Import data dynamically

As you've learned, you can import data from some data sources, like .csv files into a Google spreadsheet from the **File** menu. Keep in mind that, when you use this method, data that is updated in the .csv will not automatically be updated in the Google Sheet. Instead, it will need to be manually—and continually —updated in the Google Sheet. In some situations, such as when you want to be able to keep track of changes you've made, this method is ideal. In other situations, you might need to keep the data the same in both places, and using data that doesn't update automatically can be time-consuming and tedious. Further, trying to maintain the same dataset in multiple places can cause errors later on.

Fortunately, there are tools to help you automate data imports so you don't need to continually update the data in your current spreadsheet. Take a small general store as an example. The store has three cash registers handled by three clerks. At the end of each day, the owner wants to determine the total sales and the amount of cash in each register. Each clerk is responsible for counting their money and entering their sales total into a spreadsheet. The owner has the spreadsheets set up to import each clerks' data into another spreadsheet, where it automates and calculates the total sales for all three registers. Without this automation, each clerk would have to take turns entering their data into the owner's spreadsheet. This is an example of a dynamic method of importing data, which saves the owner and clerks time and energy. When data is dynamic, it is interactive and automatically changes and updates over time.