

# How do I keep Excel from changing "yyyy" dates to "yy"?

## Q: How do I keep Excel from changing "yyyy" dates to "yy"?

### Answer

When you bring a .txt file into Excel, Excel reads the date file and converts four-digit years (e.g., 1998) to two-digit year format (e.g., 98). You can prevent this.

When you open an Excel file saved as text, the Text Import Wizard lets you make some format choices.

1. Click through the several screens (clicking on the **Next** button).
2. On the third and final screen in the **Data Preview** area, select the **Date** column.
3. In the "Column data format" area, choose **Text**
4. Click on **Finish**

Another approach is to save the file first as an Excel spreadsheet or worksheet with the four-digit year properly formatted. Then save the .txt file under a different name.

When you need to make changes, open the Excel file, not the .txt file. Make your changes and save again in both formats.

If four-digit years were displayed on the screen, then the tab delimited text file will have four-digit years.