

Clean up your data with this easy-to-use Excel function

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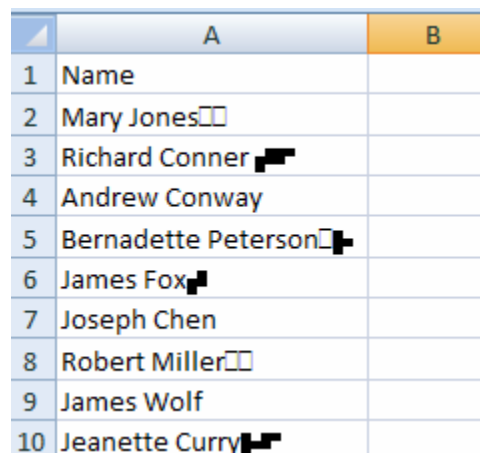
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Here's a truly efficient way to get rid of garbage characters that have tagged along with imported data: Just let the Excel CLEAN function remove them for you.

Excel includes a number of functions that allow you to remove printable characters, like spaces, from imported data. But what if your data contains nonprintable characters, like the ones shown in **Figure A**?

Figure A



	A	B
1	Name	
2	Mary Jones	
3	Richard Conner	
4	Andrew Conway	
5	Bernadette Peterson	
6	James Fox	
7	Joseph Chen	
8	Robert Miller	
9	James Wolf	
10	Jeanette Curry	

To clean up this data, Excel provides the CLEAN function. Follow these steps:

Select C2:C10.

Enter the following formula:

=CLEAN(A2)

Press Ctrl + Enter (**Figure B**).

Figure B

	A	B	C	D
1	Name		Name	
2	Mary Jones		=CLEAN(A2)	
3	Richard Conner			
4	Andrew Conway			
5	Bernadette Peterson			
6	James Fox			
7	Joseph Chen			
8	Robert Miller			
9	James Wolf			
10	Jeanette Curry			
11				

Excel displays the contents of the cells without the nonprintable characters. You can now copy the results to another part of the workbook using the Paste Special option to copy the values without the formulas (**Figure C**).

Figure C

C2		fx =CLEAN(A2)		
	A	B	C	D
1	Name		Name	
2	Mary Jones		Mary Jones	
3	Richard Conner		Richard Conner	
4	Andrew Conway		Andrew Conway	
5	Bernadette Peterson		Bernadette Peterson	
6	James Fox		James Fox	
7	Joseph Chen		Joseph Chen	
8	Robert Miller		Robert Miller	
9	James Wolf		James Wolf	
10	Jeanette Curry		Jeanette Curry	
11				

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