

How to Cut-and-Paste a Word Table into Excel

This procedure outlines how to paste a Word table into an Excel spreadsheet without creating a separate row and cell for paragraphs in the Excel spreadsheet.

In Word:

Before you start the process, consider the difference between a soft return (also called a line break), and a hard return (Also called a hard break or carriage return). Hard returns are used to signify the end of a paragraph, whereas soft returns simply signify the end of a line. While Word recognizes the difference, Excel does not. Excel only accepts soft returns in a cell.

- Step 1.** Select your entire table in Word.
- Step 2.** Open the "Find and Replace" dialog (e.g., by typing Ctrl+H).
- Step 3.** In the "Find what" field, enter ^l. This will select all line breaks.
- Step 4.** In the "Replace with" field, enter ^v. This is a shortcut for the paragraph symbol ¶, also known as a "pilcrow".
- Step 5.** Click "Replace All".
- Step 6.** Now, select paragraph breaks by entering ^p in the "Find what" field.
- Step 7.** In the "Replace with" field, enter ^v to create a pilcrows.
- Step 8.** Click "Replace All".
- Step 9.** Copy the table data to the clipboard.

In Excel:

These steps require you to enter 'Alt codes' which allow special characters not in the keyboard to be entered in Excel. To enter an Alt code, hold down the **Alt** key as you type the appropriate digits on the numeric keypad. It may help to have **Num Lock** on.

- Step 1.** Paste your table in the desired location in Excel.
- Step 2.** With the tabular data selected, open the "Find and Replace" dialog (again, Ctrl+H works as a keyboard shortcut).
- Step 3.** In the "Find what" field, enter the following Alt code: Alt+0182. A pilcrow appears.
- Step 4.** In the Replace field, enter the following Alt code: Alt+0010.
- Step 5.** This code enters in a single line break. Nothing appears in the box, but your cursor may change shape.
- Step 6.** Click "Replace All". All the pilcrows will become line breaks within the cell and the row from the Word table will become a single row in the Excel table.