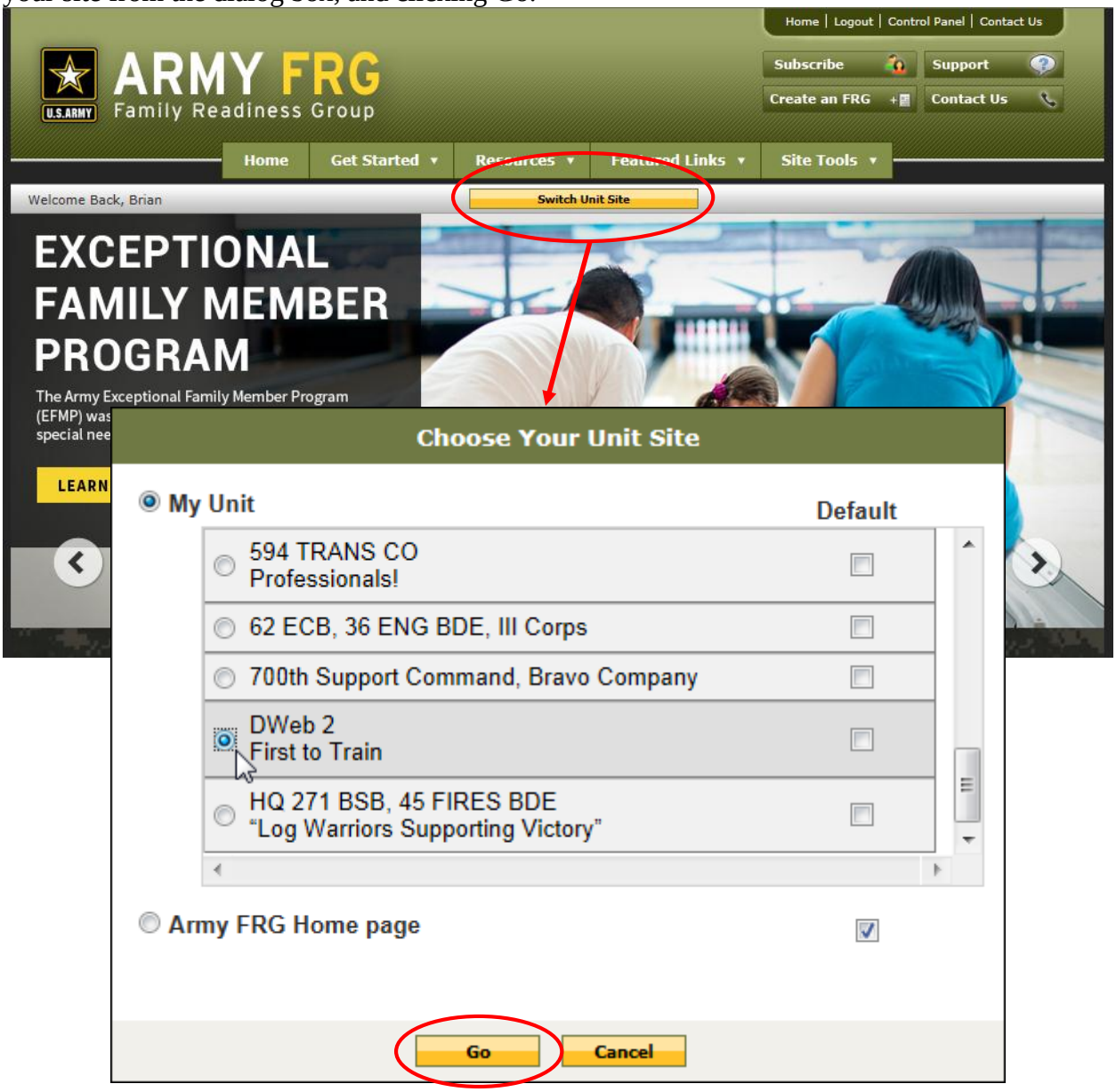
Uploading the Sponsor Database

The Army SFRG system allows SFRG Administrators to automate the approval of subscriptions to the SFRG by Sponsors and Family Members. It does this through the use of the Sponsor Database. Everyone who wishes to subscribe to the SFRG must identify their connection to the SFRG by submitting the name of a Sponsor of Interest and the last four digits of the Social Security Number of that Sponsor. That information is checked against the Sponsor Database.

Go to your SFRG

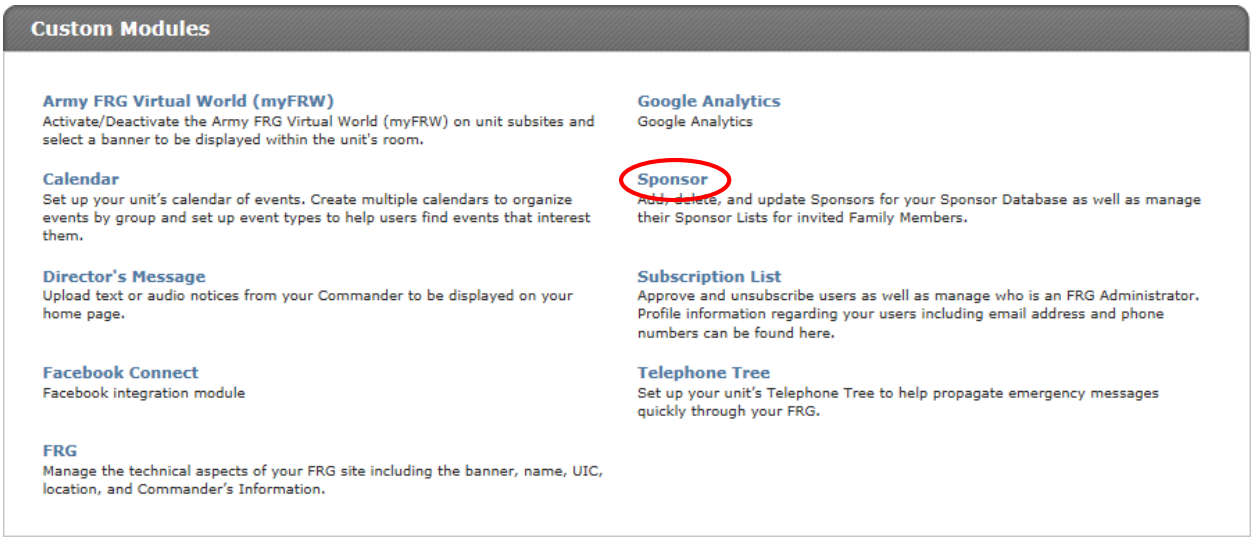
Log into the Army SFRG site and go to your SFRG by clicking on Switch Unit Site, selecting your site from the dialog box, and clicking Go.



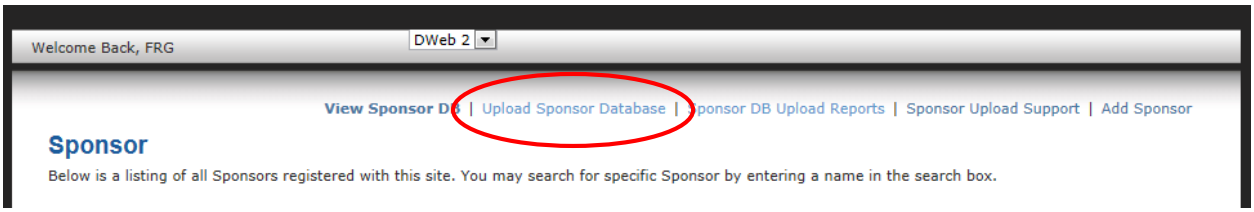
Go to the Upload Sponsor Database section

Click on Control Panel at the very top of the screen.

In the Control Panel, click on the Sponsor link in the Custom Modules section.

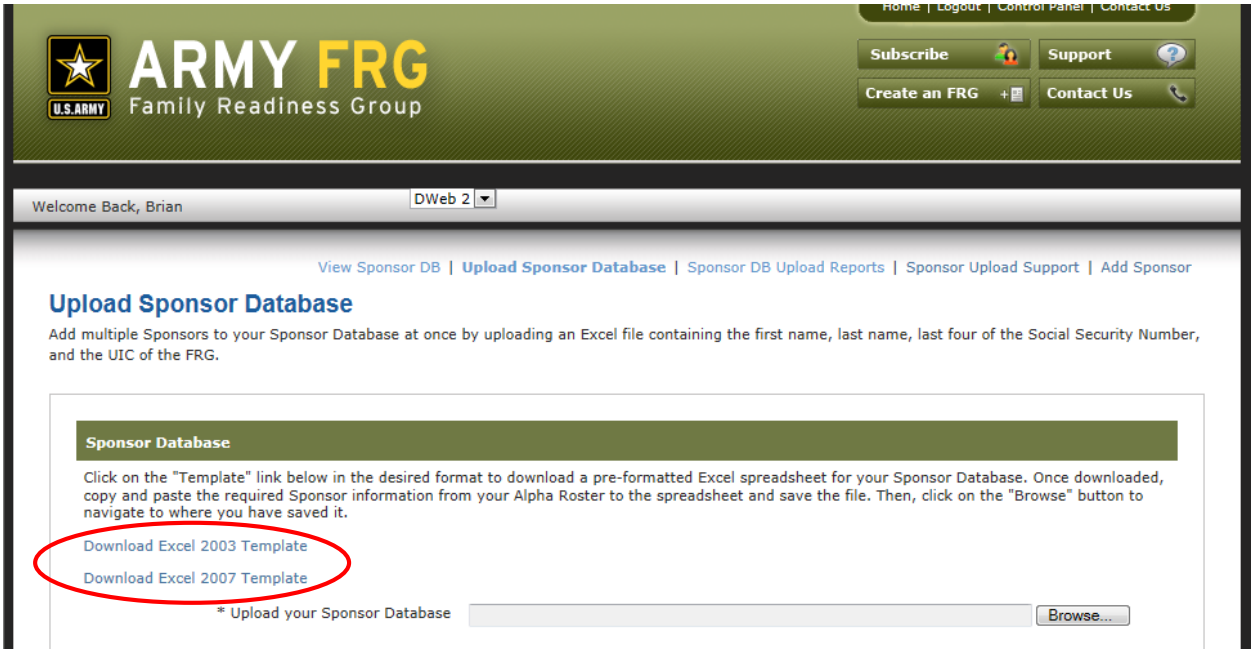


In the Sponsor Module, click on the Upload Sponsor Database link at the top of the screen.



Download the Template

You'll be taken to the page to upload your Sponsor Database. Click on the appropriate template to download a copy of the Sponsor Database Template. If you are using Excel 2003, you will want the 2003 version. If you are using Excel 2007 or later, you will want the 2007 version.



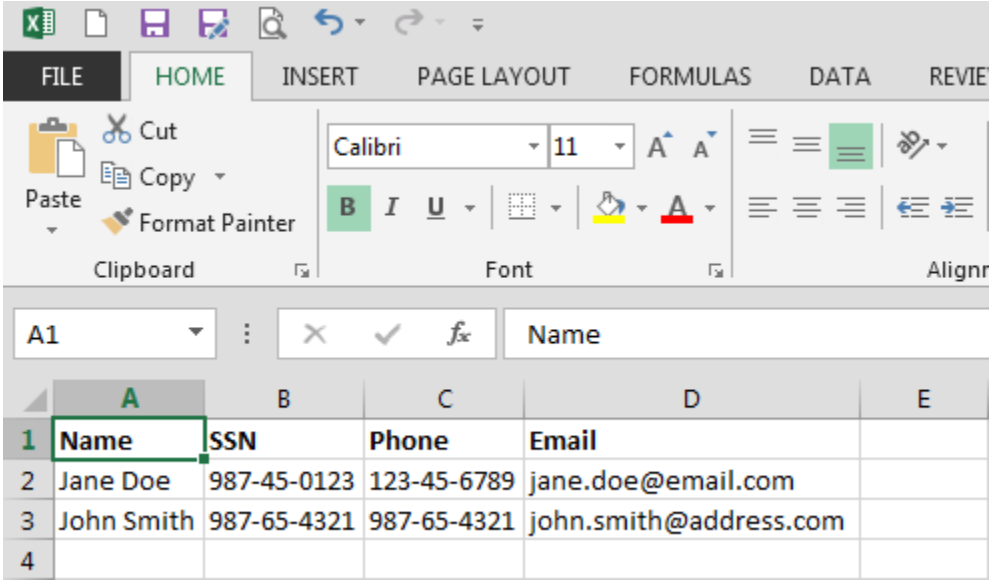
Pull the Sponsor name information from your Alpha Roster

You'll now want to pull the required information from your Alpha Roster. The Template only requires four pieces of information: The Sponsor's first name, last name, last four digits of the Social Security Number, and the UIC of the SFRG. Note that this means the UIC will be the same for every single entry in the Sponsor Database. If you do not know your SFRG's UIC, your Unit Commander will be able to assist you.

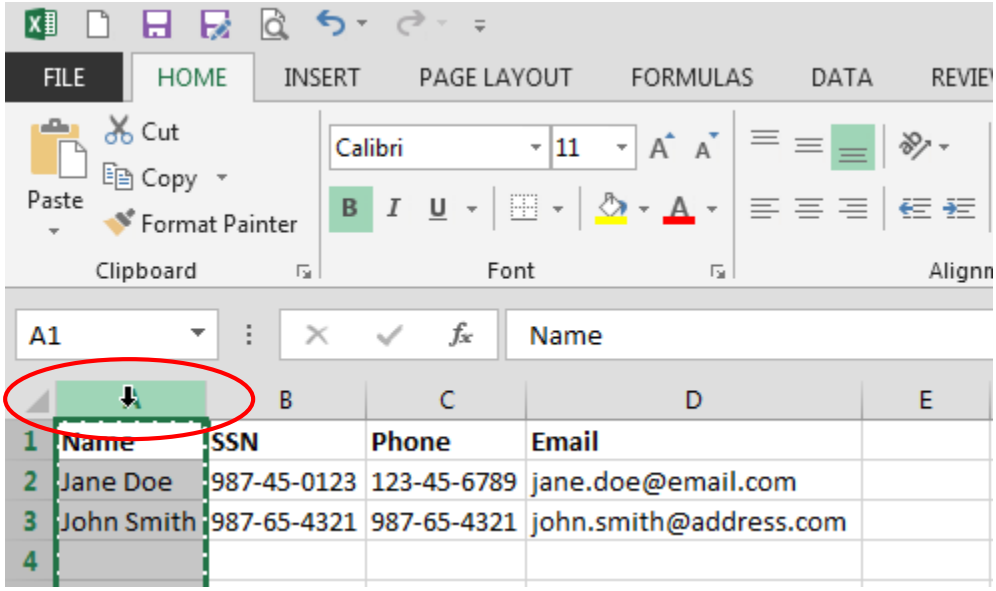
To pull the information from your Alpha Roster, open it up in Excel. **For this manual, the examples will be of Excel 2013. Excel 2007 and 2010 screens will be similar. For those using Excel 2003, please note that where the screenshots and descriptions refer to tabs, you'll want to use the corresponding menu. For example, when referring to the Data tab, you'll want to go to the Data menu.**

Depending on how the roster is formatted, the names of the Sponsors may be listed in a single cell. That is, rather than having a column of just first names and a column of just last names, the roster may have both the first and last names in a single cell. If this is the case, you can use Excel to split that cell in two.

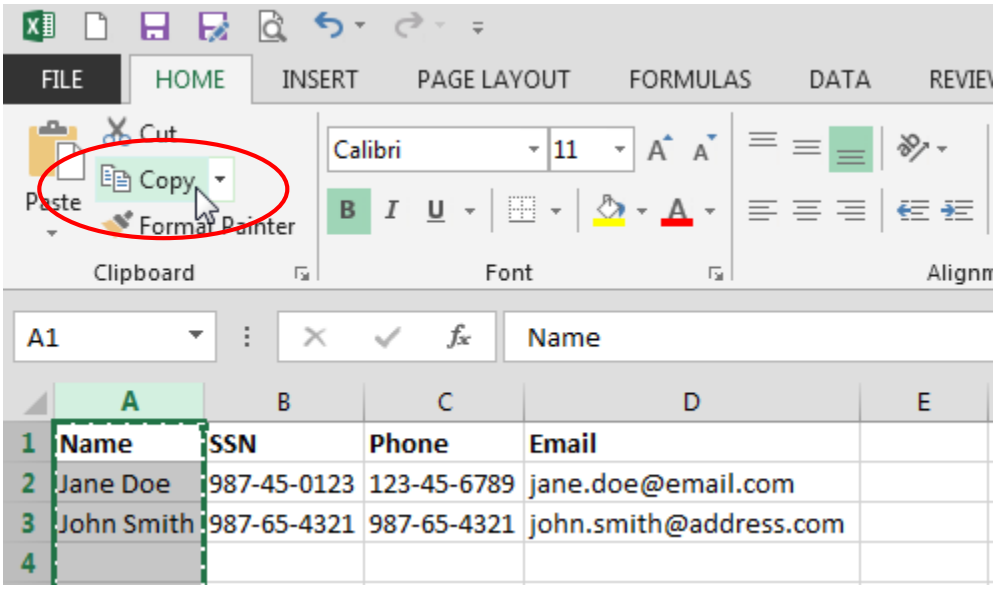
Your roster may look something like this:



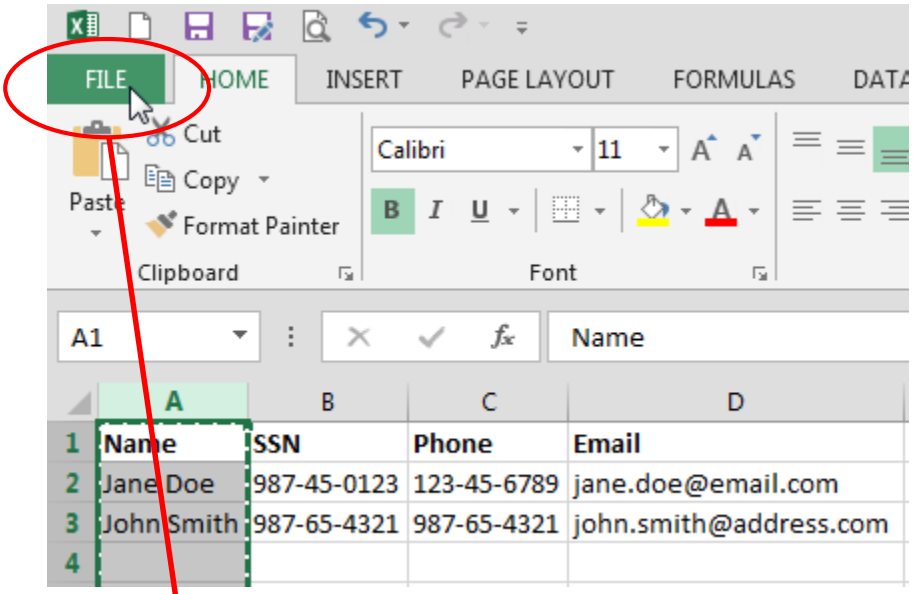
Since we don't want to alter the original document, cut and paste the column that contains the names into a new workbook. To do this, click on the column header (in this case, the letter A at the top of the column.) The entire column should highlight.

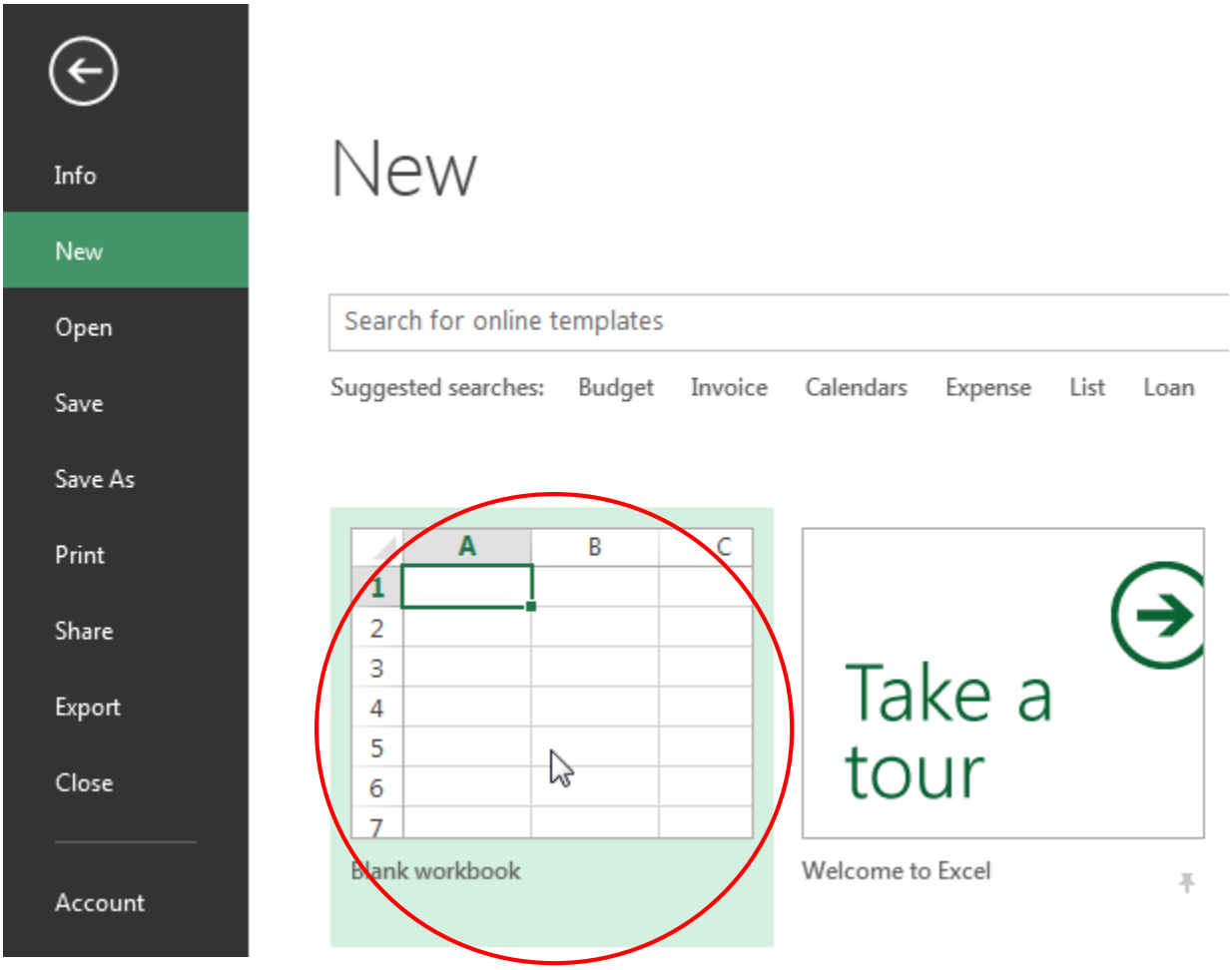


Copy the column.

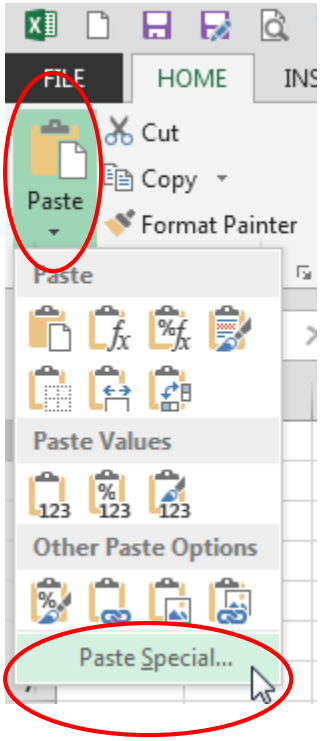


Go into the File tab, click New, and create a blank workbook.

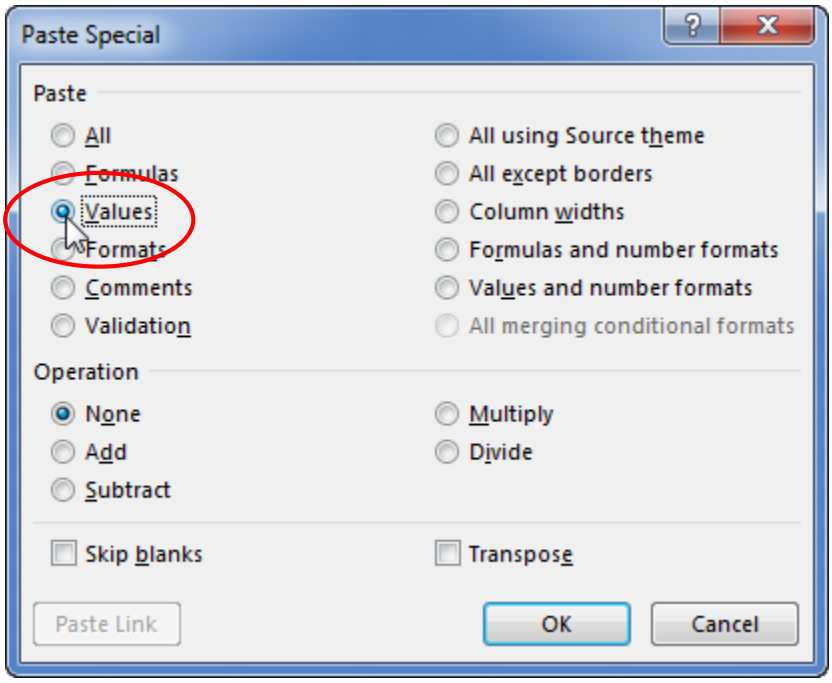



Info
New
Open
Save
Save As
Print
Share
Export
Close
Account
New
Search for online templates
Suggested searches: Budget Invoice Calendars Expense List Loan
A B C
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Blank workbook
Take a tour
Welcome to Excel

Paste the column into the new workbook by going into the Paste button and selecting Paste Special....

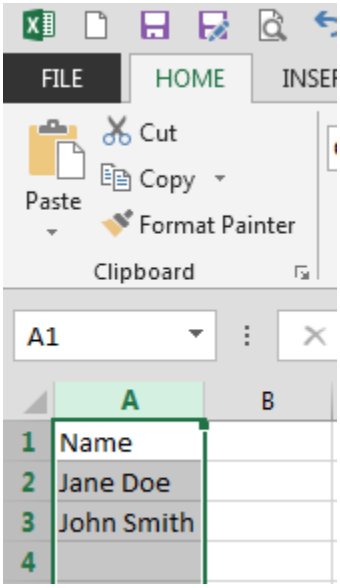


This will bring up a dialog box asking how you wish to paste. Click the Values radio button and then click OK.

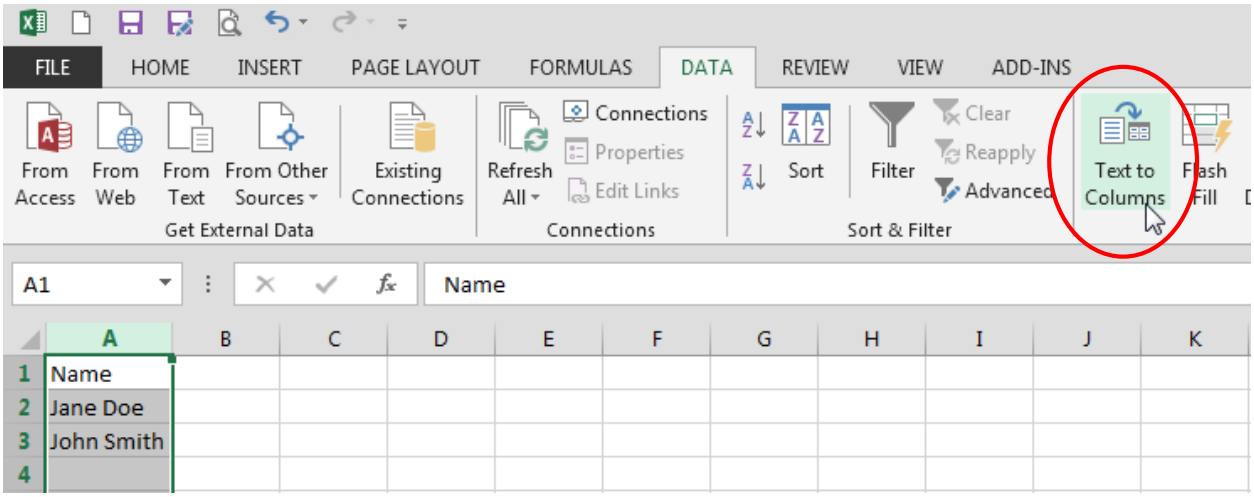


This will strip all formatting out of the information you have copied. The parser for the Sponsor Database requires the information to be formatted in a specific way and any formatting of the data such from borders, colors, shading, fonts, centering, etc. can throw the parser off.

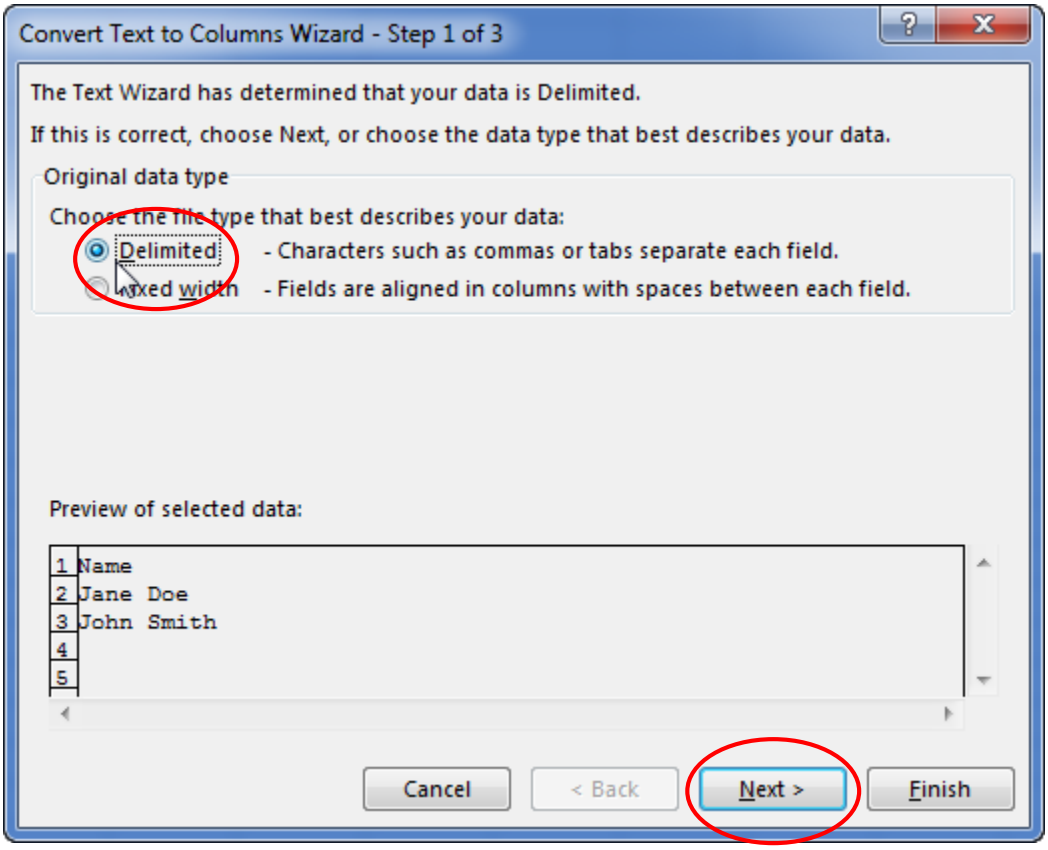
You should now have a workbook that has a single column in it with just the names:



The column of names should still be highlighted. Go into the Data tab and select Text to Columns.



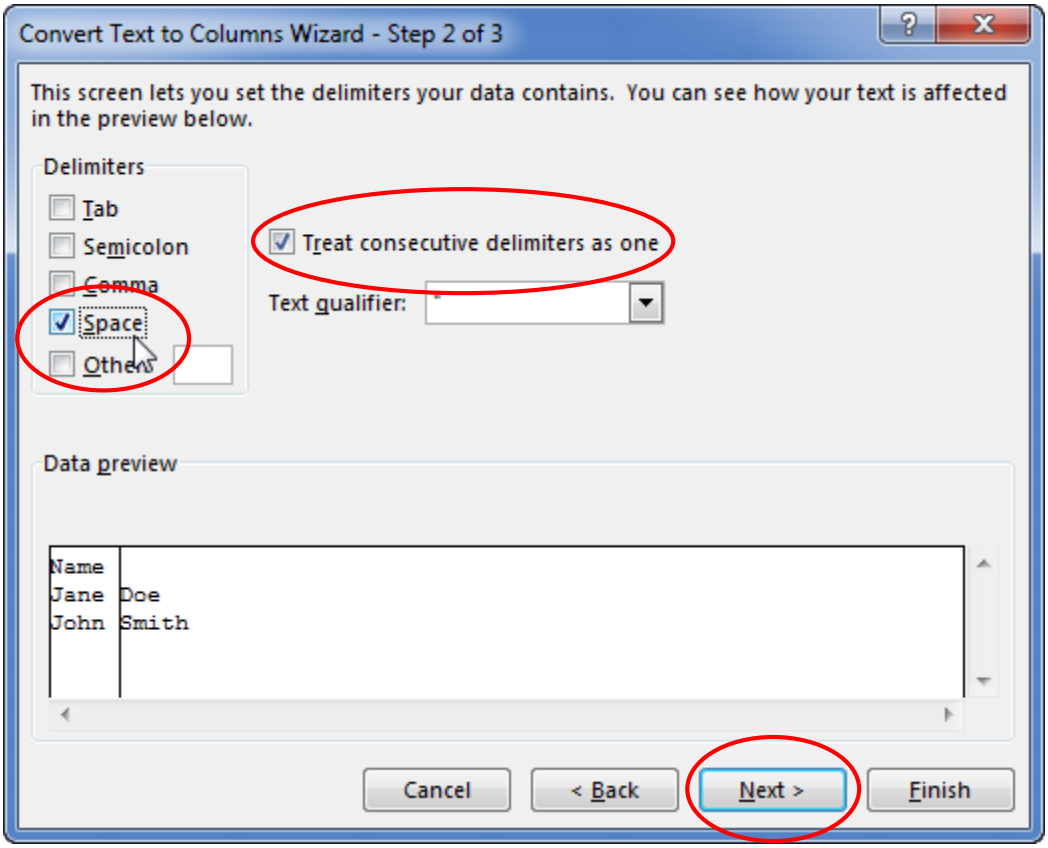
In the dialog box that appears, set the radio button to Delimited and then click Next.



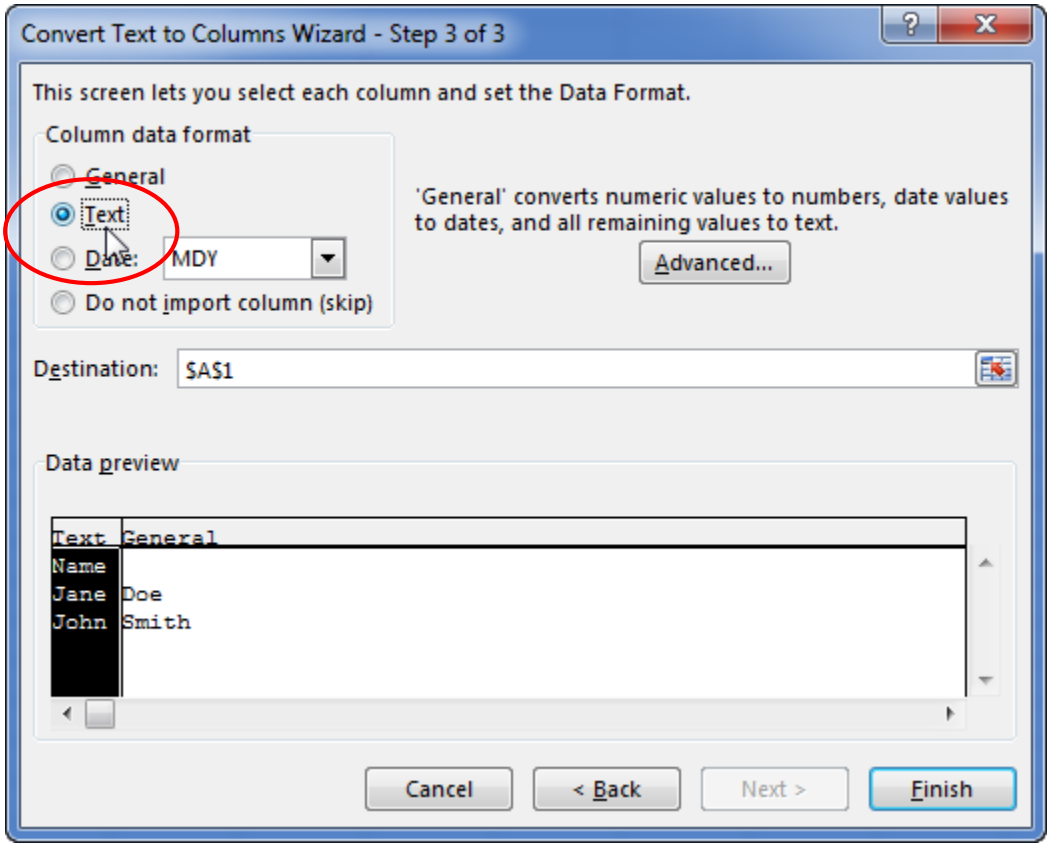
In the Delimiters section, check the boxes for the characters that are used to separate the names. In this example, the names are listed “First Last” with only a space between them. Thus, you would uncheck the “Tab” box and check the “Space” box.

If your Alpha Roster lists the names as “Last, First” with a comma and space between the two, uncheck the “Tab” box and check both the “Comma” and “Spaces” boxes.

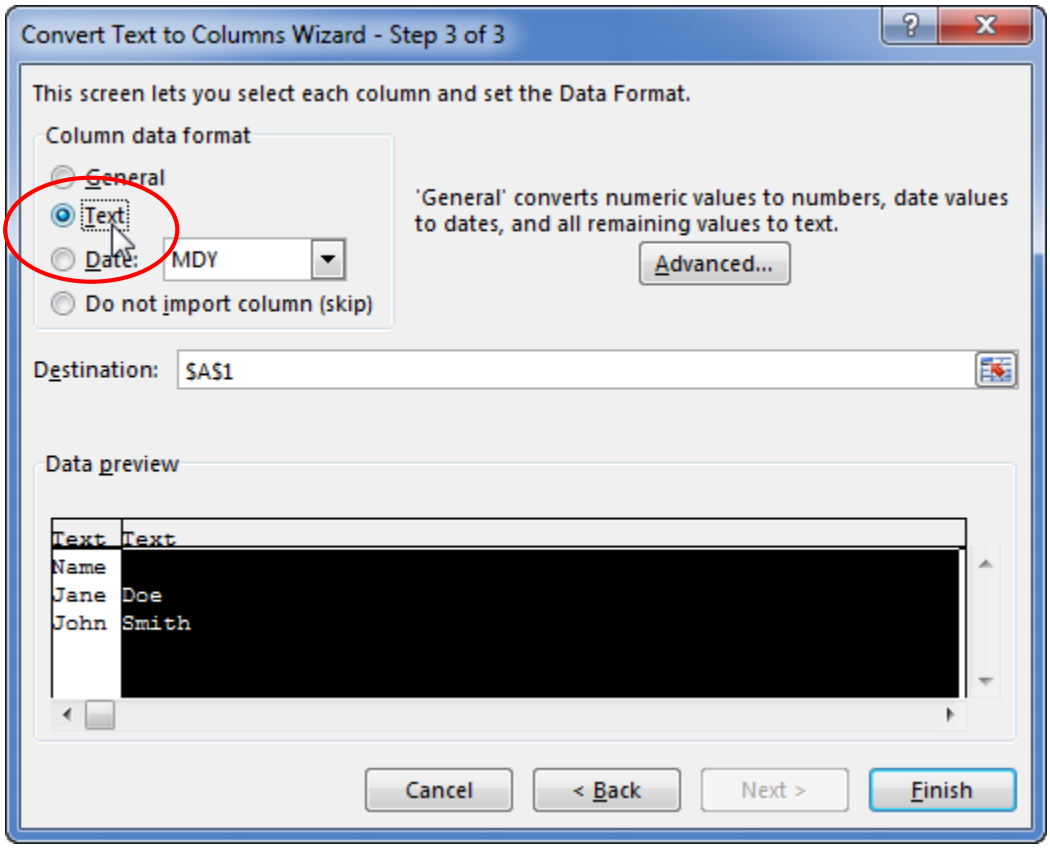
Be sure to leave the “Treat consecutive delimiters as one” checkbox checked. Then click “Next.”



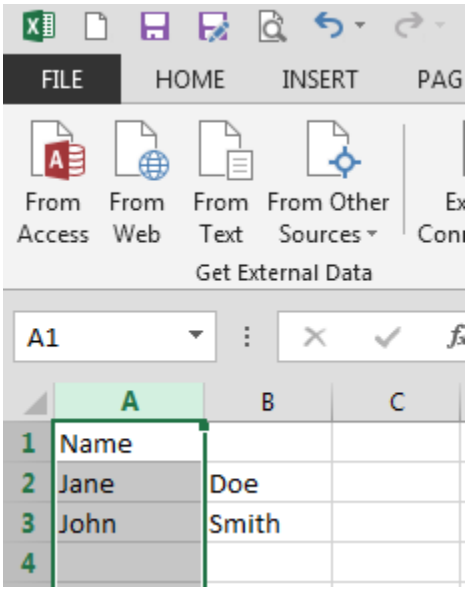
The first column should be highlighted. Set the radio button to text.



Do the same with the second column by clicking on it to highlight and then setting the radio button to Text.



If you have a third column, repeat the process. When you have set all columns to Text, click on Finish and you should have separated columns.

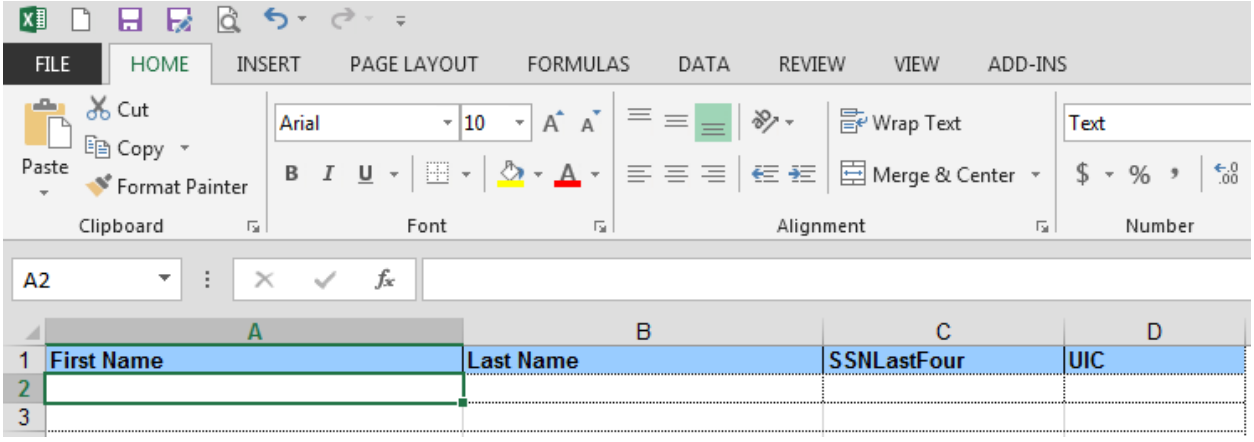


Depending upon the specific names in your Alpha Roster, you may have more than just two columns such as when your roster includes middle names or initials or if suffixes such as Jr. or III are used. If this is the case, you will need to do some manual clean up of the split so that you have a column of just first names and a column of just last names. Too, look over the entries for anything that may be unusual such as stray punctuation marks that might be attached to a name. This is important because the name that is entered in the Sponsor Database is what must be used when the person is subscribing. That is, if the original name was "John Smith, Jr." and you are only splitting on the spaces, then Excel will have included the comma on the end of Smith when splitting the names into separate columns. If you don't remove that comma, then anybody subscribing to the SFRG will have to enter "Smith," with a comma on the end or be rejected.

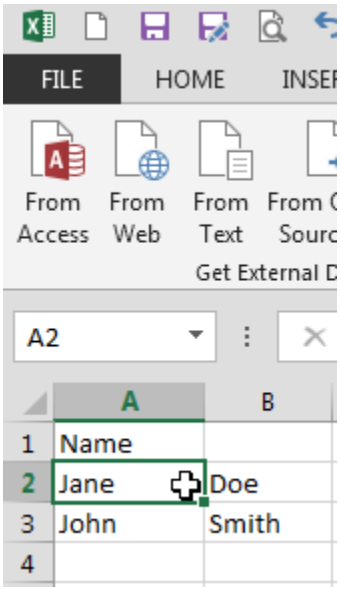
You will also note that we specifically told Excel to format the split columns as Text. This is because the upload process is expecting text fields. The Template is set to Text and we want to keep that formatting.

Copy the names over to the Template

Open the Template that you downloaded from the site.

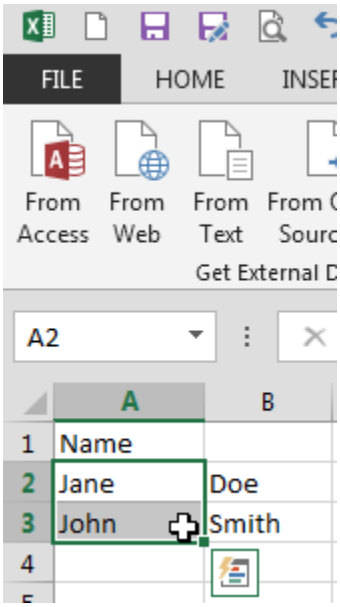


Back in the worksheet that has the columns of names, select the cell that holds the initial first name in the column so that it is selected.

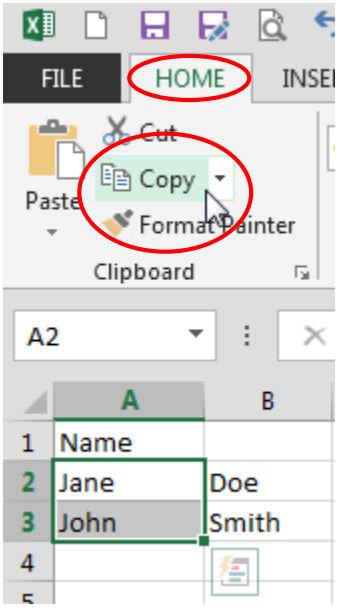


Next, shift-click on the final first name in the column, meaning hold the Shift key down on your keyboard and while you are holding it down, click on the final cell. All the intervening cells should highlight.

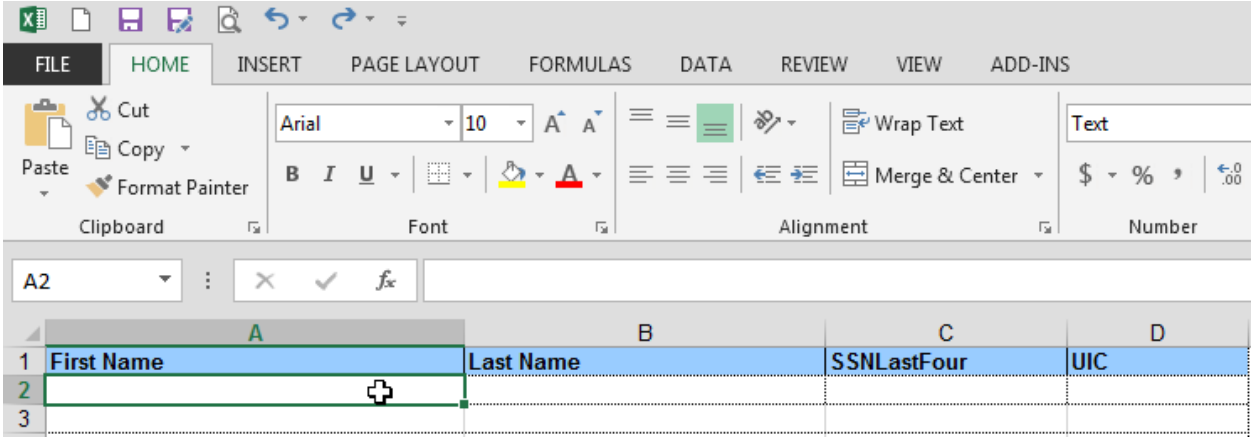
You can also do this by just dragging over the cells that have the first names. If you do this, make sure you only select names. Do not include any header cells



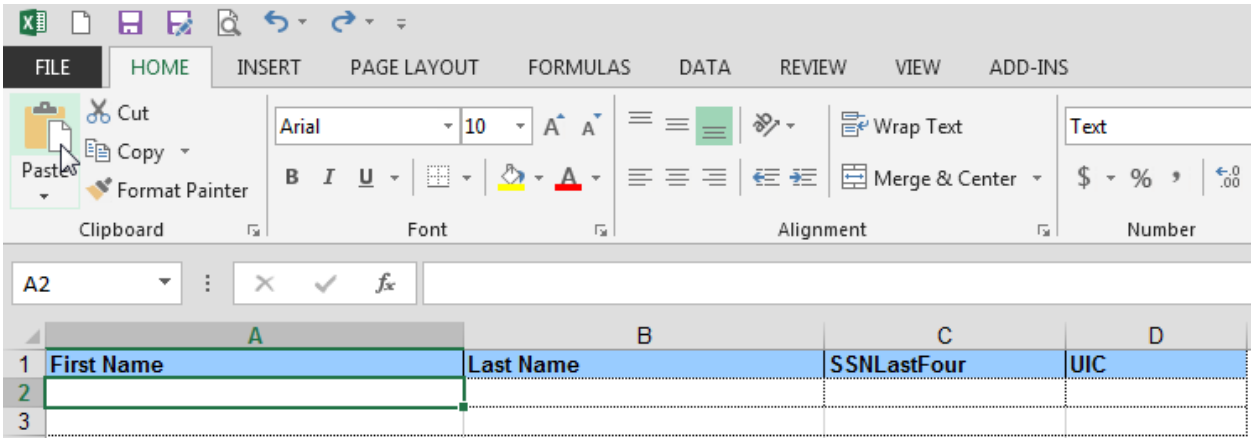
In the Home tab, select Copy.



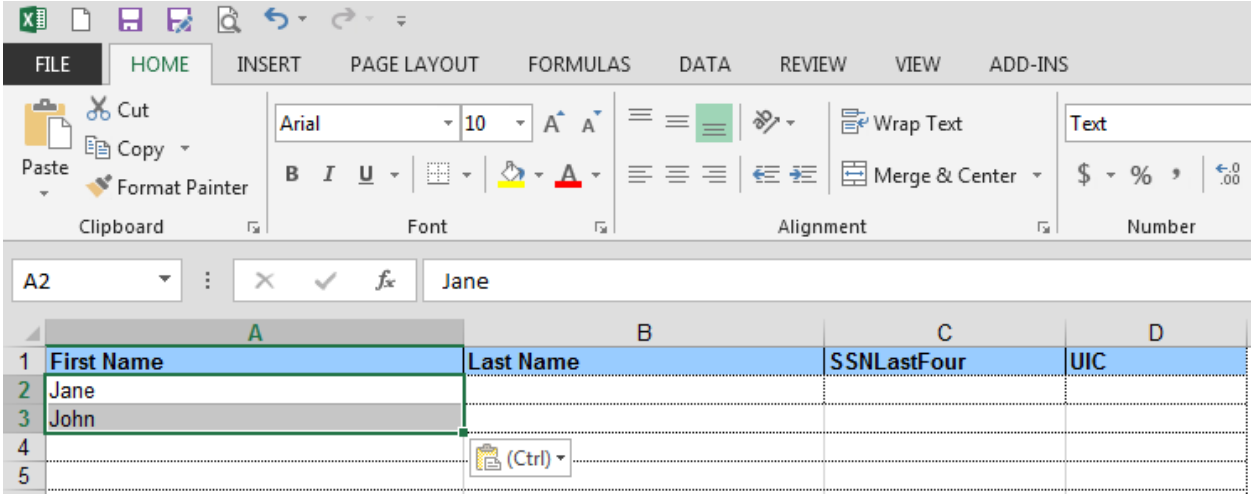
Go to the Template and select the first cell under the “First Name” column header (cell A2).



In the Home tab, click Paste.



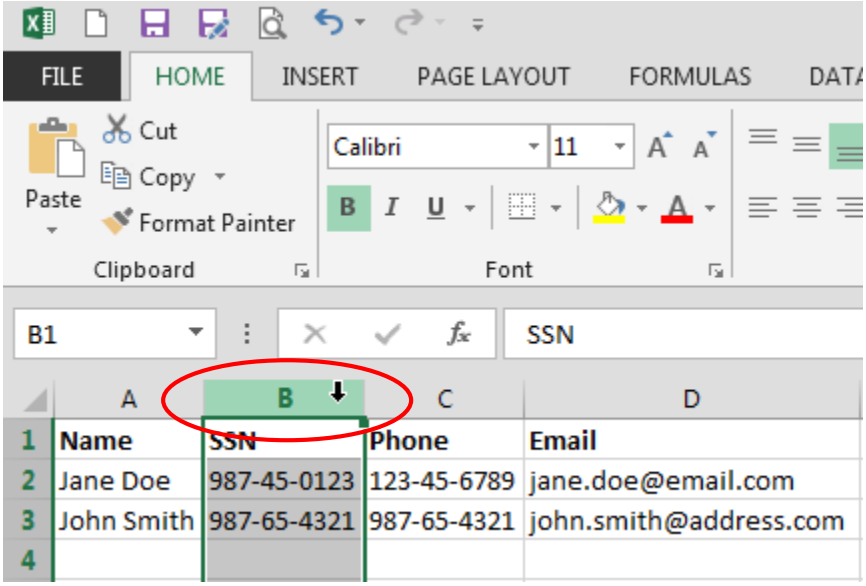
This will paste the first names into the First Name column.



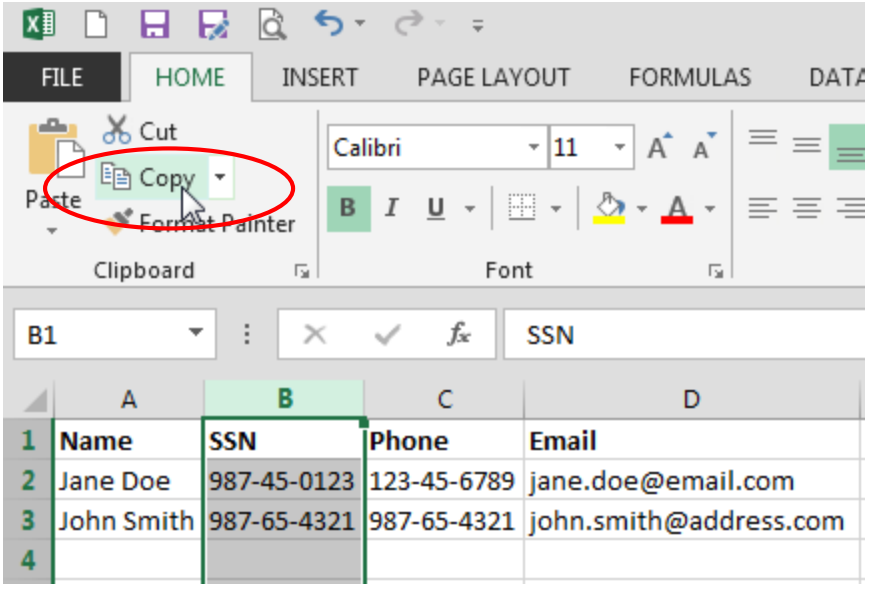
Repeat the copy and paste process with the last names.

Pull the Sponsor SSN last four information from your Alpha Roster

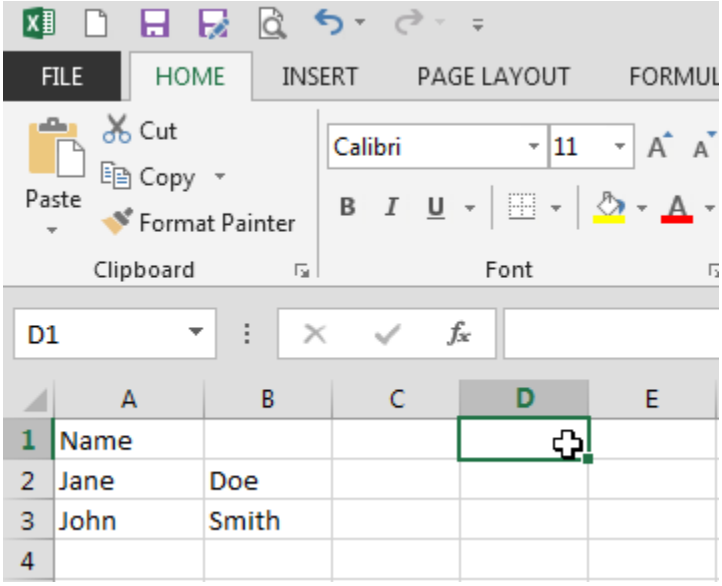
Just as we split the names into separate columns, we can split the Social Security Number so that you are left with a single column of last fours. Go back to your Alpha Roster and click on the column header for the SSNs (in this case, the letter B at the top of the column.) The entire column should highlight.



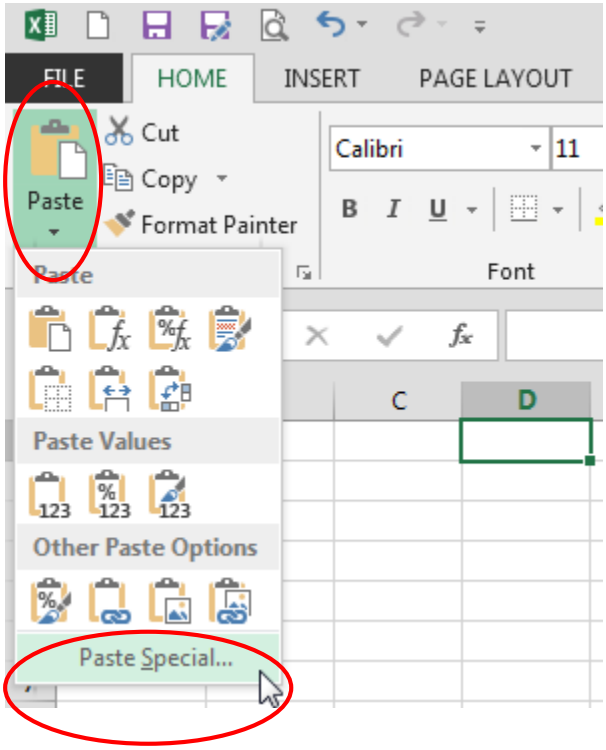
Copy the column.



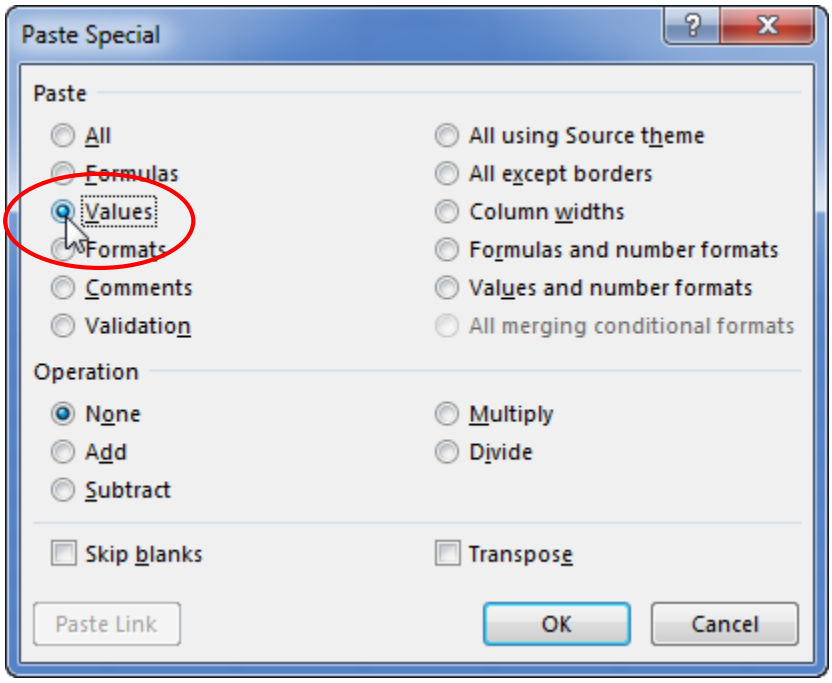
Go to your workbook where you worked on the names and select the first cell in a blank column.



Paste the column into the new workbook by going into the Paste button and selecting Paste Special....

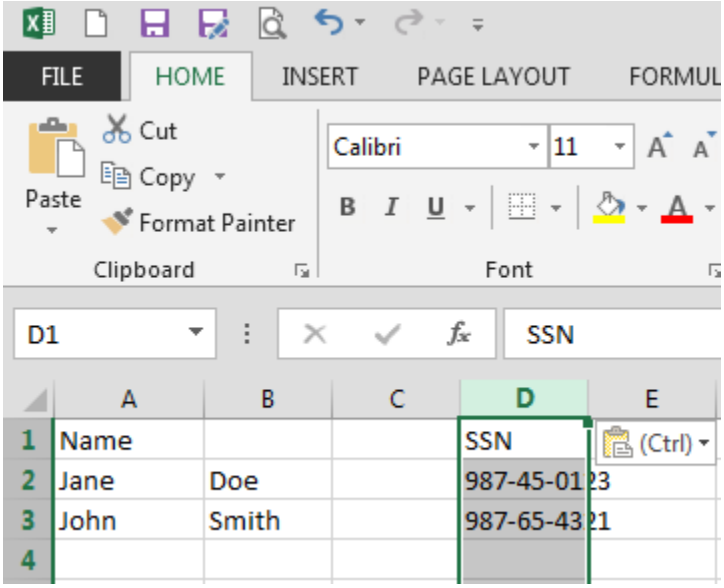


This will bring up a dialog box asking how you wish to paste. Click the Values radio button and then click OK.

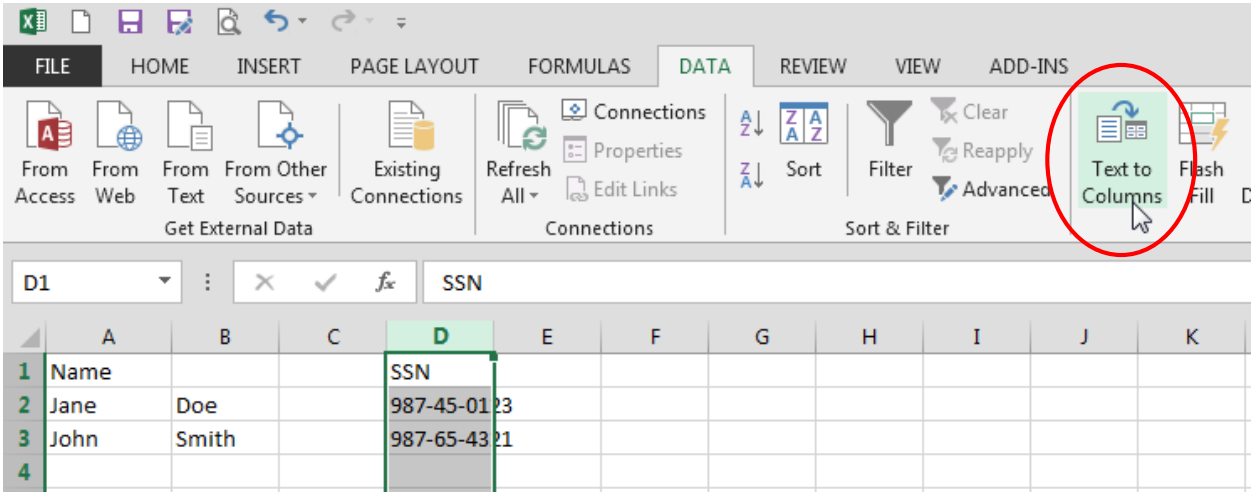


This will strip all formatting out of the information you have copied. The parser for the Sponsor Database requires the information to be formatted in a specific way and any formatting of the data such from borders, colors, shading, fonts, centering, etc. can throw the parser off.

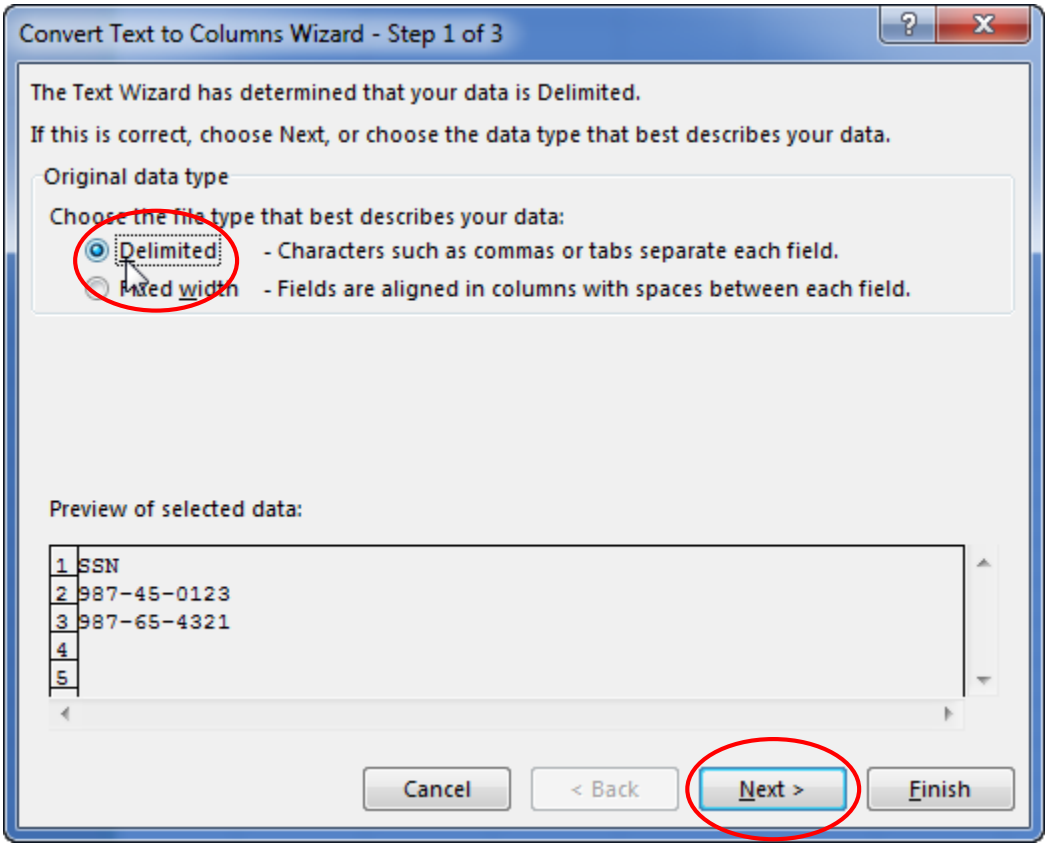
You should now have a column of SSNs in your scratch workbook:



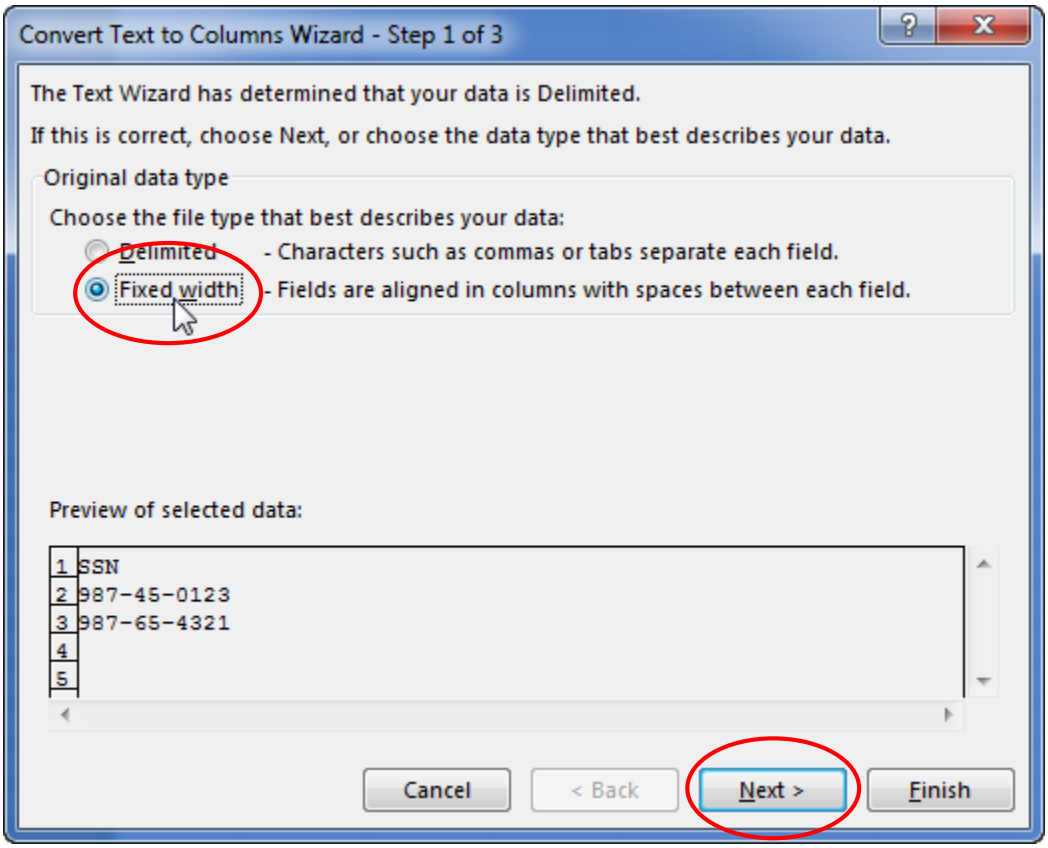
The column of SSNs should still be highlighted. Go into the Data tab and select Text to Columns.



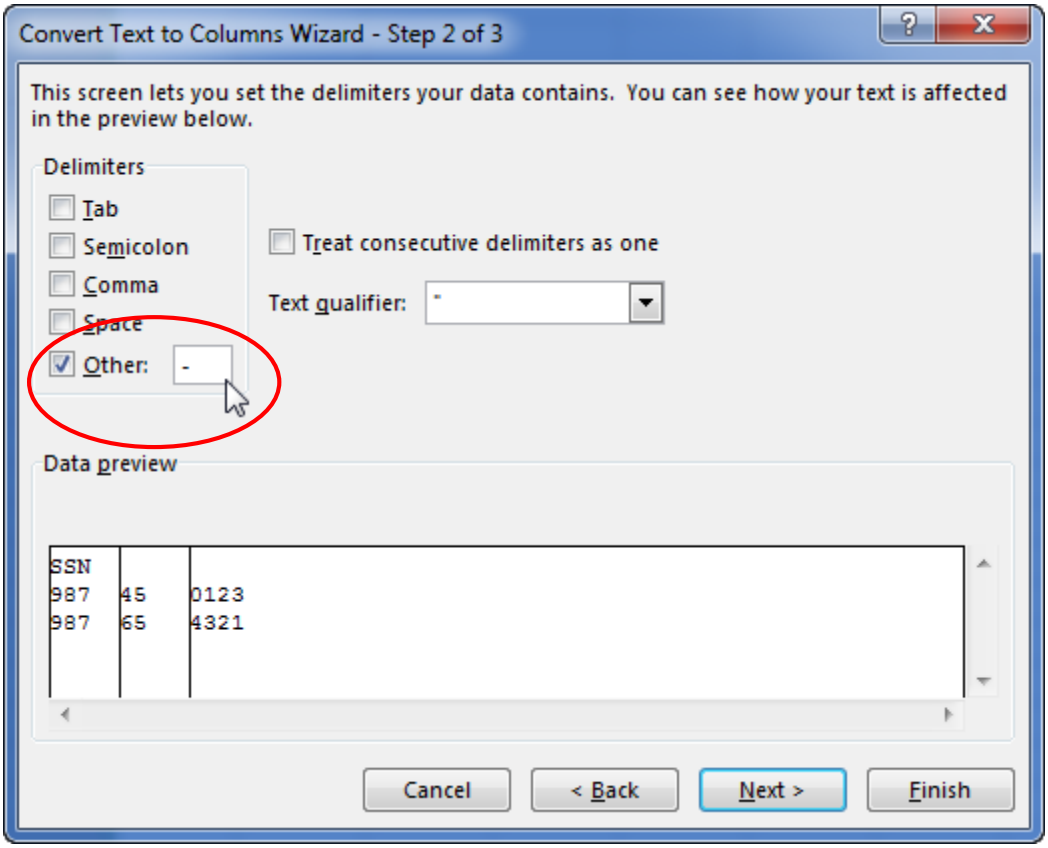
Depending on how your SSNs were originally formatted in your Alpha Roster will determine the next few steps. If your SSNs are separated with a character such as a hyphen, set the radio button to Delimited and then click Next.



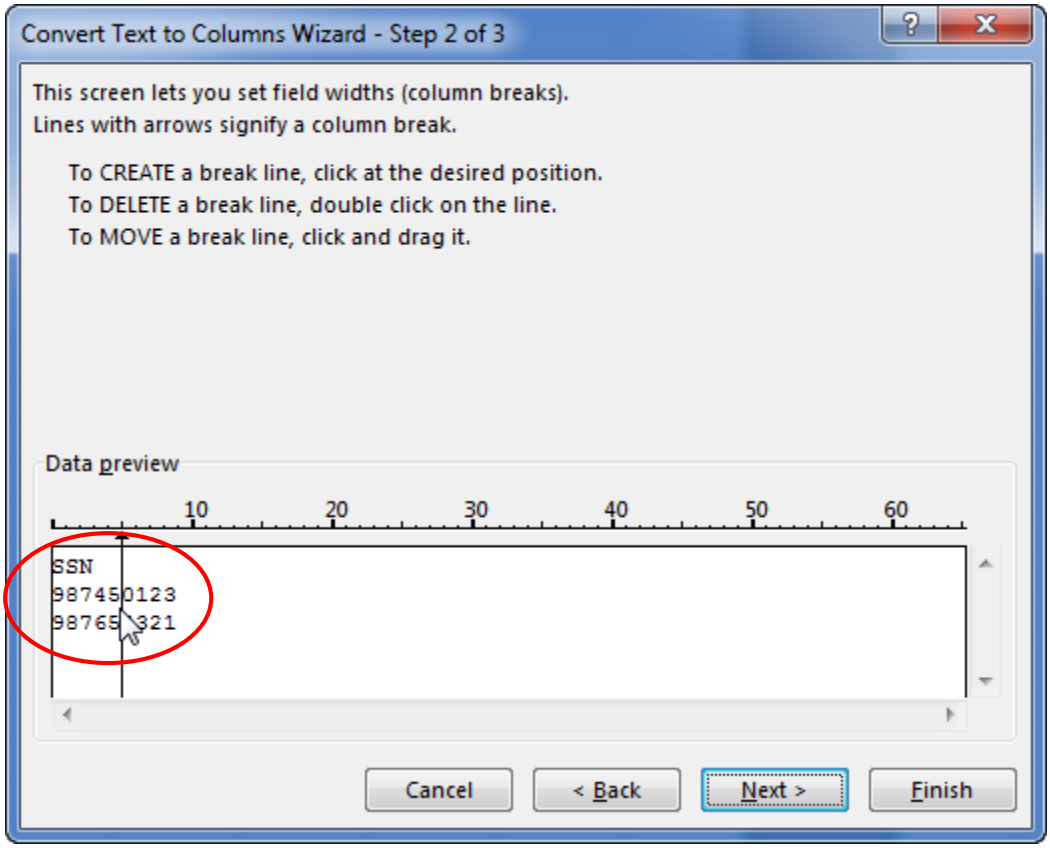
If the SSNs are not separated by any characters, set the radio button to Fixed width and click Next.



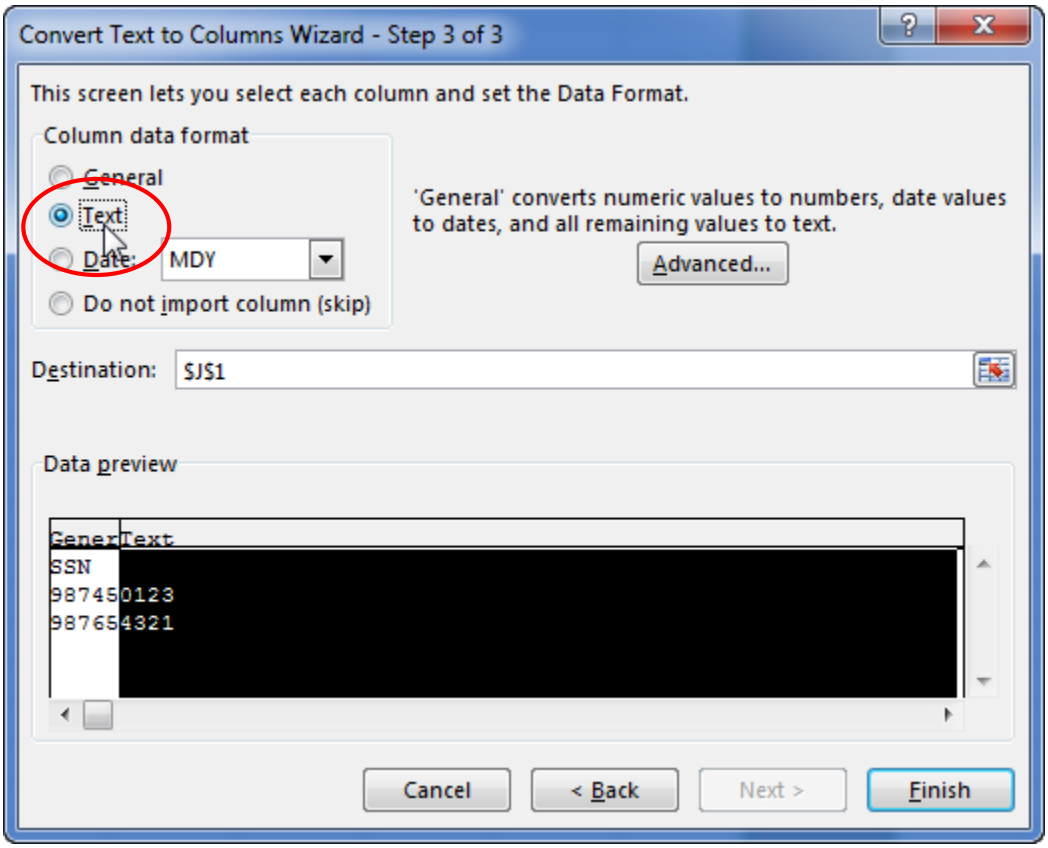
If your SSNs are separated by a character, in the second step of the dialog box, check the box that is the delimiter. If it isn't a Tab, Semicolon, Comma, or Space, check the Other check box and in the box next to it, put in the character that is the delimiter (such as a hyphen). Clear out any other checkboxes and click Next.



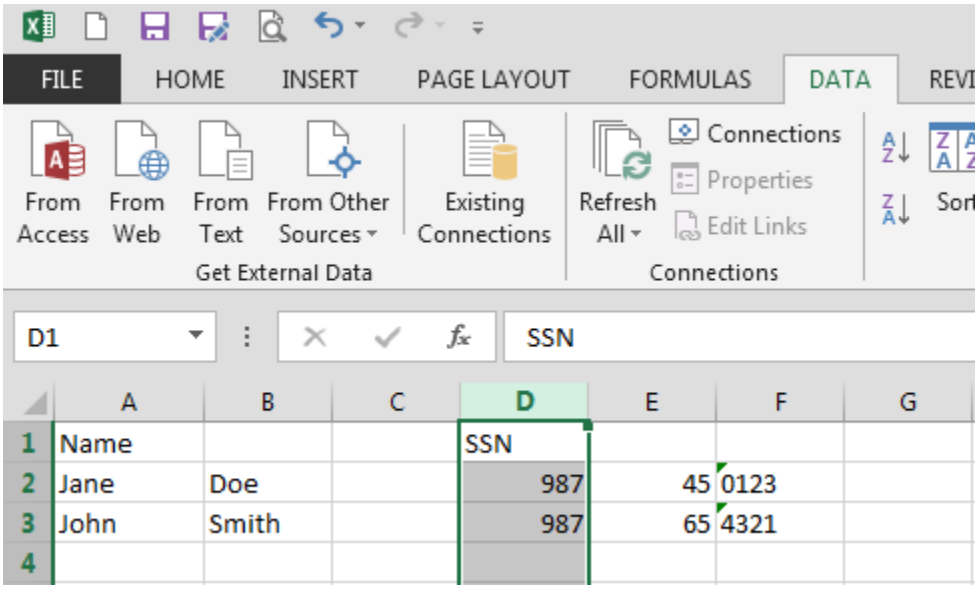
If your SSNs are not separated by characters, in the second step of the dialog box, click between the first five and last four digits of the SSN. A line will appear showing that a break will be made there. If you misclick, you can drag the line to the appropriate spot. After setting the line, click on Next.



In both cases (Delimited or Fixed width), click on the final column that contains the last four digits so that it highlights and set the radio button to Text.



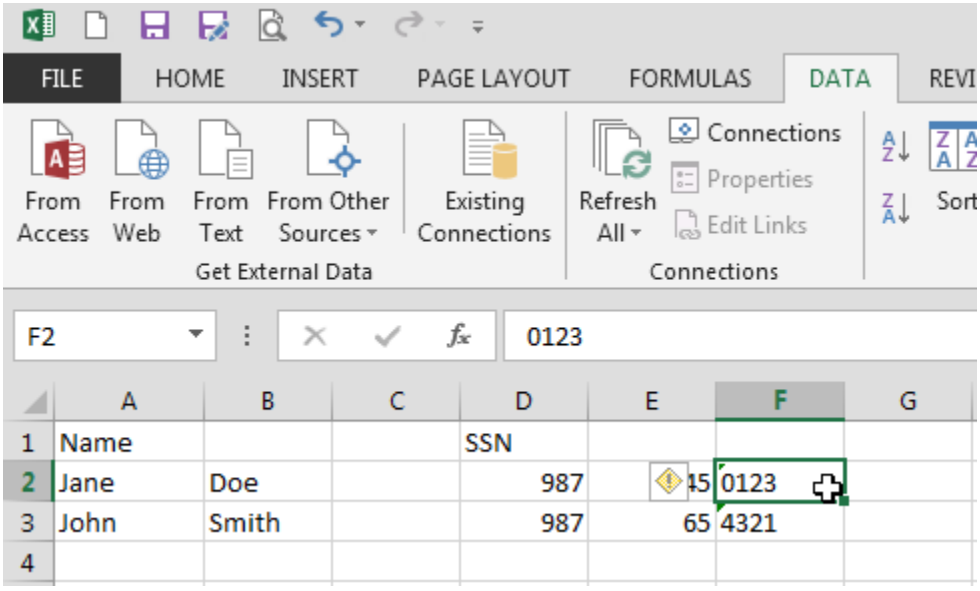
When the last column is set to Text, click on Finish and you should have separated columns with the last four digits isolated from the others.



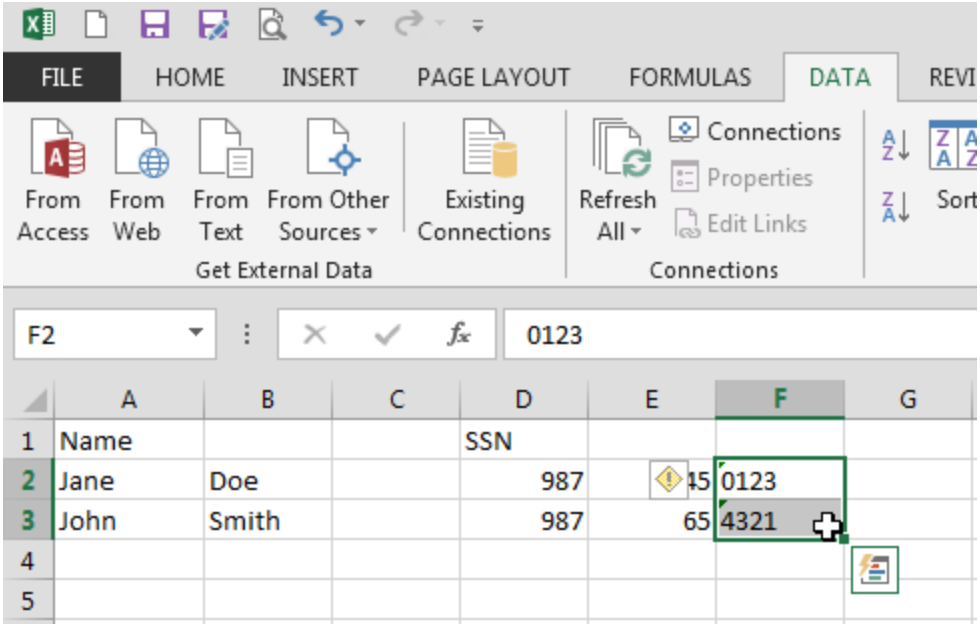
Notice that because the column of last fours has been set to Text, any leading zeroes in the last four will be kept. Too, notice that Excel has a little green triangle in the upper left corner of each cell. This is to let you know that the cell is formatted as Text.

Copy the last fours over to the Template

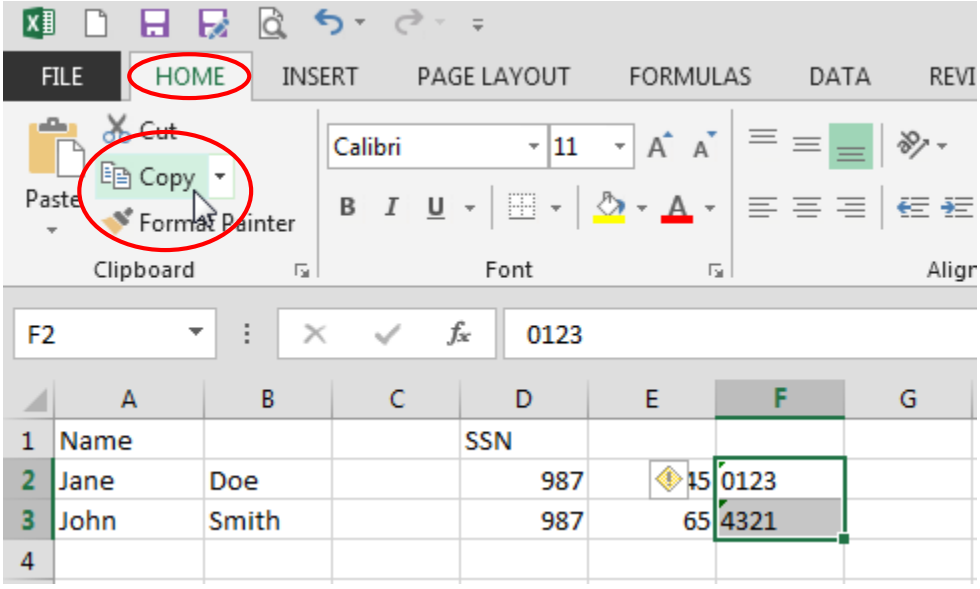
Select the cell that holds the initial last four in the column so that it is selected.



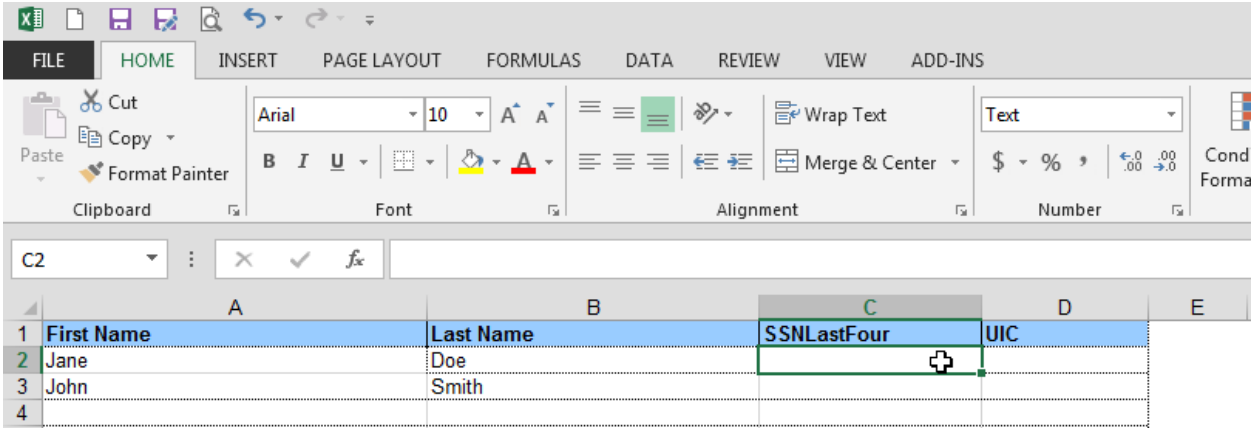
Next, shift-click on the final last four in the column, meaning hold the Shift key down on your keyboard and while you are holding it down, click on the final cell. All the intervening cells should highlight.



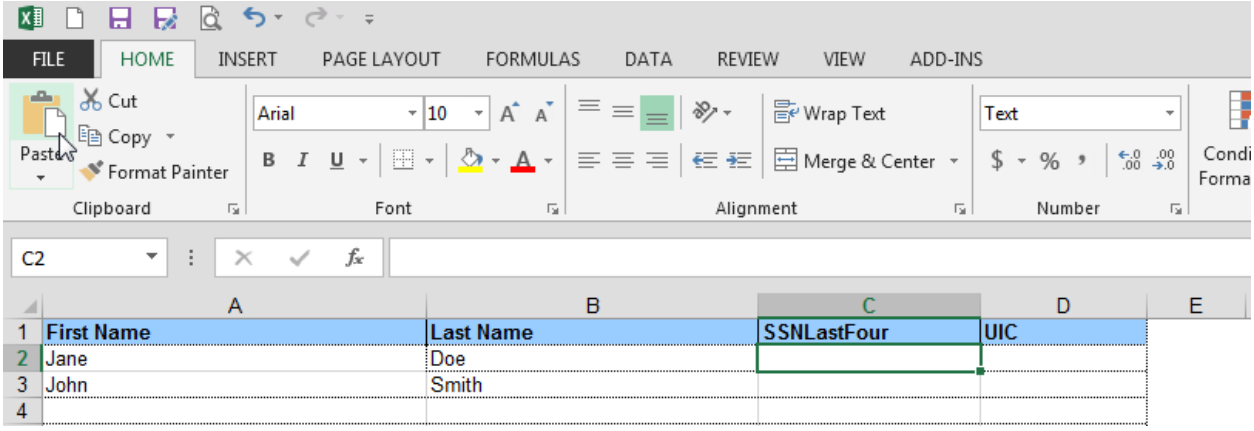
In the Home tab, select Copy.



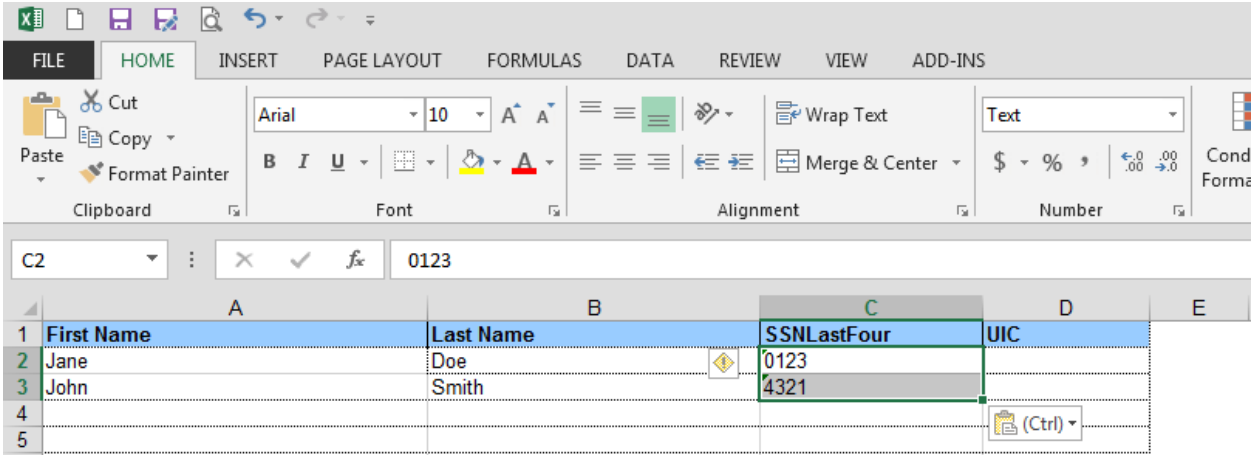
Go into the Template and select the first cell under the SSNLastFour column header (cell C2).



In the Home tab, click Paste.

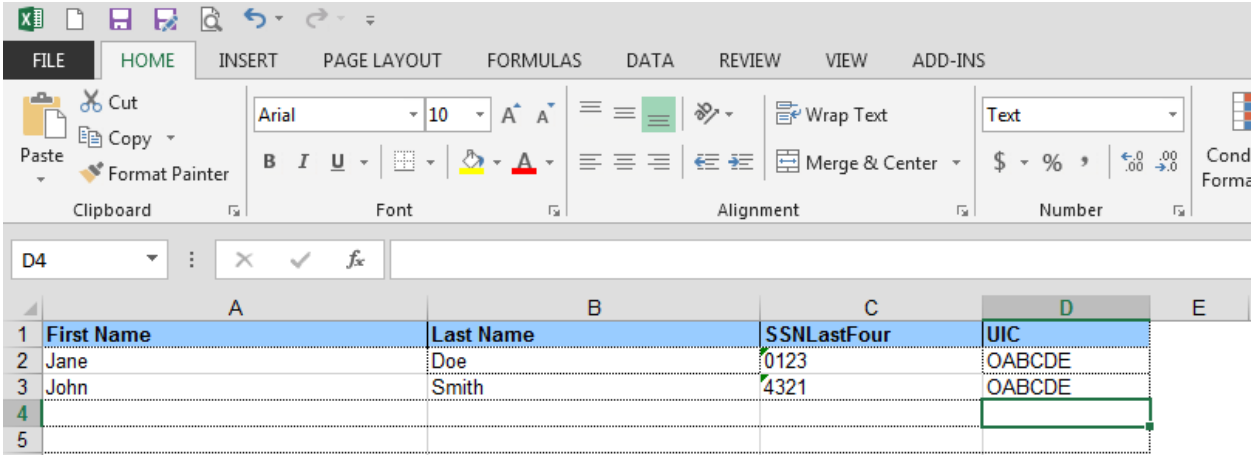


This will paste the last fours into the SSNLastFour column.



Copy the SFRG's UIC into the Template

In the UIC column, copy the SFRG's UIC into the cell for each Sponsor. Note, this is the UIC of the SFRG, not the UIC of the Company the Sponsor is in. Thus, every entry will have the same UIC. If you do not know your SFRG's UIC, your Unit Commander can assist you.

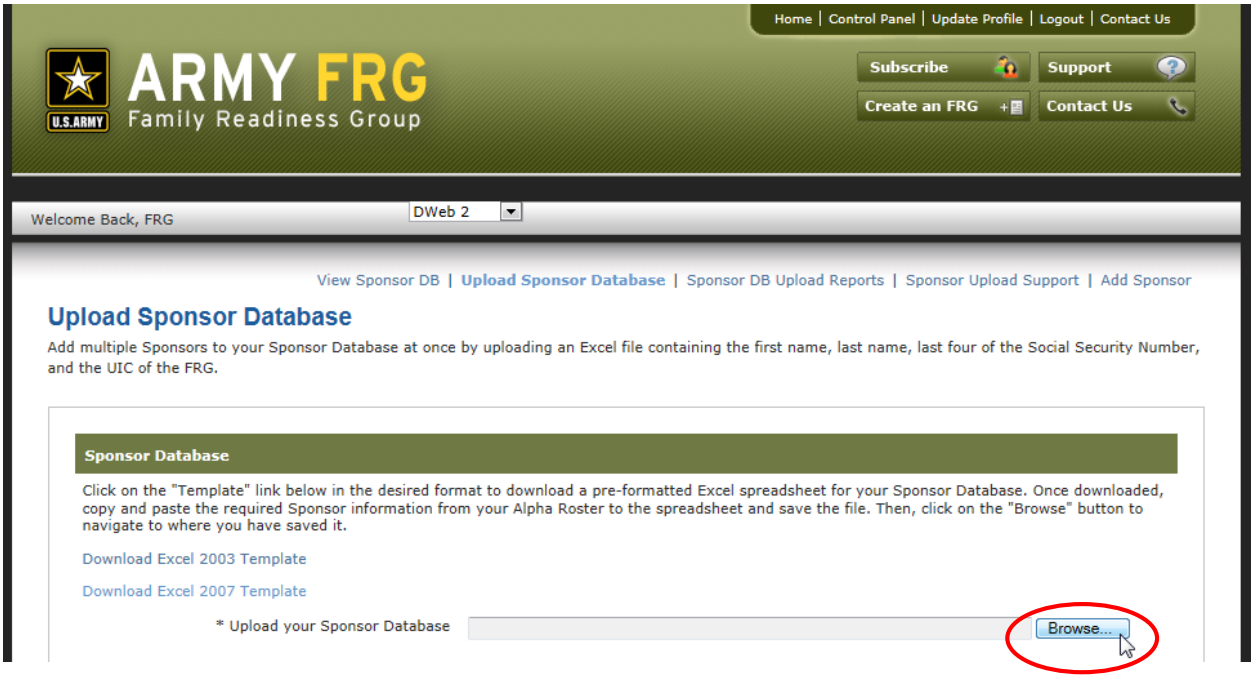


Now that you have a completed Template, save it.

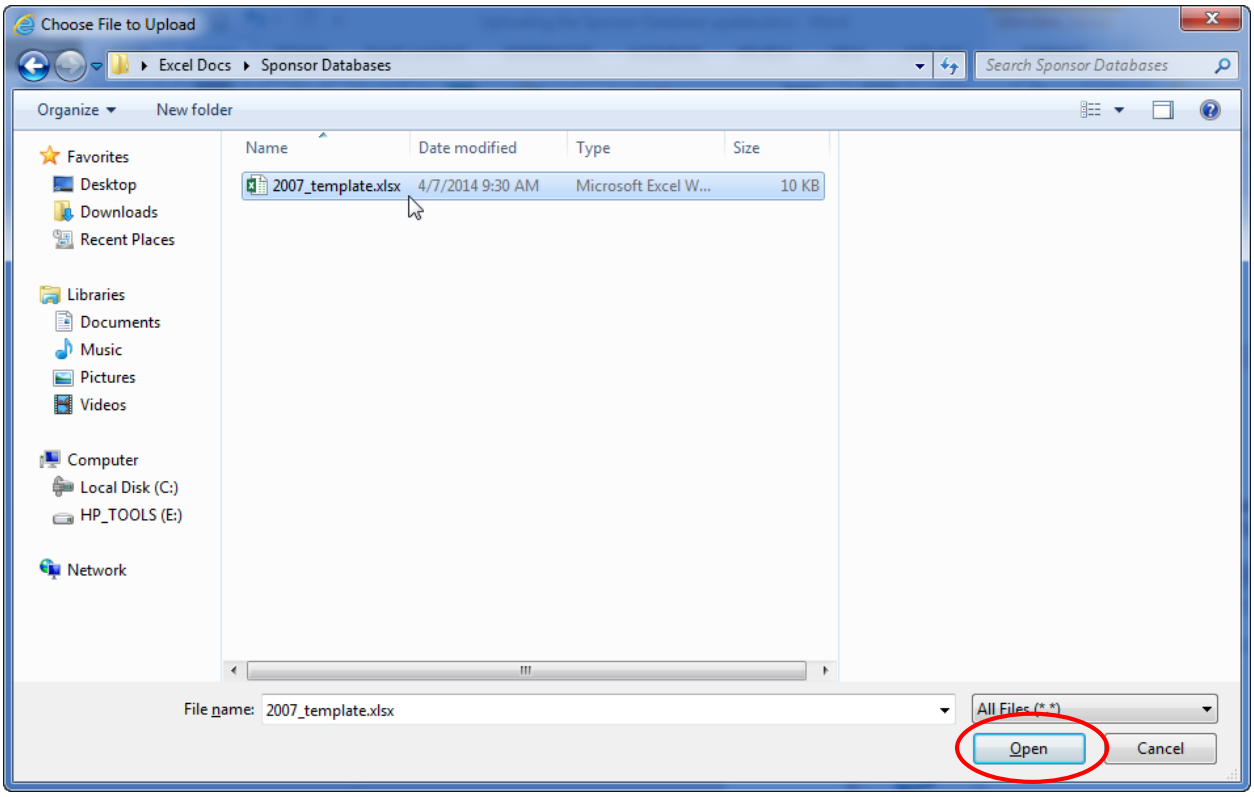
Please note: The parser for the Sponsor Database can only handle 2000 entries at a time. If you have more than 2000 Sponsors to upload, you will need to split them into multiple files and upload them separately.

Upload the Sponsor Database

Now that you have a saved Sponsor Database in the right format, you can upload it to the Sponsor Database. Go back to your SFRG and into the Upload Sponsor DB section where you downloaded the template. This time, click on the "Browse" button.



A dialog box appears asking you to choose what file to upload. Navigate to where you saved your Sponsor Database, select it, and click on Open.



Once you have selected your Sponsor Database, click on the "Add New Sponsors" button or the "Delete and Replace" button.

"Add New Sponsors" will process the Sponsor Database for new names and add them to your current Sponsor Database. Duplicate entries will be skipped and no names will be removed.

"Delete and Replace" will delete all names in your current Sponsor Database and replace them with the names in the new Sponsor Database you are uploading. Be careful when using this option as all accounts associated with deleted Sponsors will show a Sponsor of Interest of "(none)" in the Subscription List. If you accidentally delete someone out of the Sponsor Database, you can put the person back into the database using the exact same information and everything will sync back up.

Upload Sponsor Database

Add multiple Sponsors to your Sponsor Database at once by uploading an Excel file containing the first name, last name, last four of the Social Security Number, and the UIC of the FRG.

Sponsor Database

Click on the "Template" link below in the desired format to download a pre-formatted Excel spreadsheet for your Sponsor Database. Once downloaded, copy and paste the required Sponsor information from your Alpha Roster to the spreadsheet and save the file. Then, click on the "Browse" button to navigate to where you have saved it.

Download Excel 2003 Template

Download Excel 2007 Template

* Upload your Sponsor Database C:\Users\bevans\Desktop\Excel Docs\Sponsor Databases\2007_tem Browse...

Add New Sponsors to Sponsor Database

Click on "Add New Sponsors" to process the file and add new Sponsors to the Sponsor Database. Please note that duplicate entries between your current Sponsor Database and the one being uploaded will be skipped.

Add New Sponsors

Delete and Replace Sponsor Database

To delete the current Sponsor Database and replace it with a new one, click on "Delete and Replace." This will delete the existing Sponsor Database and replace the information with your uploaded Sponsor Database.

**Note: Deleting a Sponsor from the Sponsor Database will not unsubscribe the Sponsor or any Family Members. Instead, they will show "(none)" for the Sponsor in the Subscription List. Adding the Sponsor back to the Sponsor Database will resync their Subscription List entries.

Delete and Replace

If you have problems uploading your Sponsor Database, go to the Army vFRG home page and click on the "Contact Us" link at the bottom of the page.

The system will process your file in the background. When it is done, you should receive an email message regarding the results, either letting you know that the file was processed successfully or giving you a notice as to why the upload failed.

Things to Note

Some things to be aware of when uploading the Sponsor Database:

1) The UIC for all entries in the Sponsor Database should be the same: That of your Unit and not any parent or child Unit. The Sponsor Database was not designed to be a look-up tool to determine which Company a Sponsor is in. Instead, it is used to associate your Sponsors with your Unit. If you are at the Brigade, then every entry in the Sponsor Database will use the Brigade's UIC; if you are at the Battalion, then every entry in the Sponsor Database will use the Battalion's UIC, and so on. This UIC should be the same one that is listed in your FRG module (Control Panel -> FRG -> Edit FRG). If your UIC has changed, just make a corrected version of your Sponsor Database and upload it.

2) The parser for the Sponsor Database can only handle 2000 entries at a time. If you have more than 2000 people to add, you will need to break them up into multiple files and upload them separately.

3) If you are using the "Delete and Replace" option and you have more than 2000 Sponsors to add, only do so for the first file. Otherwise, you will be deleting the Sponsors you just added. Instead, upload the first file using the "Delete and Replace" option and allow it to process completely where you receive the email summary. After you receive that summary, you can go ahead and use the "Add New Sponsors" option for the other files.

4) Do not change the formatting of the Template in any way. Do not add borders, colors, shading, fonts, centering, or any other type of formatting. Because the information in the Sponsor Database is used to validate the identities of your subscribers, the parser for the Sponsor Database requires the information to be formatted in a specific way in order to ensure an accurate upload. Changing the formatting of the Template in any way can throw the parser off and your file will not upload.

5) Do not put in partial entries. Every single entry for your Sponsor Database must be complete. This means it must have a First Name, a Last Name, a Last Four, and a UIC. You cannot upload partial entries such as having a line with no First Name or with just a UIC. All entries must be complete.

6) Please note that the Template has the First Name first and the Last Name second.