

Split Cells in Excel

To split a cell in Excel, add a new column, change the column widths and merge cells. To split the contents of a cell into multiple cells, use the Text to Columns wizard, flash fill or formulas.

♦ Split a Cell

Use the following trick to "split" a cell in Excel.

1. For example, task B starts at 13:00 and requires 2 hours to complete.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1		13:00	14:00	15:00					
2	Task A								
3	Task B								
4	Task C								
5									

Suppose task B starts at 13:30. We would like to split cell B3 and color the right half.

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2. Select column C.

	A	B	C ↓	D	E	F	G	H	I
1		13:00	14:00	15:00					
2	Task A								
3	Task B								
4	Task C								
5									

3. Right click, and then click Insert.



Result:

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1		13:00		14:00	15:00				
2	Task A								
3	Task B								
4	Task C								
5									

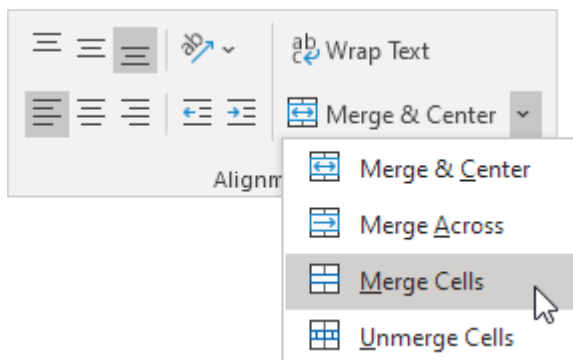
4. The default width of a column is 64 pixels. Change the width of column B and C to 32 pixels.

The image shows the Excel ribbon menu with a tooltip indicating the width of column B is 3.86 (32 pixels). The table below shows the result of this action.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1		###		14:00	15:00					
2	Task A									
3	Task B									
4	Task C									
5										

5. Select cell B1 and cell C1.

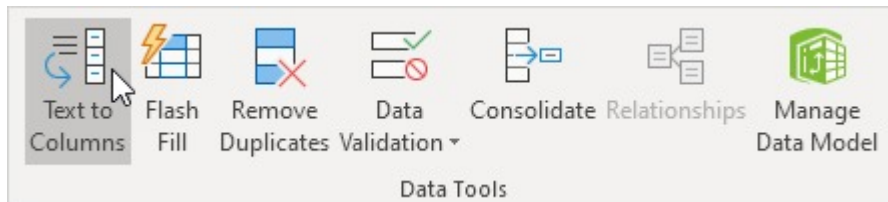
6. On the Home tab, in the Alignment group, click the down arrow next to Merge & Center and click Merge Cells.



Result:

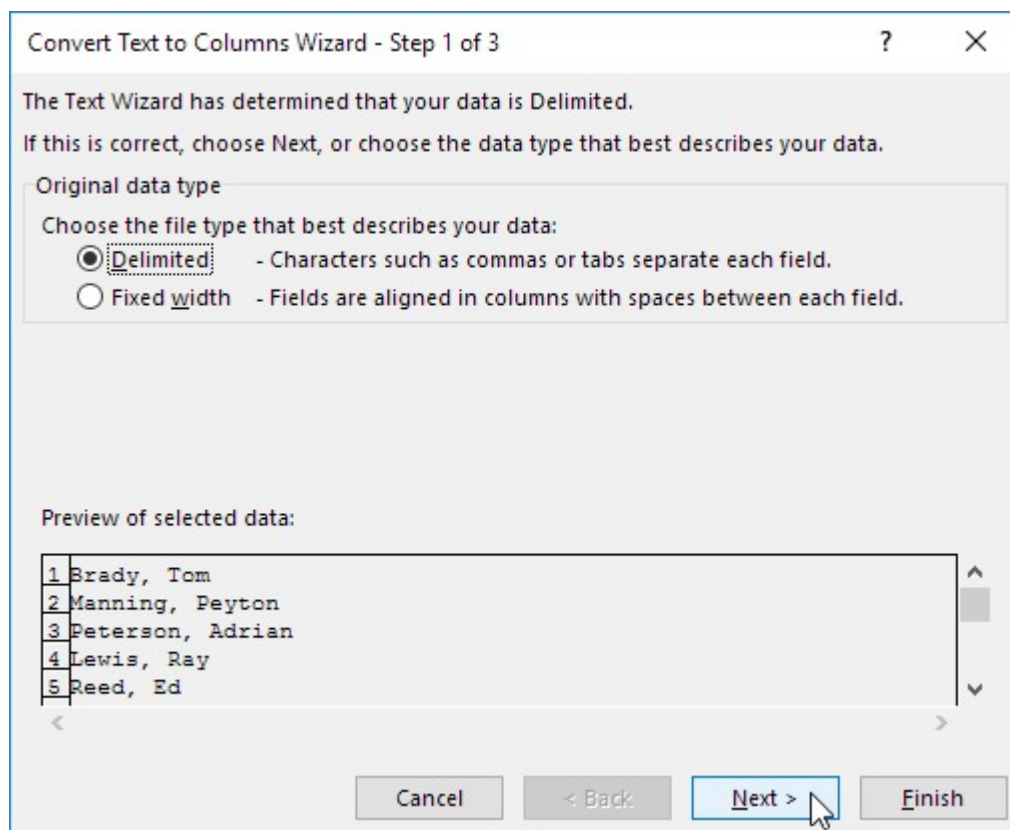
5	Reed, Ed							
6	Polamalu, Troy							
7	Johnson, Andre							
8	Revis, Darrelle							
9	Brees, Drew							
10	Peppers, Julius							
11								

2. On the Data tab, in the Data Tools group, click Text to Columns.



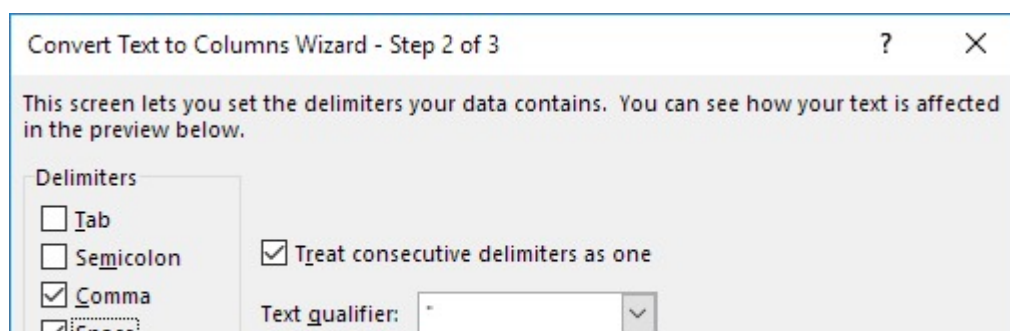
The following dialog box appears.

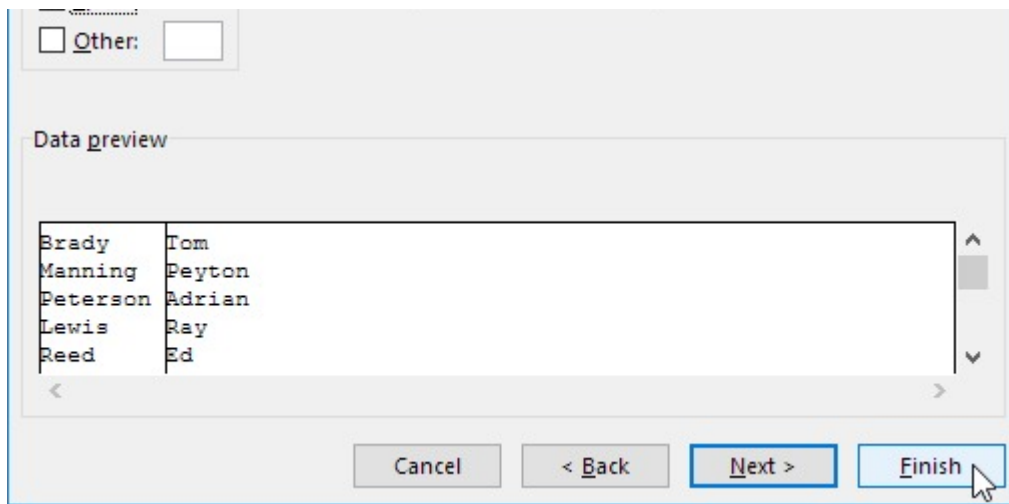
3. Choose Delimited and click Next.



4. Clear all the check boxes under Delimiters except for the Comma and Space check box.

5. Click Finish.





Result:

Note: this example has commas and spaces as delimiters. You may have other delimiters in your data. Experiment by checking and unchecking the different check boxes. You get a live preview of how your data will be separated.

◆ Flash Fill

Do you like Magic? Instead of using the Text to Columns wizard, use flash fill to quickly split data into multiple columns.

1. First, split the contents of one cell into multiple cells.

2. Select cell B1 and press CTRL + E (flash fill shortcut).

3. Select cell C1 and press CTRL + E.

4. Select cell D1 and press CTRL + E.

Note: flash fill in Excel only works when it recognizes a pattern. Download the Excel file and give it a try. Visit our page about [Flash Fill](#) to learn more about this great Excel tool.

◆ Formulas to Split Cells

One drawback when using these tools is that the output will not automatically update when the source data changes. Create formulas to overcome this limitation. Let's split full names into first and last names.

1. The formula below returns the first name.

2. The formula below returns the last name.

3. Select the range B2:C2 and drag it down.

Note: visit our page about [separating strings](#) to understand the logic behind these formulas.

4. If you have Excel 365, use the new [TEXTSPLIT function](#) to split text into rows or columns using delimiters.

Note: the TEXTSPLIT function, entered into cell B2, fills multiple cells (B2 and C2). Wow! This behavior is called [spilling](#).

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