



How to split a variable containing comma-separated numbers into multiple variables using Excel

Problem

Multiple response data has been captured in such a way that it appears in Excel as a single column, rather than as separate variables for each column (e.g., 1, 4, 6, 9). You want to express each number as a separate variable in separate columns.

Steps to solve

1. Determine the maximum number of entries that appear per respondent. For example, if no respondent has selected more than five categories, then there are five entries.
2. In Excel, insert blank columns to the right of the column containing the comma-separated data. The number of columns to be inserted needs to be one less than the number of entries (e.g., if there are five entries, you insert four columns to the right).
3. In Excel, select all of the comma-delimited cells, but not the column heading.
4. In Excel, select **Data** and **Text to Columns** (the precise names of these may be different, depending upon which version of Excel you use).
5. Select **Delimited**.
6. Click **Next**.
7. Check **Comma**.
8. Press **Finish**.
9. Give the columns some form of variable name (e.g., if the original variable was called Q5, you might call the variables Q5a, Q5b, Q5c, Q5d and Q5e).
10. Repeat this process for any other multiple response questions.
11. Save the file as a CSV file.
12. Import into Q.
13. Create a question containing the variables and set as a **Pick One - Multi**.
14. Select the question, right click and select **Insert Ready – Made Formula(s)** and **Questions → Pick Any with All Combinations**

Additional reading

Terms shown in italics and bold can be found in the index of the *Q Reference Manual*, the *Quick Start Manual* and via the **Help** menu within Q.

What to do if the problem is not solved

If these instructions are insufficient, please email us (**Help | Email Support...**) with a detailed description of what in the instructions is not working for you and we will either provide you with more comprehensive instructions, or, upon your request, we can do the analysis for you in your file (fees apply) .