Preserving Number Styles from Excel in Word Mail Merge

Format currency and other numbers by using field codes

Let's start with an example. Say you insert a Price field into a form letter that you're preparing for a mail merge. In the main document, it looks something like this, where «Price» is the field:

```
The gizmo you ordered will cost «Price».
```

Press **ALT+F9**, and you'll see the code behind the field. That code will look like this:

```
The gizmo you ordered will cost { MERGEFIELD "Price" }.
```

You can control the formatting of the prices in that field just by typing a few additional characters (that is, by adding a formatting switch) inside the braces.

To include:

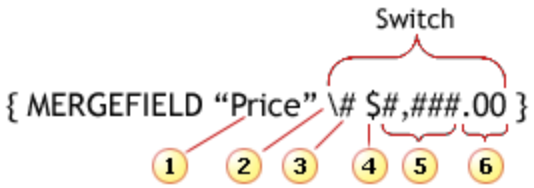
- A currency symbol
- Four digits by default, and a space if the number you're merging has only three digits
- Two decimal places
- A comma between the first and second numbers

This is what you type (shown in bold) in the field code:

```
{ MERGEFIELD "Price" \# $#,##0.00 }
```

When you finish typing, press **ALT+F9** to stop looking at field codes. Now when you merge, all of your prices will be formatted exactly the way you want. (You can use this same approach with numbers other than prices.)

Here's a breakdown of the elements in the switch we just used:



1. The name of the field that you inserted into your main document. It corresponds to a column in your Excel worksheet.
2. Backslash, which starts the formatting switch.
3. Definition of the switch — in this case, to format numbers.
4. Characters that you want to include — for example, a **$** that appears before each price.
5. The maximum number of digits. If there are fewer digits in a number, Word leaves a blank. Type commas where you want them to appear in the number.
6. Decimal point, which you type where you want it to appear. The zeros specify the maximum number of digits after the decimal point. If there are fewer digits, Word puts in a zero.

In the See Also box, you will find a link (called Numeric Picture field switch) to more information about formatting numbers by using a switch.

Format dates by using field codes

You can also use a formatting switch to get dates from a Date column in your spreadsheet to look exactly the way you want in your merged documents. If you insert a Date field into the main document and then press **ALT+F9**, you see this:

```
{ MERGEFIELD "Date" }
```

To get all the dates in the merged documents to have the format February 18, 2008 (regardless of how the dates are formatted in the worksheet cells), you can add this formatting switch (shown in bold) to the field code:

```
{ MERGEFIELD "Date" \@ "MMMM d, yyyy" }
```

In the See Also box, you can find a link (called Date-Time Picture field switch) to more information about formatting dates by using a switch.