# Excel/Outlook: Linking Dates in Excel to your Outlook Calendar

What? Three Outlook tips in a row? Well, I was going to do something else, but a client asked me a great question last week about taking "due" dates from an Excel spreadsheet and making Outlook reminders out of them. So, you can thank Pam from Elliot Lake for this one…

First of all – some prep work must be done in Excel:

1. Any Excel columns that you want imported into Outlook – *must* have column headings (in Excel) that match appointment field headings in Outlook (circled here).
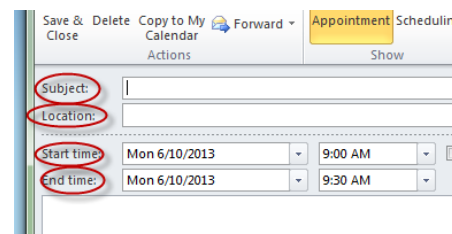
   Let's say you're keeping track of the date by which employees have to have a certain certification. You want three pieces of information to make up each Outlook appointment: Certification Deadline Date; Name of Certification Exam; Employee Number (I don't know…I'm just making these up).

   What you'll need to do, in Excel, is (temporarily) rename these three columns so they match the (circled) headings inside an Outlook appointment window. So maybe: The Certification Deadline Date column heading is renamed to START TIME; the Name of Certification Exam heading becomes SUBJECT; and Employee Number becomes LOCATION.

2. Make sure the columns that you want to import and located beside one another.

> The headings must match headings that exist in an Outlook appointment window.

3. Select the range that you want imported (including the column headings) – and NAME the range:

   a. Select the range (shown here)
   b. Click inside the NAME BOX (where you see I've typed OutlookStuff (circled here))
   c. Type a name for the range (I used OutlookStuff) – no spaces.
   d. PRESS [ENTER] (very important that you press [ENTER] and not just click your mouse somewhere (nasty habit))
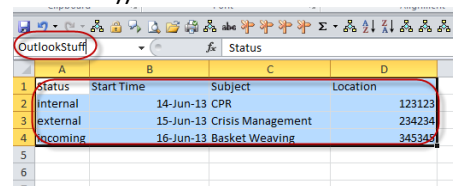
4. Now you need to SAVE the file (IMPORTANT: it must be saved in the old 97-2003 format (with the .xls extension)) and CLOSE the file.

5. In Outlook:

   a. Click the FILE tab – then choose OPEN.
   b. Click the IMPORT option (on the right) – to open the Import and Export Wizard window.
   c. Choose the IMPORT FROM ANOTHER PROGRAM OR FILE option – then click NEXT.
   d. At the SELECT FILE TYPE TO IMPORT FROM list – click Microsoft Excel 97-2003 – then NEXT.
   e. To the right of the FILE TO IMPORT box – click the BROWSE button – locate your Excel file and double-click it – so its name appears in the FILE TO IMPORT box – then click NEXT.
   f. When the SELECT DESTINATION FOLDER – scroll up near the top of the list and select CALENDAR (make sure it's CALENDAR listed under OUTLOOK – not ARCHIVE) – then click NEXT.
   g. In the "THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS WILL BE PERFORMED WINDOW" – you should see the RANGE NAME (ie, OutlookStuff in this example) that you called your Excel range – click the (blank) square beside it – if the column headings that you created in Excel match the available headings in Outlook – the OK button should become available – click it.
   h. The IMPORTING window will (briefly) appear – done. Go check out your Outlook calendar…there will be appointments for each row of the named Excel range…on the appropriate days.
   i. Whew! That was a long one.