EXCEL ‹‹‹‹‹‹

By Bill Jelen

Bullet Points in Microsoft Excel

Sometimes you might have the need for bullet points in a comment column in Microsoft Excel. While Microsoft Word offers an icon and dropdown menu to access the bullet points library, there is no such option available in Microsoft Excel.

Excel does provide a shortcut key for typing a bullet. If you have a keyboard with a numeric keypad, make sure Num Lock is on, and type Alt+7. Be sure to use the 7 key on the numeric keypad. Excel has assigned different commands to the number row and the number key-

pad. If you use the 7 key at the top of the keyboard instead, you'll invoke whatever the seventh icon is on your Quick Access Toolbar.

If you're using a keyboard that doesn't have a numeric keypad, there's often a numeric keypad drawn over the MJK LUIO789 keys on the right side of the keyboard. In that case, you would usually hold down FN+7 to type a 7 from the numeric keypad. Therefore, you have to hold down Alt+FN+7 to produce the bullet character.

There's a noticeable delay after you

press Alt+7 and before the bullet appears. It seems that Excel doesn't keep the bullet character in memory and has to load it from some file on your computer. You might notice a similar delay the first time you mark a cell as bold. Excel has to load the bold font into memory before it can change the cell to bold.
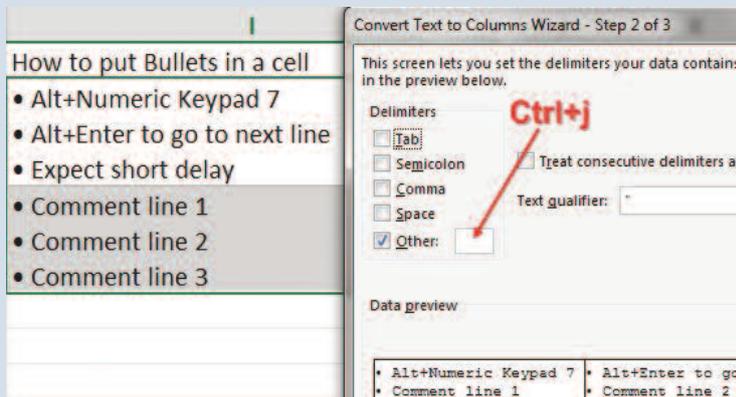
Adding Line Breaks in a Cell

Bullet points are usually used when there are multiple items. To add additional lines to a cell, type the first bullet point, a space, the text for line one, and then press Alt+Enter to move to a new line in the cell.

This is similar to turning on the Wrap Text feature, but by using Alt+Enter, you get to decide where the new line begins.

Breaking Multiple Lines into Columns

You might find yourself with a worksheet where someone has used Alt+ Enter to put multiple values in a single cell. If you need to put those values into multiple columns, you can do so using the Text to Columns command. In Step 1 of the Text to Columns wizard, choose

Figure 1

Delimited. In Step 2, choose the Custom option. Click in the Custom box and type Ctrl+J (see Figure 1). Nothing will appear in the box, but you will see the multiple lines break into columns in the preview window.

Getting Rid of Bullets

After breaking the bullet points into multiple columns, there may not be a need for the bullet points. Choose the range of cells that contains bullet points. Press Ctrl+H to display the Find and Replace dialog. In the Find What box, type Alt+7 and a space. Leave the Replace With box empty. Click Replace All.

Alternate Bullet Points

The Alt+7 shortcut inserts a standard round bullet. There are other bullet point icons available in the various Wingding fonts, but they are significantly more difficult to use. Table 1 shows a list of the icons, the font to use, and the keystroke.

For example, to use the small diamond bullet point in Wingdings (0115), you would follow these steps:

1. Select a blank cell.
2. Hold down the Alt key and type 0115 on the numeric keypad.

3. Release the Alt key. Excel will insert the wrong symbol.
4. Type a space and add your comment.
5. In the formula bar, carefully select only the symbol at the beginning of the line.
6. On the Home tab, open the Font dropdown and choose Wingdings.
7. Press Enter.

The symbol will change to the diamond bullet point while the rest of the cell should stay in a normal font. If you see the entire cell change to Wingding symbols, press Ctrl+Z to undo and select only the initial symbol in the formula bar. Note that some of the symbols in Table 1 require you to choose Webdings, Wingdings 2, or Wingdings 3 as the font.

Once you have successfully added an alternate bullet point, it's easier to copy that symbol from the formula bar and paste it when you need additional bullet points. **SF**

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Table 1		
	Font	**Keystroke**
•	Wingdings 2	Alt+0151
●	Wingdings	Alt+0108
●	Wingdings 2	Alt+0152
⬤	Webdings	Alt+0110
·	Wingdings 2	Alt+0159
•	Wingdings 2	Alt+0150
▪	Wingdings 2	Alt+0160
▪	Wingdings	Alt+0167
■	Wingdings 2	Alt+0161
■	Wingdings 2	Alt+0162
⬧	Wingdings	Alt+0115
◆	Wingdings	Alt+0119
◆	Wingdings	Alt+0116
▹	Wingdings 3	Alt+0238
➤	Wingdings 3	Alt+0134
◉	Wingdings 2	Alt+0158
⊙	Wingdings 2	Alt+0157
◉	Wingdings 2	Alt+0156
◎	Wingdings 2	Alt+0155
○	Wingdings 2	Alt+0154
○	Wingdings 2	Alt+0153