

Follow these instructions¹ to download the Office of Defects Investigation (ODI) Complaints data (5-year) and import them into Microsoft Excel. ODI Complaints data are available in the compressed data (ZIP) format on the ODI web site.

The system characteristics of the target machine will affect the speed and performance of the processing needed to accomplish the downloading and importing of the Complaints data.

Detailed field descriptions of the data file are given in Appendix A.

Note: For consistency the generic file names **COMPLAINTS_RECEIVED** and **CMPL** are used throughout these instructions. Replace these with the actual file name of the 5-year set being downloaded, e.g., **COMPLAINTS_RECEIVED_1995-1999** or **CMPL_1995-1999**, as appropriate.

Go to the following URL:

<https://www-odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/downloads/index.cfm>

Download Data from NHTSA/ODI Databases		
Select the .zip file for the desired database to download and extract the data. See the corresponding .txt file for a description of the file layout. All times shown are Eastern Time (ET).		
Complaints		
Name	Last Modified	Size
<i>Single file of all Complaints</i>		
FLAT_CMPL.zip	05/10/2021 01:53:11 PM	264.8M
Import_Instructions_Excel_All.pdf	05/10/2021 12:24:59 PM	531K
<i>Five-year sets based on Received Date</i>		
COMPLAINTS_RECEIVED_2020-2021.zip	05/10/2021 12:37:32 PM	17.5M
COMPLAINTS_RECEIVED_2015-2019.zip	05/10/2021 12:35:19 PM	78.0M
COMPLAINTS_RECEIVED_2010-2014.zip	05/10/2021 12:33:25 PM	69.2M
COMPLAINTS_RECEIVED_2005-2009.zip	05/10/2021 12:31:58 PM	43.6M
COMPLAINTS_RECEIVED_2000-2004.zip	05/10/2021 12:31:05 PM	38.0M
COMPLAINTS_RECEIVED_1995-1999.zip	05/10/2021 12:30:41 PM	13.7M
Import_Instructions_Excel_5-year.pdf	05/10/2021 12:23:59 PM	315K
Import_Instructions_Access.pdf	05/10/2021 12:24:59 PM	1.2M
CMPL.txt	05/10/2021 12:24:57 PM	8K
Defect Investigations		

1. Select the **COMPLAINTS_RECEIVED.zip** file.
2. **Save** the file to your Downloads folder or another destination folder on your system.

¹ The PDF version of this document is located at

http://www-odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/downloads/folders/Complaints/Import_Instructions_Excel_5-year.pdf

3. Extract the zipped file (**CMPL.txt**) to the desired folder.

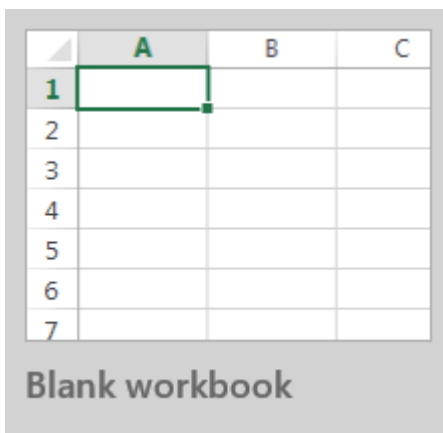
Note: The unzipped text file of Complaints data is now ready to be imported into a Microsoft Excel workbook.

4. Open Microsoft Excel.

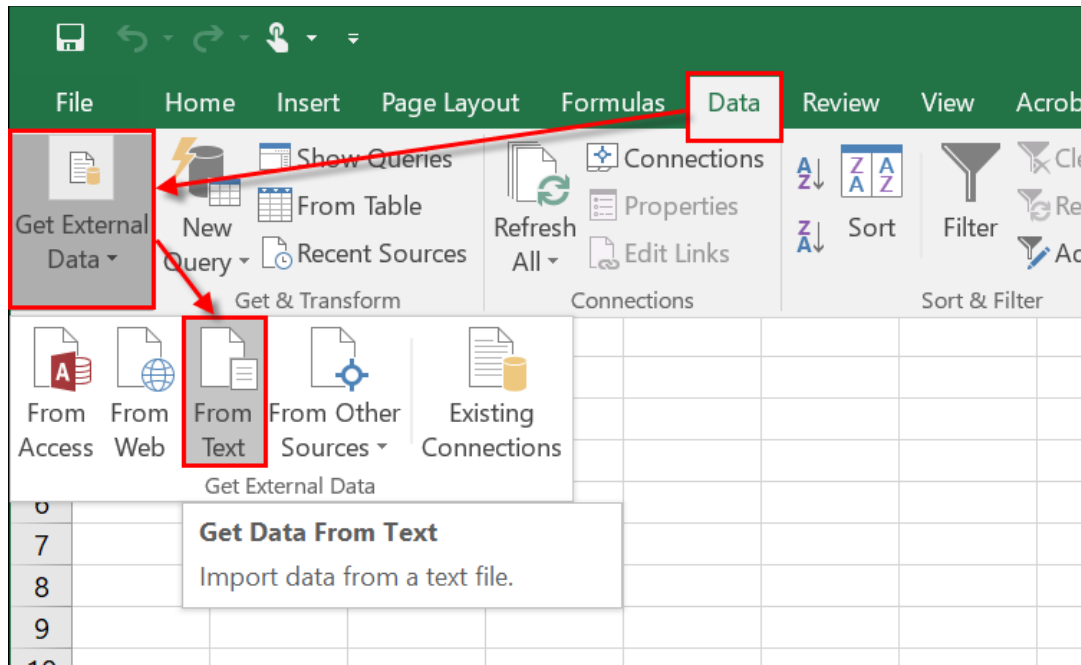


Note: The following screenshots are from Microsoft Excel 2016. Other versions will have similar views and functionality, but may have differing features and limitations. Use the toolbars or help feature if you have difficulty locating or using a function.

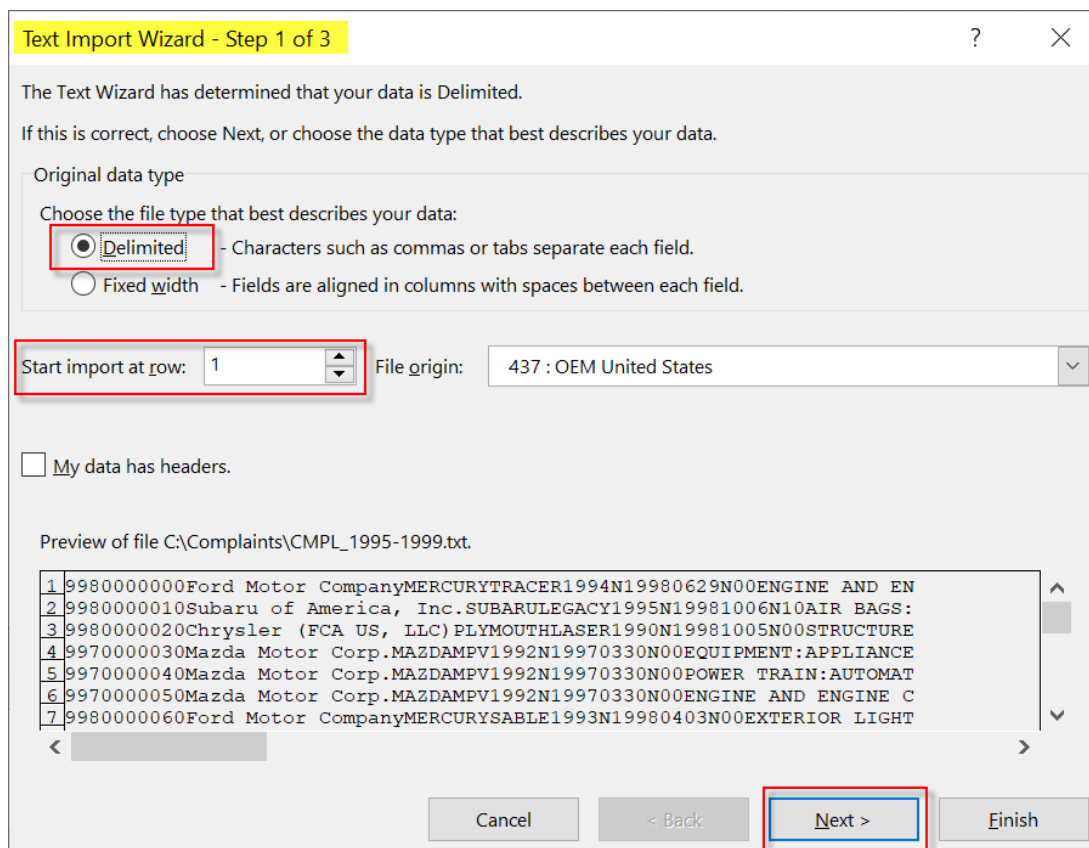
5. Open a **Blank workbook**.



6. Open the **Text Import Wizard** by selecting **Data > Get External Data > From Text**.



7. Locate and select the **CMPL.txt** file that was extracted from the downloaded .zip file.
8. In the **Text Import Wizard – Step 1 of 3** select **Delimited** and make sure that **Start import at row** is set to 1 and then select **Next >**.



9. In the **Text Import Wizard – Step 2 of 3** make sure that only **Tab** is selected under **Delimiters** and then select **Next >**.

Text Import Wizard - Step 2 of 3

This screen lets you set the delimiters your data contains. You can see how your text is affected in the preview below.

Delimiters

☒ Tab

☐ Semicolon

☐ Comma

☐ Space

☐ Other:

☐ Treat consecutive delimiters as one

Text qualifier: " ▼

Data preview

998000000	0	Ford Motor Company	MERCURY	TRACER	1994	N	19980629	N	0
998000001	0	Subaru of America, Inc.	SUBARU	LEGACY	1995	N	19981006	N	1
998000002	0	Chrysler (FCA US, LLC)	PLYMOUTH	LASER	1990	N	19981005	N	0
997000003	0	Mazda Motor Corp.	MAZDA	MPV	1992	N	19970330	N	0
997000004	0	Mazda Motor Corp.	MAZDA	MPV	1992	N	19970330	N	0
997000005	0	Mazda Motor Corp.	MAZDA	MPV	1992	N	19970330	N	0
998000006	0	Ford Motor Company	MERCURY	SABLE	1993	N	19980403	N	0

< >

Cancel < Back **Next >** Finish

10. In the **Text Import Wizard – Step 3 of 3** select **Finish** to import all of the data as is. If you wish to reformat or skip importing any of the columns, make those changes before selecting **Finish**.

Text Import Wizard - Step 3 of 3

This screen lets you select each column and set the Data Format.

Column data format

☒ General
☐ Text
☐ Date: MDY
☐ Do not import column (skip)

'General' converts numeric values to numbers, date values to dates, and all remaining values to text.

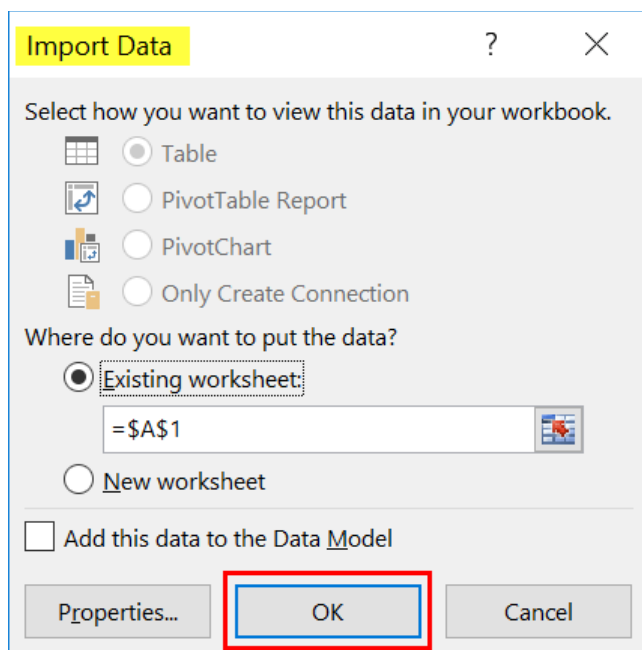
Advanced...

Data preview

General	General	General	General	General	General	General	General	General	General
998000000	0	Ford Motor Company	MERCURY	TRACER	1994	N	19980629	N	0
998000001	0	Subaru of America, Inc.	SUBARU	LEGACY	1995	N	19981006	N	1
998000002	0	Chrysler (FCA US, LLC)	PLYMOUTH	LASER	1990	N	19981005	N	0
997000003	0	Mazda Motor Corp.	MAZDA	MPV	1992	N	19970330	N	0
997000004	0	Mazda Motor Corp.	MAZDA	MPV	1992	N	19970330	N	0
997000005	0	Mazda Motor Corp.	MAZDA	MPV	1992	N	19970330	N	0
998000006	0	Ford Motor Company	MERCURY	SABLE	1993	N	19980403	N	0

Cancel < Back Next > Finish

11. In the **Import Data** window select **OK** to import the data at the beginning of the current worksheet. If a different location is desired, make that selection before selecting **OK**.



12. Importing the data can take a minute or more, depending on system characteristics. A portion of the worksheet is shown below.

	A	B	C	D	E
1	998000000	0	Ford Motor Company	MERCURY	TRACER
2	998000001	0	Subaru of America, Inc.	SUBARU	LEGACY
3	998000002	0	Chrysler (FCA US, LLC)	PLYMOUTH	LASER
4	997000003	0	Mazda Motor Corp.	MAZDA	MPV
5	997000004	0	Mazda Motor Corp.	MAZDA	MPV
6	997000005	0	Mazda Motor Corp.	MAZDA	MPV
7	998000006	0	Ford Motor Company	MERCURY	SABLE
8	7	0	UNKNOWN MANUFACTURER	UNKNOWN	UNKNOWN
9	998000008	0	Chrysler (FCA US, LLC)	PLYMOUTH	NEON
10	997000009	529	Ford Motor Company	MERCURY	MYSTIQUE
11	10	780	Toyota Motor Corporation	TOYOTA	CAMRY

13. Use the Excel **Save As** function to **Save** the import with a meaningful filename, such as **NHTSA Consumer Complaints 1995-1999.xlsx**, in the desired folder.

14. Close Excel after saving the data.

This concludes the import process. You can now view all the data in the Excel workbook.

Appendix A. Complaints File Characteristics

Field#	Name	Type/Size	Description
1	CMPLID	CHAR (9)	NHTSA'S INTERNAL UNIQUE SEQUENCE NUMBER. IS AN UPDATEABLE FIELD,THUS DATA FOR A GIVEN RECORD POTENTIALLY COULD CHANGE FROM ONE DATA OUTPUT FILE TO THE NEXT.
2	ODINO	CHAR (9)	NHTSA'S INTERNAL REFERENCE NUMBER. THIS NUMBER MAY BE REPEATED FOR MULTIPLE COMPONENTS. ALSO, IF LDATE IS PRIOR TO DEC 15, 2002, THIS NUMBER MAY BE REPEATED FOR MULTIPLE PRODUCTS OWNED BY THE SAME COMPLAINANT.
3	MFR_NAME	CHAR (40)	MANUFACTURER'S NAME
4	MAKETXT	CHAR (25)	VEHICLE/EQUIPMENT MAKE
5	MODELTX	CHAR (256)	VEHICLE/EQUIPMENT MODEL
6	YEARTXT	CHAR (4)	MODEL YEAR, 9999 IF UNKNOWN or N/A
7	CRASH	CHAR (1)	WAS VEHICLE INVOLVED IN A CRASH, 'Y' OR 'N'
8	FAILDATE	CHAR (8)	DATE OF INCIDENT (YYYYMMDD)
9	FIRE	CHAR (1)	WAS VEHICLE INVOLVED IN A FIRE 'Y' OR 'N'
10	INJURED	NUMBER (2)	NUMBER OF PERSONS INJURED
11	DEATHS	NUMBER (2)	NUMBER OF FATALITIES
12	COMPDESC	CHAR (128)	SPECIFIC COMPONENT'S DESCRIPTION
13	CITY	CHAR (30)	CONSUMER'S CITY
14	STATE	CHAR (2)	CONSUMER'S STATE CODE
15	VIN	CHAR (11)	VEHICLE'S VIN#
16	DATEA	CHAR (8)	DATE ADDED TO FILE (YYYYMMDD)
17	LDATE	CHAR (8)	DATE COMPLAINT RECEIVED BY NHTSA (YYYYMMDD)
18	MILES	NUMBER (7)	VEHICLE MILEAGE AT FAILURE
19	OCCURENCES	NUMBER (4)	NUMBER OF OCCURRENCES
20	CDESCR	CHAR (2048)	DESCRIPTION OF THE COMPLAINT
21	CMPL_TYPE	CHAR (4)	SOURCE OF COMPLAINT CODE: CAG =CONSUMER ACTION GROUP CON =FORWARDED FROM A CONGRESSIONAL OFFICE DP =DEFECT PETITION,RESULT OF A DEFECT PETITION EVOQ =HOTLINE VOQ EWR =EARLY WARNING REPORTING INS =INSURANCE COMPANY IVOQ =NHTSA WEB SITE LETR =CONSUMER LETTER MAVQ =NHTSA MOBILE APP MIVQ =NHTSA MOBILE APP MVOQ =OPTICAL MARKED VOQ RC =RECALL COMPLAINT,RESULT OF A RECALL INVESTIGATION RP =RECALL PETITION,RESULT OF A RECALL PETITION SVOQ =PORTABLE SAFETY COMPLAINT FORM (PDF) VOQ =NHTSA VEHICLE OWNERS QUESTIONNAIRE
22	POLICE_RPT_YN	CHAR (1)	WAS INCIDENT REPORTED TO POLICE 'Y' OR 'N'
23	PURCH_DT	CHAR (8)	DATE PURCHASED (YYYYMMDD)
24	ORIG_OWNER_YN	CHAR (1)	WAS ORIGINAL OWNER 'Y' OR 'N'
25	ANTI_BRAKES_YN	CHAR (1)	ANTI-LOCK BRAKES 'Y' OR 'N'
26	CRUISE_CONT_YN	CHAR (1)	CRUISE CONTROL 'Y' OR 'N'
27	NUM_CYLS	NUMBER (2)	NUMBER OF CYLINDERS
28	DRIVE_TRAIN	CHAR (4)	DRIVE TRAIN TYPE [AWD,4WD,FWD,RWD]

29	FUEL_SYS	CHAR (4)	FUEL SYSTEM CODE: FI =FUEL INJECTION TB =TURBO
30	FUEL_TYPE	CHAR (4)	FUEL TYPE CODE: BF =BIFUEL CN =CNG/LPG DS =DIESEL GS =GAS HE =HYBRID ELECTRIC
31	TRANS_TYPE	CHAR (4)	VEHICLE TRANSMISSION TYPE [AUTO, MAN]
32	VEH_SPEED	NUMBER (3)	VEHICLE SPEED
33	DOT	CHAR (20)	DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TIRE IDENTIFIER
34	TIRE_SIZE	CHAR (30)	TIRE SIZE
35	LOC_OF_TIRE	CHAR (4)	LOCATION OF TIRE CODE: FSW =DRIVER SIDE FRONT DSR =DRIVER SIDE REAR FTR =PASSENGER SIDE FRONT PSR =PASSENGER SIDE REAR SPR =SPARE
36	TIRE_FAIL_TYPE	CHAR (4)	TYPE OF TIRE FAILURE CODE: BST =BLISTER BLW =BLOWOUT TTL =CRACK OFR =OUT OF ROUND TSW =PUNCTURE TTR =ROAD HAZARD TSP =TREAD SEPARATION
37	ORIG_EQUIP_YN	CHAR (1)	WAS PART ORIGINAL EQUIPMENT 'Y' OR 'N'
38	MANUF_DT	CHAR (8)	DATE OF MANUFACTURE (YYYYMMDD)
39	SEAT_TYPE	CHAR (4)	TYPE OF CHILD SEAT CODE: B =BOOSTER C =CONVERTIBLE I =INFANT IN =INTEGRATED TD =TODDLER
40	RESTRAINT_TYPE	CHAR (4)	INSTALLATION SYSTEM CODE; A =VEHICLE SAFETY BELT B =LATCH SYSTEM
41	DEALER_NAME	CHAR (40)	DEALER'S NAME
42	DEALER_TEL	CHAR (20)	DEALER'S TELEPHONE NUMBER
43	DEALER_CITY	CHAR (30)	DEALER'S CITY
44	DEALER_STATE	CHAR (2)	DEALER'S STATE CODE
45	DEALER_ZIP	CHAR (10)	DEALER'S ZIPCODE
46	PROD_TYPE	CHAR (4)	PRODUCT TYPE CODE: V =VEHICLE T =TIRES E =EQUIPMENT C =CHILD RESTRAINT
47	REPAIRED_YN	CHAR (1)	WAS DEFECTIVE TIRE REPAIRED 'Y' OR 'N'
48	MEDICAL_ATTN	CHAR (1)	WAS MEDICAL ATTENTION REQUIRED 'Y' OR 'N'
49	VEHICLES_TOWED_YN	CHAR (1)	WAS VEHICLE TOWED 'Y' OR 'N'