Quickly Combine Column Data with Excel's Flash Fill

Excel provides the greatest tool for combining two columns of data into one. You no longer have to use the concatenate function. You simply have to type.

In this example, I create a new column of data called Full Name. I already have a First Name column and a Last Name Column. I will use Flash Fill to combine the data from the two columns.

Step 1 – Add a new column

Right click on a column heading and choose Insert to add a new column.

Step 2 – Add a Column Heading

I will enter the heading Full Name in cell D2.

Step 3 – Type the Information from the Two Cells to Combine

In the first row of the list, type the information from both cells you wish to combine in the new column. For example, I will type Antonio Rommero in the Full Name column of the first row.

Step 4 – In the Next Row Begin Typing the Information from the First Column That You Are Combining

In this instance, begin typing the name LeAnn, which is the first name in this row. The Flash Fill List appears but is dimmed.

First spreadsheet table (cell D3 = "LeAnne Chang"):

	Date	First	Last	Full Name	Office	Destination	Amount	Tickets	Total
2	1/3/2010	Antonio	Rommero	Antonio Rommero	Spring Lake Park	Washington, D.C.	$ 399	1	$ 399
3	2/16/2010	LeAnne	Chang	LeAnne Chang	Maplewood	Los Angeles	$ 295	2	$ 590
4	2/19/2010	Julie	Fredricks	Julie Fredricks	Minneapolis	New York	$ 349	2	$ 698
5	2/27/2010	Janelle	Olness	Janelle Olness	Fargo	Washington, D.C.	$ 399	2	$ 798
6	3/27/2010	Anne	Olson	Anne Olson	Brooklyn Center	New York	$ 349	1	$ 349
7	3/27/2010	Anna	Torkleson	Anna Torkleson	Brainerd	New York	$ 349	2	$ 698
8	3/30/2010	Maria	Rodriguez	Maria Rodriguez	Hibbing	Washington, D.C.	$ 399	1	$ 399
9	4/20/2010	Darlene	Clay	Darlene Clay	St. Paul	St. Louis	$ 299	5	$ 1,495
10	4/30/2010	Jason	Trent	Jason Trent	Hibbing	Dallas	$ 187	2	$ 374
11	5/5/2010	Brian	Kipp	Brian Kipp	Duluth	Norfolk	$ 469	1	$ 469
12	5/29/2010	Alice	Lindgram	Alice Lindgram	Bloomington	Duluth	$ 149	3	$ 447
13	6/9/2010	Bernice	Young	Bernice Young	Duluth	Duluth	$ 149	2	$ 298
14	6/18/2010	Janelle	Olness	Janelle Olness	Fargo	Toronto	$ 349	1	$ 349
15	6/29/2010	Julie	Swanson	Julie Swanson	St. Peter	Duluth	$ 149	3	$ 447
16	1/10/2010	Joseph	Black	Joseph Black	Bloomington	Houston	$ 185	2	$ 370
17	1/20/2010	Rachel	Lyons	Rachel Lyons	Maplewood	Toronto	$ 349	1	$ 349
18	2/2/2010	Harrison	Thompson	Harrison Thompson	Duluth	Philadelphia	$ 399	1	$ 399
19	2/17/2010	Phillip	Grahams	Phillip Grahams	Edina	Boston	$ 365	1	$ 365
20	2/25/2010	Anne	Olson	Anne Olson	Brooklyn Center	Milwaukee	$ 285	2	$ 570
21	3/15/2010	Roger	Wilson	Roger Wilson	Brooklyn Center	Chicago	$ 199	2	$ 398
22	3/24/2010	Julie	Swanson	Julie Swanson	St. Peter	Dallas	$ 187	2	$ 374
23	3/25/2010	Tony	Chekov	Tony Chekov	Edina	Los Angeles	$ 295	2	$ 590
24	3/27/2010	Wendy	Nelson	Wendy Nelson	Two Harbors	New York	$ 349	2	$ 698
25	4/16/2010	Jennifer	Jordon	Jennifer Jordon	Spring Lake Park	New York	$ 349	2	$ 698
26	4/19/2010	Alice	Lindgram	Alice Lindgram	Bloomington	Toronto	$ 349	1	$ 349
27	6/3/2010	Bruce	Thorgood	Bruce Thorgood	Two Harbors	Los Angeles	$ 295	1	$ 295

Step 5 – Press Enter to Complete the Flash Fill

Press Enter to accept the Flash Fill List.

Second spreadsheet table (cell D4 = "Julie Fredricks"):

	Date	First	Last	Full Name	Office	Destination	Amount	Tickets	Total	
2	1/3/2010	Antonio	Rommero	Antonio Rommero	Spring Lake Park	Washington, D.C.	$ 399	1	$ 399	Yes
3	2/16/2010	LeAnne	Chang	LeAnne Chang	Maplewood	Los Angeles	$ 295	2	$ 590	No
4	2/19/2010	Julie	Fredricks	Julie Fredricks	Minneapolis	New York	$ 349	2	$ 698	Yes
5	2/27/2010	Janelle	Olness	Janelle Olness	Fargo	Washington, D.C.	$ 399	2	$ 798	Yes
6	3/27/2010	Anne	Olson	Anne Olson	Brooklyn Center	New York	$ 349	1	$ 349	Yes
7	3/27/2010	Anna	Torkleson	Anna Torkleson	Brainerd	New York	$ 349	2	$ 698	Yes
8	3/30/2010	Maria	Rodriguez	Maria Rodriguez	Hibbing	Washington, D.C.	$ 399	1	$ 399	Yes
9	4/20/2010	Darlene	Clay	Darlene Clay	St. Paul	St. Louis	$ 299	5	$ 1,495	Yes
10	4/30/2010	Jason	Trent	Jason Trent	Hibbing	Dallas	$ 187	2	$ 374	Yes
11	5/5/2010	Brian	Kipp	Brian Kipp	Duluth	Norfolk	$ 469	1	$ 469	Yes
12	5/29/2010	Alice	Lindgram	Alice Lindgram	Bloomington	Duluth	$ 149	3	$ 447	No
13	6/9/2010	Bernice	Young	Bernice Young	Duluth	Duluth	$ 149	2	$ 298	No
14	6/18/2010	Janelle	Olness	Janelle Olness	Fargo	Toronto	$ 349	1	$ 349	Yes
15	6/29/2010	Julie	Swanson	Julie Swanson	St. Peter	Duluth	$ 149	3	$ 447	No
16	1/10/2010	Joseph	Black	Joseph Black	Bloomington	Houston	$ 185	2	$ 370	Yes
17	1/20/2010	Rachel	Lyons	Rachel Lyons	Maplewood	Toronto	$ 349	1	$ 349	Yes
18	2/2/2010	Harrison	Thompson	Harrison Thompson	Duluth	Philadelphia	$ 399	1	$ 399	Yes
19	2/17/2010	Phillip	Grahams	Phillip Grahams	Edina	Boston	$ 365	1	$ 365	Yes
20	2/25/2010	Anne	Olson	Anne Olson	Brooklyn Center	Milwaukee	$ 285	2	$ 570	No
21	3/15/2010	Roger	Wilson	Roger Wilson	Brooklyn Center	Chicago	$ 199	2	$ 398	No
22	3/24/2010	Julie	Swanson	Julie Swanson	St. Peter	Dallas	$ 187	2	$ 374	No
23	3/25/2010	Tony	Chekov	Tony Chekov	Edina	Los Angeles	$ 295	2	$ 590	Yes
24	3/27/2010	Wendy	Nelson	Wendy Nelson	Two Harbors	New York	$ 349	2	$ 698	Yes
25	4/16/2010	Jennifer	Jordon	Jennifer Jordon	Spring Lake Park	New York	$ 349	2	$ 698	No
26	4/19/2010	Alice	Lindgram	Alice Lindgram	Bloomington	Toronto	$ 349	1	$ 349	No
27	6/3/2010	Bruce	Thorgood	Bruce Thorgood	Two Harbors	Los Angeles	$ 295	1	$ 295	No

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