 - Check how the generated script defines options to the `readtable` function.
- We can also change the data type *after* the table has been created.

```
mlb.Team = categorical(mlb.Team);  
mlb.Name = string(mlb.Name);
```

<https://au.mathworks.com/help/matlab/data-type-conversion.html>

Filtering Data in an Array

- MATLAB can identify what values meet a particular condition.
- For example, to find what elements in an array "ages" are larger than 10:

```
>> ages = [1 2 5 34 2 32];  
>> ages > 10  
ans =  
    1x6 logical array  
    0    0    0    1    0    1
```

- The result is a filter represented as a **logical array**: each element is either 0 ("false") or 1 ("true").
- We can now select all elements whose corresponding logical array indicates true.

```
>> ages(ages > 10)  
ans =  
    34    32
```

Filtering Data in a Table

Examples in this slide use the file `trees.csv`

- The same process can be used to remove rows that have columns with some criteria.

```
>> trees.Girth_in_ > 15
ans =
    31x1 logical array
    0 0 0 ... 1 1 1
>> wide_trees = trees(trees.Girth_in_ > 15, :)
```

- We can combine multiple filters by using Boolean operators.
- Can you tell what's the output of the following?

```
>> trees = readtable("trees.csv");
>> filtera = trees.Girth_in_ > 10;
>> filterb = trees.Girth_in_ < 15;
>> filterc = trees.Height_ft_ > 70;
>> result = trees(filtera & filterb | filterc, :)
```

Working with Missing Data

- Sometimes, data in some cells are missing.
- In MATLAB, these are indicated with:
 - `NaN` in numerical data.
 - `NaT` in date-time data.
 - `undefined` in categorical data.
- You can do several things with rows that contain NaN.
 - 1 Ignore the missing data and carry on (almost) as normal.
 - 2 **Data filtering**: Remove rows with NaN values.
 - 3 **Data imputation**: Replace NaN cells with guessed values (this is the topic for another unit).

Using Columns with Missing Data

Examples in this slide use file `hurricanedata1990s.csv`

(<https://matlabacademy.mathworks.com/R2020a/portal.html?course=mlvi#chapter=2&lesson=2>)

- Most MATLAB functions generate NaN if one of its inputs contains NaN.

```
avgWS = mean(data.Windspeed)
```

- Some MATLAB functions have an option that allow us to operate with columns that contain missing values.

```
avgP = mean(data.Pressure , "omitnan")
```

Removing Rows with Missing Data

Look at the script [W07HurricaneMissingData.mlx](#)

- If few rows have columns with missing data we can remove them.
- MATLAB's `rmmissing` function can remove these rows.
- Sometimes, missing data are represented with unconventional terms, e.g. the string "N/A".
- MATLAB's `standardizeMissing` can mark these as missing data.

```
data = standardizeMissing(data, 'N/A')  
data = rmmissing(data)
```


Take-home Messages

Excel

- Fixing problems from manual data input.
- Importing text.
- Text to columns feature.
- Flash Fill.

MATLAB

- Changing data types.
- Text functions.
- Filtering data.
- Removing missing data.

What's Next

- Friday 11 September: Communicator hurdle
- Mid-semester break 14-25 September
- Week 8 lecture: Transforming Data