Preparing the Post Card Recipient List

Downloading the Contacts List

Login in to www.nefamilyhistory.com with your admin password. From the main administrator's page, click on the green number next to the word Contacts.



You will see the following list of all the people who have ever attended the conference.



From the "Select an action..." menu, click on "Download CSV", this will send the list to a file on your own compuer that you can open in MS Excel.



Saving/Opening the list in Excel

Different operating systems handle the next step differently. In Windows 7 I get a gold bar along the bottom of my screen "asking" if I want to open the file or save it. I choose "Save" because I want to choose a place for the file to "live" on my computer so I can find it again later. I same all my files related to the conference in a sub-folder under my My Documents folder called "Family History Conference". Under that sub-folder I have sub-sub-folders for each year of the conference. So this file will be stored in the 2012 folder. I named the file it *postcard addresses.xls*

My Documents

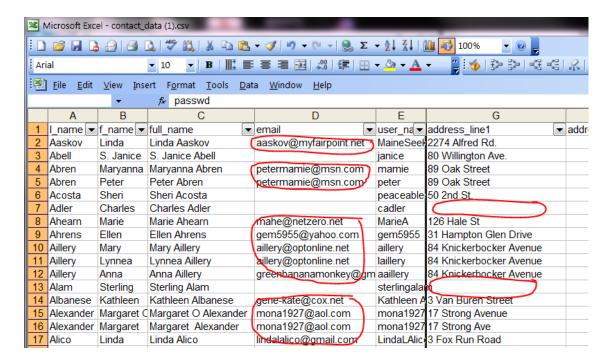
Family History Conference 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012

postcard addresses.xls

I open the file in Excel by double clicking on it and now I am ready to cleanup the file for the merge.

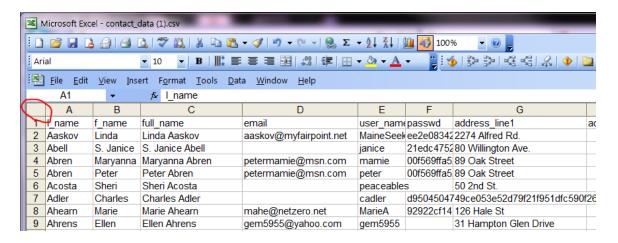
Selecting just the Post Card people

We want to reach those who do not have email addresses, so we want only those rows in our list that have a blank email address in our list. In order for the post office to deliver the post card we need to make sure that the address we were given is complete enough for delivery. A completed "Address Line 1" is usually an indicator of a good address so we will also filter out those that have a blank "Address Line 1" field. (The password field has encrypted data that overlaps with the Address Line 1 field, I have hidden it in the next picture.

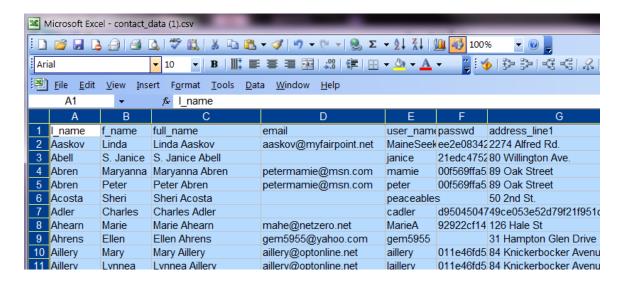


Filtering the list in Excel

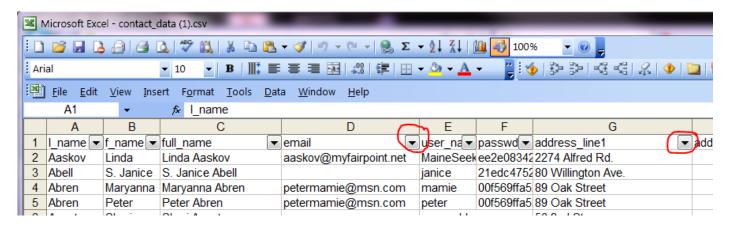
Select the entire spreadsheet contents but clicking on the top left most pinkish/cream colored square.



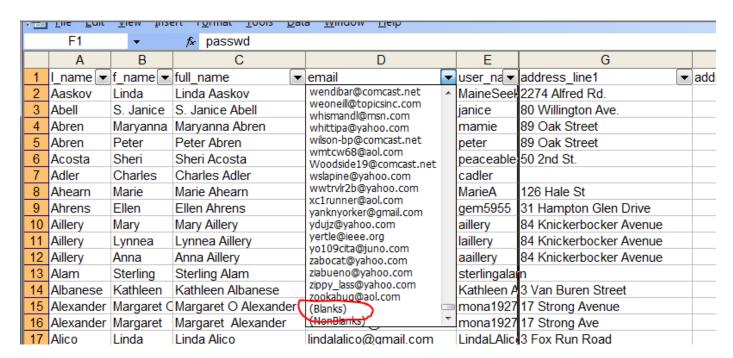
Once you have clicked all the data will be highlighted in blue and will look like this



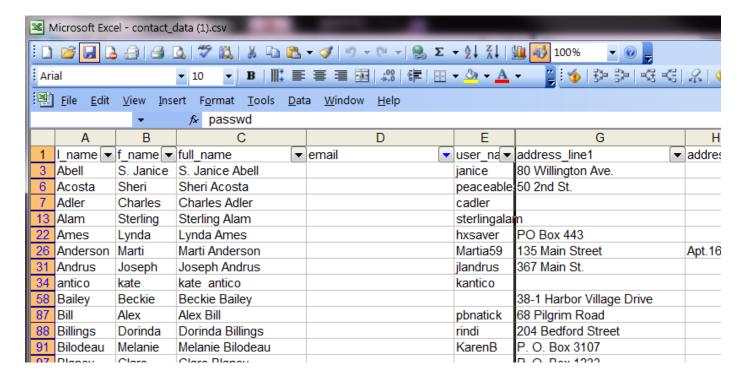
Now for the filtering part, click on the Data menu and select "Filter" and "AutoFilter" (there should be a check mark in the orange box next to the "Auto Filter" menu item in the sub-menu.). Now you will see little drop down arrows next to each column header.



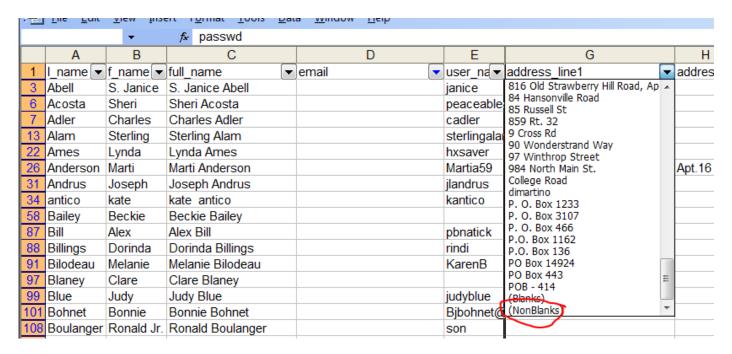
To filter out all the email address, click on the drop down arrow on the email column header and scroll down to the bottom of the list and click on "Blanks"



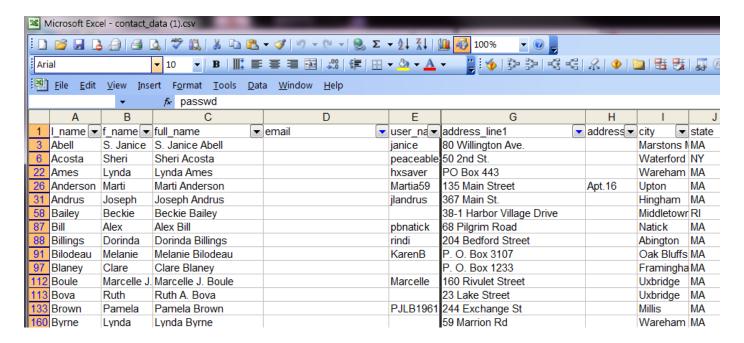
Now your list will look like this. Now we have a list that does not have anyone on it who has an email address. We still need to clean up the Address Line 1 data.



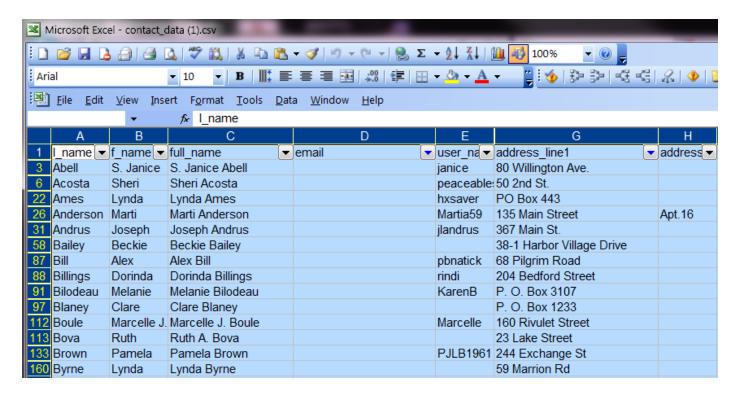
Do the same thing for the Address Line 1 field and "filter" out the address line one fields that are blank. Click on the drop down list arrow next to the Address Line 1 header, scroll down to the bottom of the list and select "Non-blanks"



Now your list will look like this. No one has an email address and everyone has an Address Line 1.

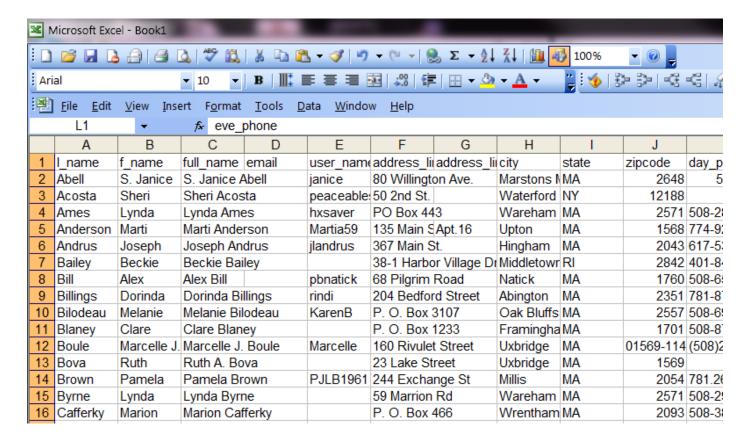


The filtered out rows are still there they are just hidden. To get rid of them, cut and past the whole list into a new file. Click on the pinkish/beige button in the upper right corner to select all the records. All records will show as highlighted in blue.

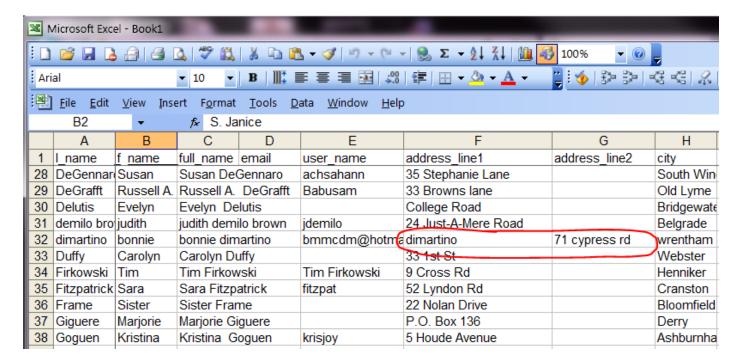


Copy the filtered data to a new file

Now copy the rows from this page, from the "Edit" menu, select "Copy". The data has now been saved to your "past buffer", a temporary storage area in your computer. To open a new file, click on the "File" menu and select "New", now go to the right side of your screen and select "Blank Workbook". You have a new file. Click in the top right most field of the new file and paste the data into the new file, from the "Edit" menu, select "Paste".



Our file now has only 92 records in it because we have filtered out all the records that we didn't need. Now you can scan the data to see if there are any other things that you want to fix. In the example below the person typed their last name in the "Address Line 1" field and their street address in the "Address Line 2" field. This postcard would get there so use your judgment on how many you fix.



Zipcodes with Leading 0's

When Excel sees a number it drops leading zeros and left justifies it – the norm for accounting purposes. This is not good for Zipcodes with leading zipcodes. To fix this do the following:

Insert a new column next to the zip code column.

RIGHT click on the "L" above the word day_phone to the right of the zipcode column. You will see a menu called a context menu. LEFT click on the word "Insert" and a new empty column will have been added next to the zipcode column. To the right of the first cell next to the zipcode type the following formula

=IF(LEN(J2) =4,CONCATENATE("0",J2),J2)

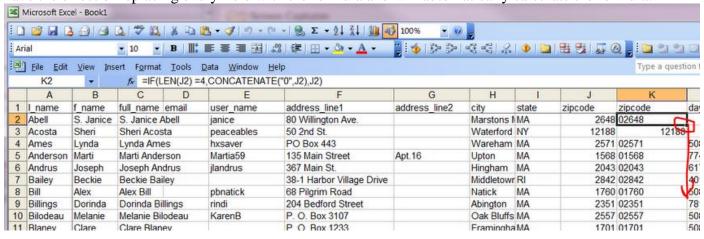
What does the formula mean?

If the length of the zipcode field (the J2 – column J, Row 2 - indicates the specific data being inspected) is equal to 4 digits IF(LEN(J2) = 4,

add a "0" to the front of the zipcode CONCATENATE("0",J2, otherwise just use what is already there ,J2.

Copy the formula all the way down the page.

Left click in the field to select it, then left click on the little black square in the lower right corner of the field and while holding down the left mouse button drag the field down to the very bottom of the list. This will have the effect of replacing every field with the formula and will automatically calculate the formula.



Overwrite the original zipcode field with the fixed zipcodes

Right click on the "K" above the column you just created and select (Left Click) "Copy" from the context menu. Right click on the "J" above the original zipcode column and select "Paste Special". Click on the check box next to the word Values (third option from the top left).

Delete the extra zipcolde column containing the formula

Now you can get rid of the formula column. Right click on the "K" above the second zipcode column and select "Delete".

Excel Worksheets

Just one more note, a single Excel spreadsheet can have multiple worksheets. For display purposes they are layered on top of one another. At the bottom left corner of your file you will see three little tabs, "Sheet1" "Sheet2" and "Sheet3". The work you have done is on "Sheet1". If you click on Sheet 2, you will see a blank page, click back to Sheet 1 to see your work. Remember this because you will need it when you are doing the merge.



Save the File

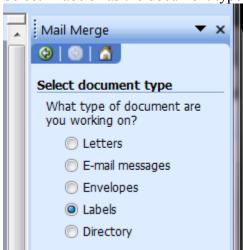
Now go to the File menu and Save your file.

Performing the Merge

Open new blank document in MSWord. From the Tools menu, select Letters and Mailings/Mail Merge The Mail Merge pane will appear on the right side of your screen

Step 1 of 6

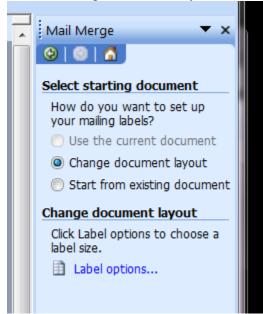
Select "Labels" as the document type.



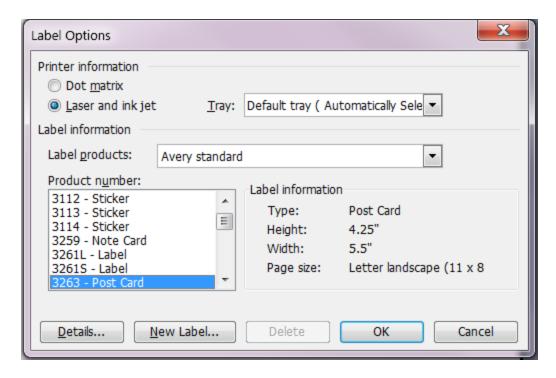
At the lower left corner, click Next: Starting document

Step 2 of 6

Leave the default, "Change document layout" as the starting document. Under "Change document layout", click on Label Options



The following windows dialog window will appear



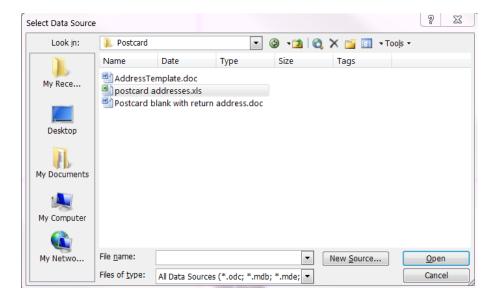
In the Product Number selection box, lower left corner of the dialog window, Scroll down to Product Number 3263 – Post Card and click OK

You will see that your blank page is now divided into 4 postcard size sections.

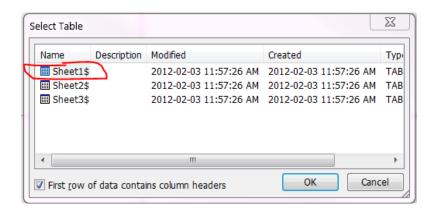
Click on Next: Select recipients

Step 3 of 6 – Select Recipients

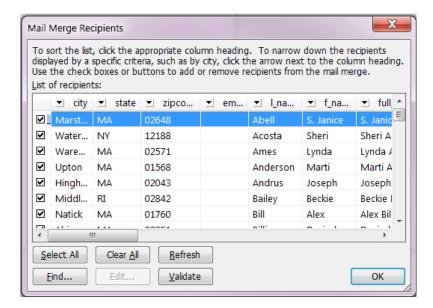
Leave "use an existing list" as the option under "Select Recipients" and click on the Browse link under "Use an existing list". Browse your computer for the location of the *postcard addresses.xls* file and click "Open".



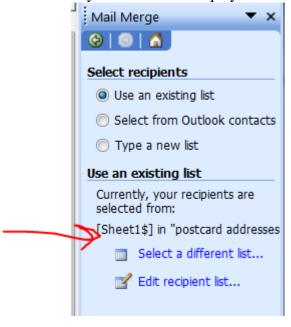
Here is where you will use your knowledge of Excel Worksheets. You are presented with a list of Excel Worksheets called "Sheet1", "Sheet2" and "Sheet3". Sheet1 is highlighted and that is the one where your work is stored so you can just click "OK"



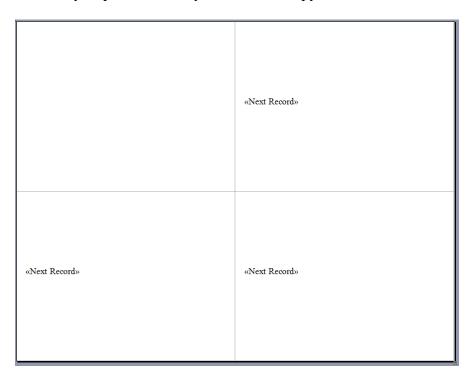
Next you will see your list of post card recipients with all of them selected. This step is really just to confirm that you have the right file. This step gives you another chance to leave out any recipients that you don't want to send to. To do this just Click in the checkbox next to the name to remove the check mark. If everything looks fine, click "OK".



The name of your file is now displayed here



Now MS Word is aware that you have a list and that your list has more than one recipient on it. So your page looks different. It knows that it is going to have something that it is going to copy many times, so it has prepared the cards after the first one to move to the "Next Record". The first card is blank, because you have not yet specified what you want it to copy.



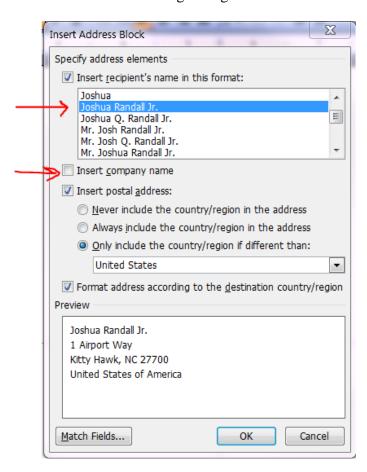
Click on Next: Arrange your labels

Step 4 of 6: Arrange Your Labels

Click on "Address Block" from the options for "Arrange Your Labels".

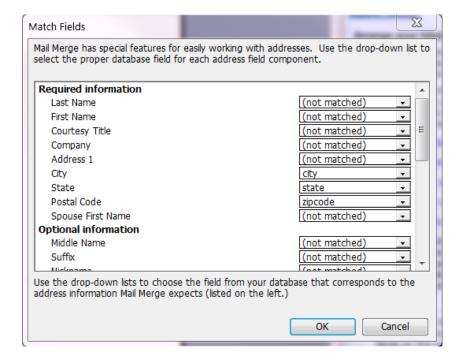


You will see the following dialog box.



Make sure your selections look like the above. You only need the simplest form of someone's name and you do not need a company name. All the addresses are within the USA.

Now click on "Match Fields" at the lower left corner of the dialog box.

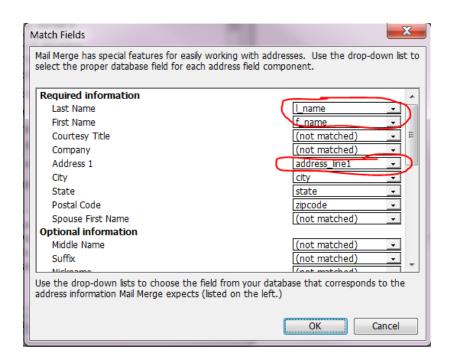


This dialog box allows you to match the names of the columns in your spreadsheet to the standard names that Microsoft Word calls them (see list on left). Notice, that on the right side of the page you see the word "city" matched to "City" on the left; "state" and "Postal Code" were also matched automatically. Some other fields that we need such as "Last Name" and "First Name" were not able to be matched automatically. You need to select the match. Click on the drop down arrow for the (not matched) field to the right of "Last Name" and select "l_name" from the drop down. Match the other fields we need as follows:

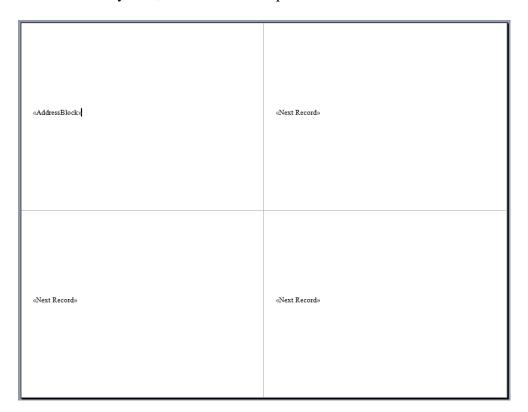
First Name f_name

Address 1 address_line_1 Address 2 address_line_2

You will need to scroll down below "Optional Information" to find "Address 2". Now click "OK" to save your matches.

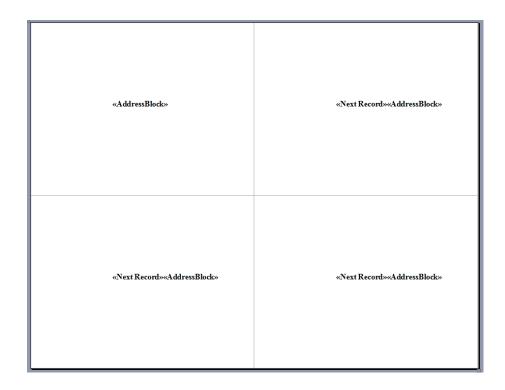


Your page will now look like this. You have indicated that you want MS Word to put the recipient's address on every card, so MS Word has put the word << Address Block>> on the first card.



Click on "Update all labels" to copy this to the other postcards. Move the words to where the address should appear on the post card and set the font to 14 Bold so that your page looks like this

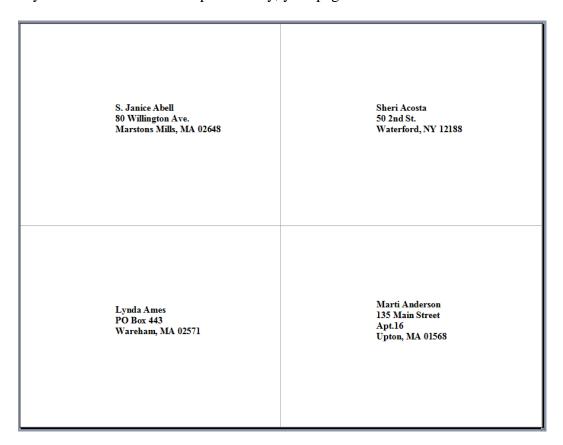




Now for the moment of truth! Click on Next: Preview your labels

Step 5: Preview Your Labels

If you followed all of the steps correctly, your page should look like this:



Here you can poke around and check individual records



If all looks good, click on Next: Complete the merge

Your list has now been merged with the postcards file. From here you can either "Print" the merged file onto your cardstock or labels immediately, or you can open a separate file containing all the labels and save it as a permanent record of the postcards that were sent "Edit Individual labels".

That is it!!