




TimeTabler Software



Import of Basic Data

from an MIS or third-party system
into **TimeTabler**

Contact

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Book T1

Import Basic Data into TimeTabler

Purpose of this Document

This document describes how to:

- import basic data (teachers, subjects, rooms) **from a third-party system** (eg: **your MIS**),
- ... **into TimeTabler**.

The *third-party system* could be an MIS* / Admin System, or simply a file maintained in Excel, etc.
(*Management Information System)

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Any Questions ?

If you have any questions, or would like to see an example import file, please ask us for more details:
support@timetabler.com

1 Overview of the Import

Why use the import ?

When using **TimeTabler** for the very first time, a school may wish to import the list of Teachers (staff initials and full name) from their MIS. (Either to speed-up data-entry or so that teacher initials, etc are the same in both systems). They may also want to import a list of Subjects and/or Rooms.

You can do this if your MIS can export this data as a CSV (or tab-delimited, or space-delimited, or as an Excel xls file)

The format is shown on the next page.

Is it common practice to use this import ?

It is optional, but we typically find:

- In **the first Year** of using **TimeTabler**, it is common to import your Basic Data from your MIS (or from an Excel file), although you can type it manually if you wish.
- In **Year 2 onwards**, most schools find it easier / quicker to simply edit their existing data from last year. You have already spent time getting your data the way you want it for timetabling, and only a few of your Teachers will have changed, and Subjects and Rooms are often the same.

How does the user import into TimeTabler ?

The school timetabler should import as follows:

Go to "File → Import Basic Data from a file" and follow the screen instructions thereafter.

Note that **by default** any imported data **over-writes** any existing data you have already entered manually – if you would prefer that the imported data is simply **added** to the end of your existing data, then choose 'Append' at Step 3. 'Append' is useful if you are importing subjects from **Options**, or you wish to update last year's subjects with some changes for this year.

File format

A variety of file formats can be imported into **TimeTabler**. Usually they are as follows:

Format: typically either **CSV** or **Excel**

Contents: typically either: (a) **3 separate files**, one for Teachers, one for Subjects, one for Rooms
or: (b) **1 single file** containing Teachers, Subjects & Rooms***.

*** If **(b)**, then the file exported from your MIS must contain lines beginning with "TC" or "TE" or "TS" (for each teacher), and/or "SB" or "SU" (for each subject) and/or "RM" or "RO" (for each Room). This format is best illustrated by an example – see 'Example 1' for a sample CSV file. [Note that the codes and names can appear in different fields from the example file and still be imported].

The file needs to be CSV (or tab-delimited, or space-delimited, or an Excel xls file), with one line for each item to be imported – see example on next page.

The file can have **any name** - but the user is asked to browse for it, so the more 'obvious' the name the better.

The Import Screen

When you go to “File → Import Basic Data from a file”, you will see this screen:

Import from 3rd-Party or MIS File (in 5 steps)

If you have a CSV (or Excel or tab-delimited) file of the correct format, then you can use this screen to import your Basic Data (Teachers / Subjects / Rooms) from another system (eg: from your MIS / Admin System). Just work through the 5 steps below.

Note: this import is typically only used in the first year that you use TimeTabler - thereafter, it is usually quicker to edit your existing Basic Data in TimeTabler.

1 Choose the file to import from:

Import Filename (click on yellow folder to browse):

F:\Teachers.csv

Click here to see the required file formats: [?](#)

The import file contains this data:

1-Abbrev	2-Name	3-Fac	4-Subj	5-Rm1	6-Rm2	7-Rm3
JHa	Miss J.HARRISON	1	Maths	U9	U10	L19
JM	Mr J.MASON	1	Maths	U7	U8	L18
FHi	Mr F.HICKSON	1	Maths	U1	U7	U9
JV	Ms J.VEITCH	1	Maths	L19	L17	U20
VH	Mr V.HAGAN	1	Maths	L28	U18	L17
AHa	Mrs A.HAWLEY	1	Maths	U2	U17	L1
JWi	*Mr J.WILSON	1	Maths	U9	U19	L18
GWd	Mrs G.WARD	1	Maths	L18	U9	L4
GNe	Mr G.NESS	1	Maths	L17	L18	
AJo	*Mr A.JOHNSON	2	Eng.	U14	U7	L6
JR	Mrs J.ROSE	2	Eng.	U13	L8	U12
SG	Mrs S.GHEITH	2	Eng.	U10	L5	L19
CNe	Miss C.NEWALL	2	Eng.	U31	L2	U30
WT	Mrs J.WAINWRIGHT	2	Eng.	U12	L5	U15
DA	Mrs D.ADDISON	2	Eng.	U14	U12	U31
DS	Mr D.SMITH	2	Eng.	U29	U2	L28
ST	Mr S.TAYLOR	2	Eng.	L10	L5	U7
BJ	Mr B.JACKSON	2	Eng.	L7	L15	L28
MU	Mrs M.UMAAR	2	Eng.	L27	L26	L28
VP	Miss V.PERRY	11	none			

2 Choose the data to import from this file:

If you only want to import a specific type of data, leaving the others unchanged, then please tick the type(s) you want to import below:

Quick Setup Teachers Subjects Rooms

Identifier required?: [?](#)

3 Choose the import method:

Import data like this: replace (allow duplicates) [?](#)

Truncate long subject abbreviations: first 6 [?](#)

4 Select the fields and file format:

Required:

Abbreviation is field: 1 [?](#) Delimiter is: Comma [?](#)

Full Name is field: 2 [?](#) Header is: none [?](#)

Optional (for Teachers only):

Title is field: - [?](#) Room1 is field: 5 [?](#)

Main Subject is field: 4 [?](#) Room2 is field: 6 [?](#)

Dept/Fac is field: 3 [?](#) Room3 is field: 7 [?](#)

Max wkload is field: - [?](#) Reset to defaults

5 Now Click to import this basic data:

Import [←](#)

[Visit the KBase](#) [Length of Fields](#) [How to enter my own data](#) [? Help](#) [Close](#)

It looks complicated at first (because it has options to cover all the different file formats that any school around the World may be using) ... but it is really just a matter of working through the 5 steps in order.

Note-1: If you use an MIS such as [SIMS](#), [iSAMS](#) or [SEEMiS](#), then see the KnowledgeBase article on “Importing Basic Data into TimeTabler”, for details of how to extract a file of the correct format from these MIS.

Note-2: If you cannot see how to import your file into [TimeTabler](#), then please contact our [Support Centre](#), attaching a copy of the file who are trying to import - we will then be able to advise you.

Exporting to an MIS

If (later, at the end of the timetabling process) you export your final timetable to your school MIS (Management Information System), then the file can also (optionally) be used to check that the basic data in your MIS (Teachers, Subjects and Rooms) matches the basic data in [TimeTabler](#).

For more information, see the latest Export Documentation on our website. See also Section 4.

2a Format Example 1: A file containing teachers, subjects & rooms

```

TC,AH,A.HAWLEY
TC,AJ,A.JOHNSON
TC,AK,A.KELLY
TC,AT,A.TAYLOR
TC,BPa,R.PALMER
TC,McC,M.McCULLOUGH
TC,CN,C.NEWALL
TC,DA,D.ADDISON
TC,DK,D.KESTERTON
TC,DS,D.SMITH
TC,FH,F.HICKSON
TC,GMW,G.MOORE-WILLIAMS
TC,GS,G.SMITH
... etc for other teachers ...
TC,RC,R.CHADWICK
TC,RPS,R.PARTINGTON-SMITH
TC,RR,R.REYNOLDS
TC,SA,B.ALLEN
TC,SG,S.GHEITH
TC,ST,S.TAYLOR
TC,WT,J.WAINWRIGHT
SB,Art,Art
SB,Biol,Biology
SB,Bus.St,Business Study
SB,Chem,Chemistry
SB,Eng.,English
... etc for other subjects ...
SB,Maths,Mathematics
SB,Music,Music
SB,P.E.,Physical Educn
SB,Phys,Physics
SB,R.E.,Religious Educn
SB,Sci.,Science
SB,Span,Spanish
SB,Tech,Technology
RM,U1
RM,U2
RM,U10
RM,U11
... etc for other rooms ...
RM,U31
RM,U32
RM,Hall
RM,Lab1
RM,Lab2
RM,Gym

```

One teacher per line:
TC,initial/code,full-name

One subject per line:
SB,abbreviation/code,full-name

One room per line:
RM,room-name

Notes

- 1) TE (or TS) is an alternative to TC
- 2) SB is an alternative to SU
- 3) RO is an alternative to RM
- 4) If you prefer, you can separate the teachers, subjects and rooms into 3 separate files, and import them separately.
- 5) As an alternative to CSV, the file can be tab-delimited, or space-delimited, or an Excel xls file.
- 6) If your file has a 'header' line at the start, you can ask **TimeTabler** to ignore this when importing.
- 7) The imported fields are by default the 2nd & 3rd fields after the identifier (eg: TC) in your file (as above) but if you have a more complicated file with extra information, then you can customize this to import any field, so you could for example import a teacher in this format, by requesting that fields 3 and 6 are imported:
TC,1423,AJ,12 Main Street,43,A.JOHNSON

2b Format Example 2: A file containing teachers only

AH, A. HAWLEY, Maths, Mrs, 21, U2
 AJ, A. JOHNSON, Eng. , Mr, 22, U14
 AK, A. KELLY, Tech, Mr, 18, U24
 AT, A. TAYLOR, Art, Mrs, 15, U18
 CNe, C. NEWALL, Eng. , Miss, 21, U31
 DKe, D. KESTERTON, Geog, Mr, 20, U30
 ... etc for other teachers ...

One teacher per line:

This file includes extra information about each teacher; their main subject, title, max. workload, and favourite room

... all of which can be imported into TimeTabler.

2c Format Example 3: A file containing subjects only, in Excel

Abbreviation	Full Subject Name
Art	Art
Biol	Biology
Bus.St	Business Study
Chem	Chemistry
Eng.	English

... etc for other subjects ...

One subject per line

2d Format Example 4: A file containing rooms only, in Excel

Room name
U1
U2
L1
Lab1
Hall
Gym

... etc for other rooms ...

One room per line

3 Field Lengths in *TimeTabler*

The max field lengths in **TimeTabler** are shown below:

Basic data	Code / abbreviation	Full name
Teachers	3 characters	24
Subjects	6	15
Rooms	n/a	5

If a field appears in the import file that exceeds these lengths, then it does not prevent /stop the import. Instead, the data is simply truncated in **TimeTabler**. The user can then edit it as s/he wishes.

Teacher, Subject and Room codes should be unique.

Note that if (later, at the end of the timetabling process) you are intending to export your final timetable to your school MIS, then it is easier if you have used the same codes in **TimeTabler** as in your MIS. However, if you have used different codes, this does not stop you exporting ... because you can say during the export that 'this code' in **TimeTabler** equates to 'that code' in your MIS.

For example, you can say that teacher "CJo" in **TimeTabler** is "CJOHN" in your MIS.

4 Exporting to an MIS or Admin System

It is generally a good idea to keep your Basic Data in **TimeTabler**, similar to the data in your MIS; this will make it easier for you to export your timetable to your MIS at the end of scheduling.

However, if you don't keep the two the same, that is not a problem. (And in fact, if you import your basic data as explained in this document, then any imported field that is longer than the equivalent field in **TimeTabler**, will be shortened / truncated, and so be slightly different in **TimeTabler** from in your MIS).

If the two are not the same when you come to export at the end of scheduling, then you can simply 'map' one to the other, in **TimeTabler**, during the export, as follows:

Staff /

Teachers: if you are importing from an MIS or Admin System with **more than 3-character staff codes:**

In **TimeTabler**, we have 3-character Staff initials/codes (it's best for the displays and printouts).

If you have longer staff codes in your MIS, then for now, you just need to change any non-unique initials to be something unique in **TimeTabler**. Don't worry (for now) that these initials now differ from those in your MIS.

Then when you come to export to your MIS:

If you have teachers with more than 3 characters in your MIS then, at Step 3 of the export, click 'Prepare your Basic Data' then 'Teachers'. If you **un-tick** 'Teacher initials are the same in both systems' then you can say that 'JHa' in **TimeTabler** is actually 'J.HARRIS' in your MIS (for example). This is remembered thereafter, for all future exports to your MIS. (Because every MIS / Admin System has its own limits for things like this, this was the easiest way to handle it).

Subjects: similarly, you can 'map' your Subject abbreviations/codes during export (at Step 3, as above).

Rooms: similarly, you can 'map' your Rooms names/codes during export (at Step 3, as above).