

Using Flash Fill



Introduced in Excel 2013, Flash Fill recognizes patterns in data based on neighboring cells. It's much more sophisticated than Auto Fill. You can use it, for example, to reformat text and split or combine data. Here's an example.

- 1 You might have a list of names, with the first name and last name combined. For the first row, type the first and second names into the next cells. This is how you teach Excel the pattern to copy.

Name	First Name	Surname
Murphy Slaw	Murphy	Slaw
Bob Sled		
Phil Space		
Dave Triffids		
Gladys Working		

- 2 Position your cursor in the empty first name cell for the second name.
- 3 Press Ctrl + E or click the Flash Fill button on the ribbon. Find it by clicking the Data tab, then looking in the Data Tools.



- 4 The first name column is then automatically filled out for you. Check the results look okay, and then do the same for the last name column.