

Importing an External Table into MS Access

(CARLI Office, revised July 29, 2011)

This document describes the process to manually import an MS Excel file into a new table in MS Access, in order to use the Excel data as part of an Access query. These instructions are written for Access 2003; the location of some of the menu items may vary in other versions of Access, but the concepts should apply to other Access versions.

These instructions have been written to describe a specific Excel file and its targeted Access table name to meet the requirements of a particular I-Share data maintenance project, but the concept of importing an external file can apply to other queries/projects.

Example 1 describes the creation of the StateNames table. Example 2 describes the creation of the CountryNames table. The Excel files that are to be used to create the tables described in this document are available for download from CARLI website. For other queries/projects, the Excel file to be imported will need to be created by the user as a separate preliminary step.

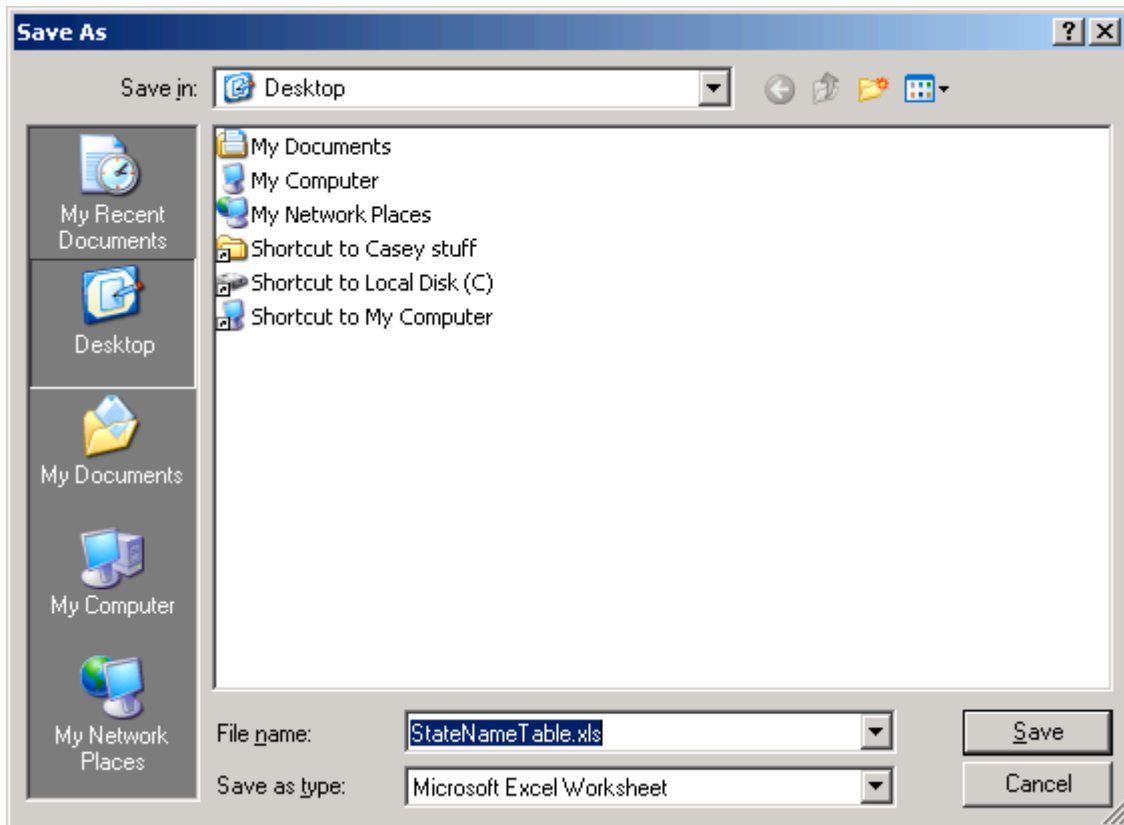
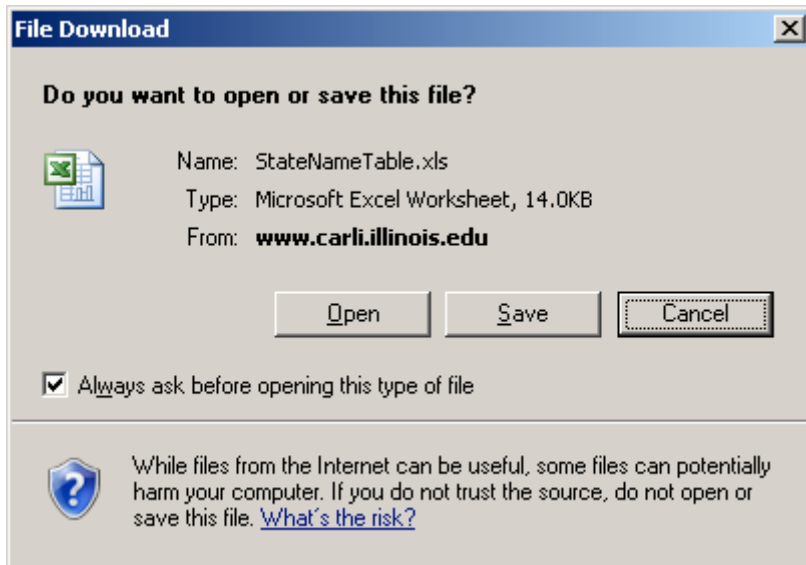
EXAMPLE 1: Step-by-step instructions for importing an Excel file into Access to create a new table called StateNames

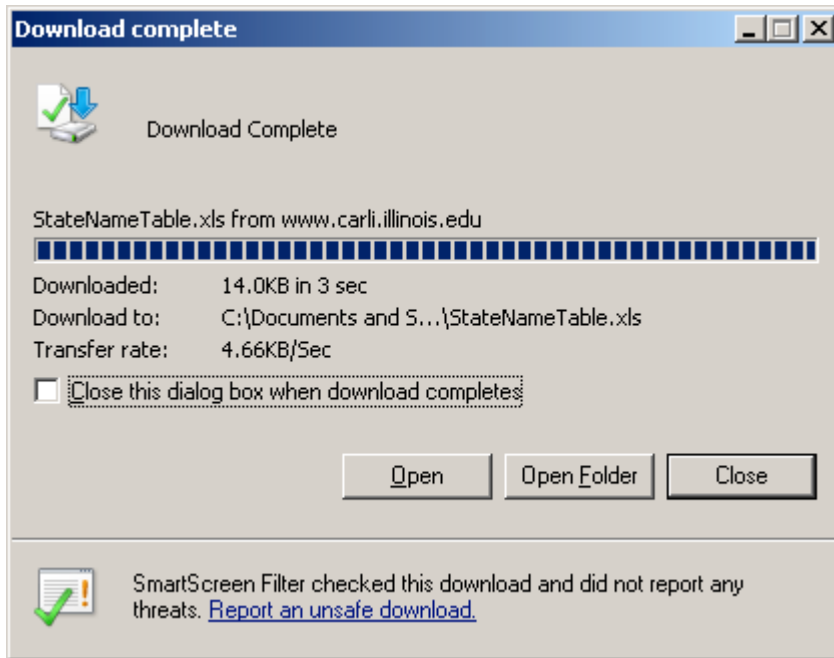
Step 1.1: Point a browser to the I-Share Shared SQL page

<<http://www.carli.illinois.edu/mem-prod/I-Share/secure/sql.html>>, Resources for Report Writing section. Locate the file called StateNameTable.xls and use your browser's functionality to download/save the Excel file to a convenient place on your PC. The PC's Desktop is used in the screen shots below.

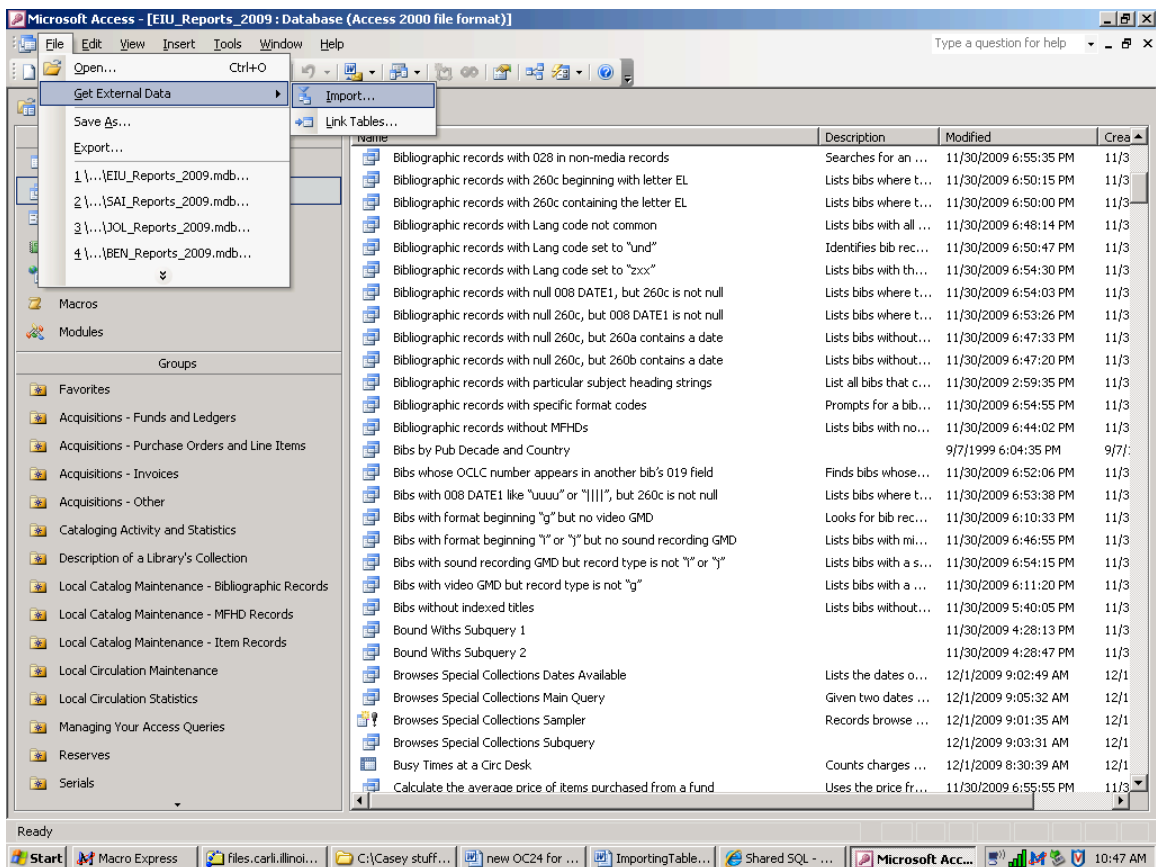
Alternatively, point your browser directly to the URL below and follow the prompts to download/save the file:

www.carli.illinois.edu/mem-prod/I-Share/secure/sql/StateNameTable.xls

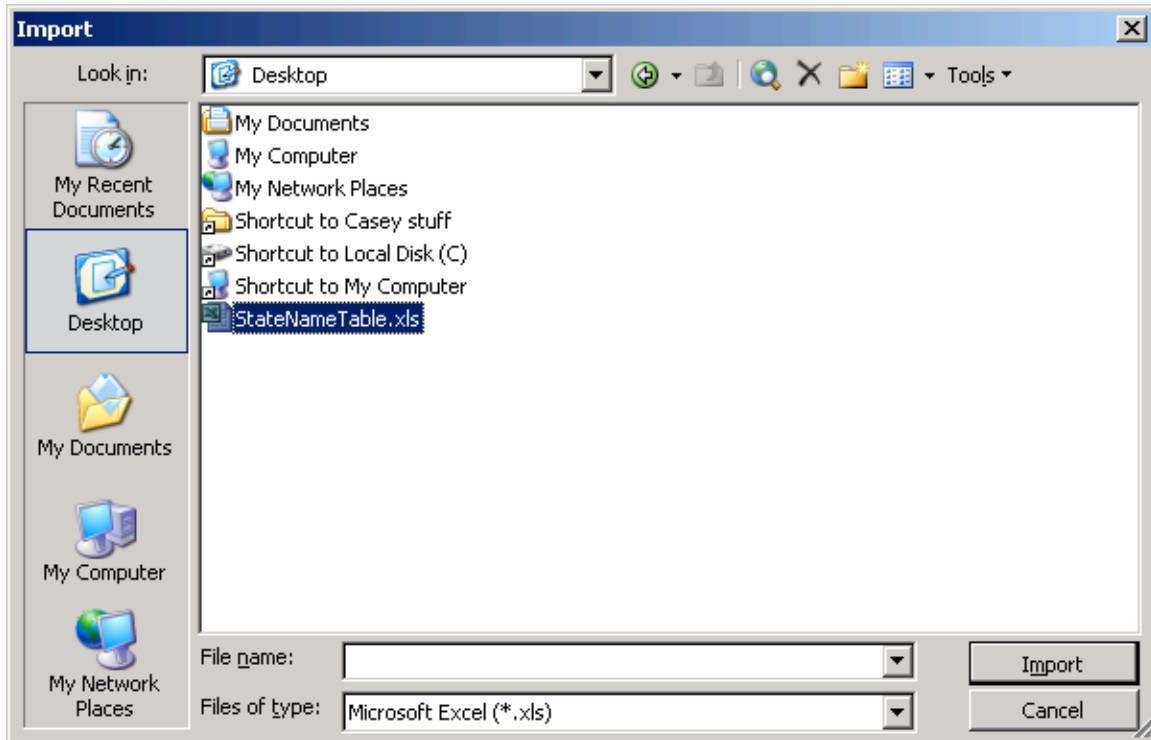




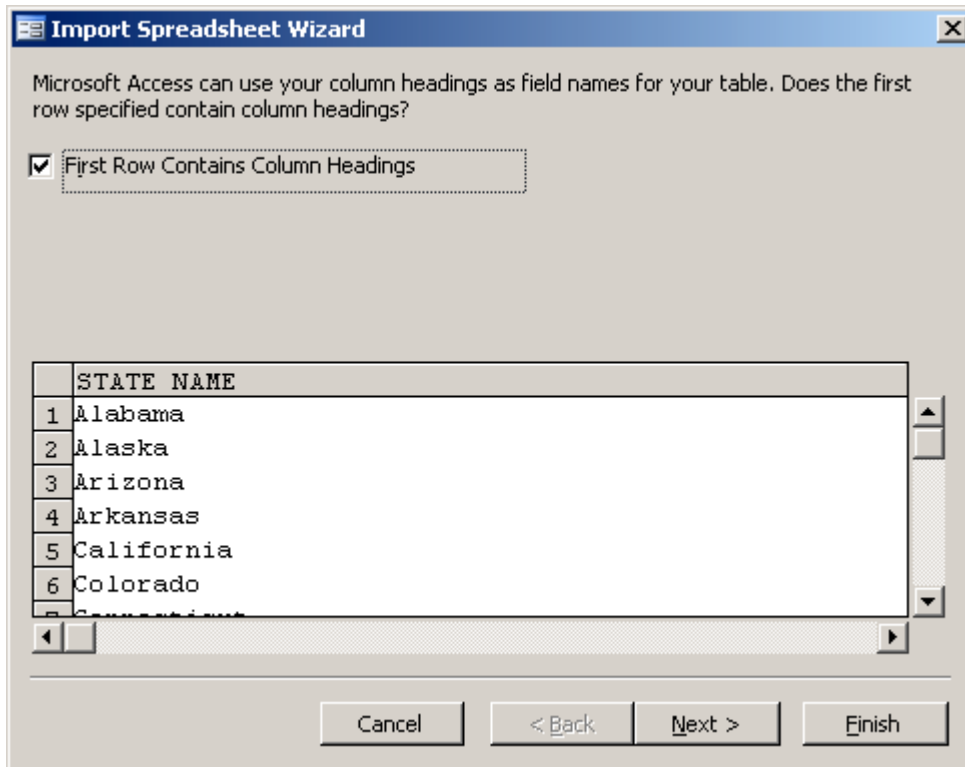
Step 1.2: Open your Access .mdb file (e.g., CARLI_reports_2009.mdb) on your PC. Go to File -> Get External Data -> Import.



Step 1.3: Navigate to wherever the Excel file was saved on the PC (e.g., the Desktop in this example). You may need to change the Files of type value in the dialog box to Microsoft Excel in order to display the StateNameTable.xls file. Highlight the StateNameTable.xls file and click Import.



Step 1.4: The Import Spreadsheet Wizard should open. Click the box that says “First Row Contains Column Headings” and then click Next.



The image shows the 'Import Spreadsheet Wizard' dialog box in Microsoft Access. The title bar reads 'Import Spreadsheet Wizard'. The main text asks: 'Microsoft Access can use your column headings as field names for your table. Does the first row specified contain column headings?'. Below this text is a checkbox labeled 'First Row Contains Column Headings', which is checked. At the bottom of the dialog is a preview table. The table has one column header 'STATE NAME' and six rows of data: 1 Alabama, 2 Alaska, 3 Arizona, 4 Arkansas, 5 California, and 6 Colorado. The table is scrollable. At the very bottom of the dialog are four buttons: 'Cancel', '< Back', 'Next >', and 'Finish'.

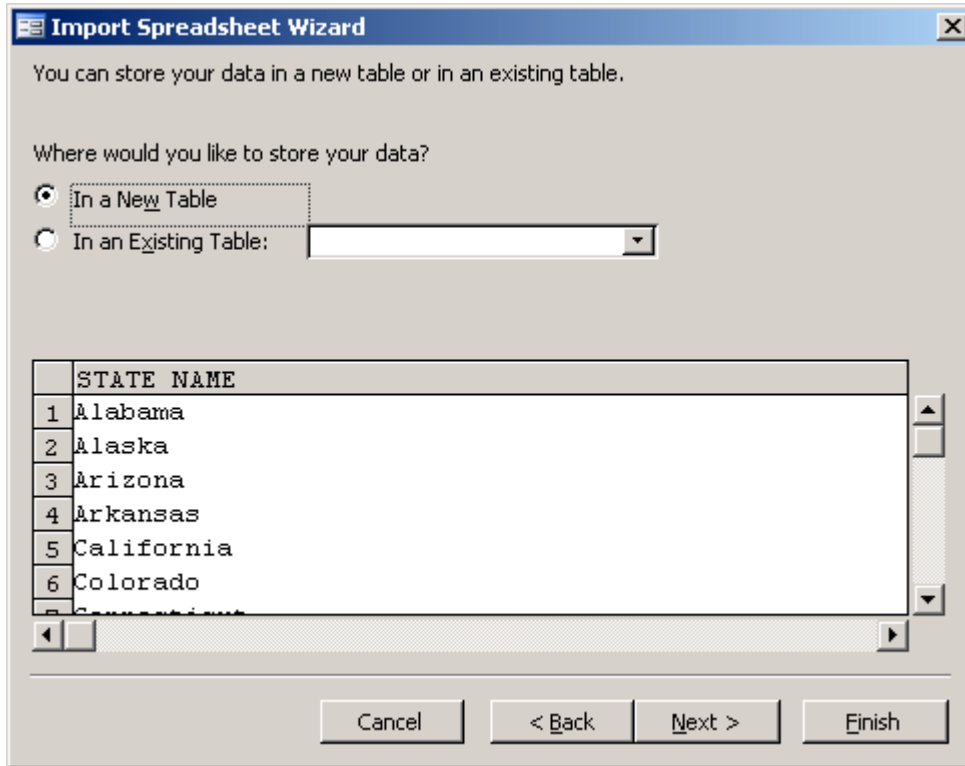
Microsoft Access can use your column headings as field names for your table. Does the first row specified contain column headings?

☒ First Row Contains Column Headings

	STATE NAME
1	Alabama
2	Alaska
3	Arizona
4	Arkansas
5	California
6	Colorado

Cancel < Back Next > Finish

Step 1.5: On the next screen, keep the default of In a New Table, and then click Next.



The image shows a Windows-style dialog box titled "Import Spreadsheet Wizard". It contains the following elements:

- Title Bar:** "Import Spreadsheet Wizard" with a close button (X) on the right.
- Text:** "You can store your data in a new table or in an existing table."
- Question:** "Where would you like to store your data?"
- Radio Buttons:**
 - ☒ In a New Table
 - ☐ In an Existing Table: [Dropdown menu]
- Table:** A table with a header "STATE NAME" and a list of states. The first six rows are visible:

	STATE NAME
1	Alabama
2	Alaska
3	Arizona
4	Arkansas
5	California
6	Colorado
- Buttons:** "Cancel", "< Back", "Next >", and "Finish" are located at the bottom right.

Step 1.6: On the next screen, keep the default of STATE_NAME for Field name. For Indexed, select Yes (No Duplicates), and then click Next.

Import Spreadsheet Wizard

You can specify information about each of the fields you are importing. Select fields in the area below. You can then modify field information in the 'Field Options' area.

Field Options

Field Name: Data Type:

Indexed: ☐ Do not import field (Skip)

	STATE NAME
1	Alabama
2	Alaska
3	Arizona
4	Arkansas
5	California
6	Colorado
7	Connecticut

Cancel < Back Next > Finish

Step 1.7: On the next screen, keep the default of Let Access add primary key, and then click Next.

Import Spreadsheet Wizard

Microsoft Access recommends that you define a primary key for your new table. A primary key is used to uniquely identify each record in your table. It allows you to retrieve data more quickly.

☒ Let Access add primary key.

☐ Choose my own primary key.

☐ No primary key.

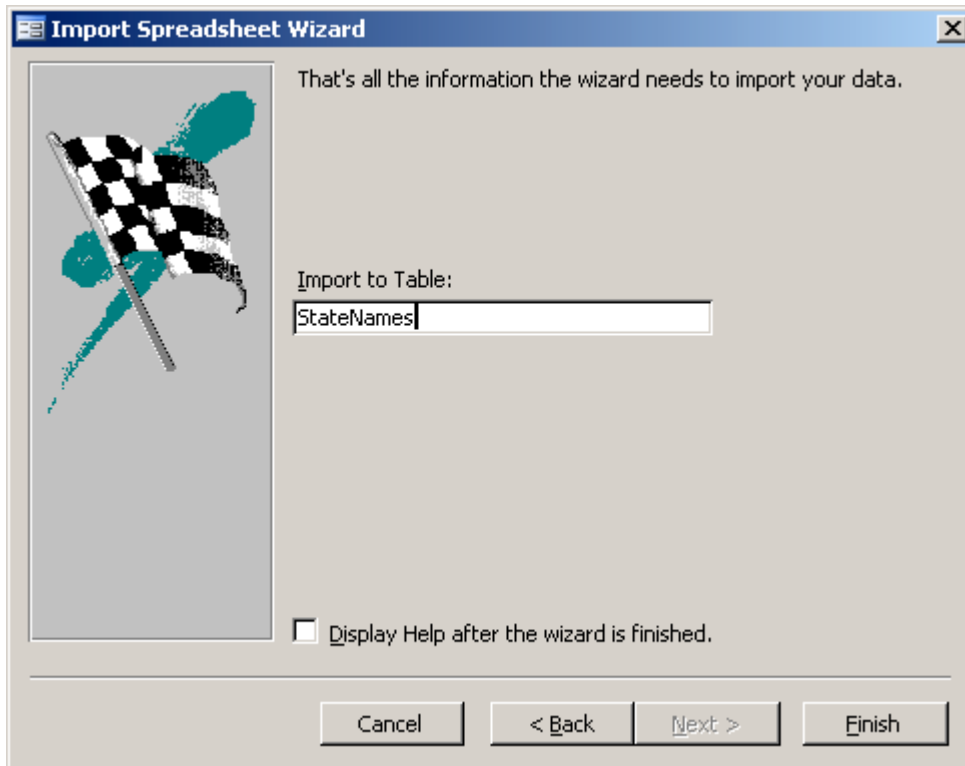
	ID	STATE NAME
1	1	Alabama
2	2	Alaska
3	3	Arizona
4	4	Arkansas
5	5	California
6	6	Colorado

Cancel < Back Next > Finish

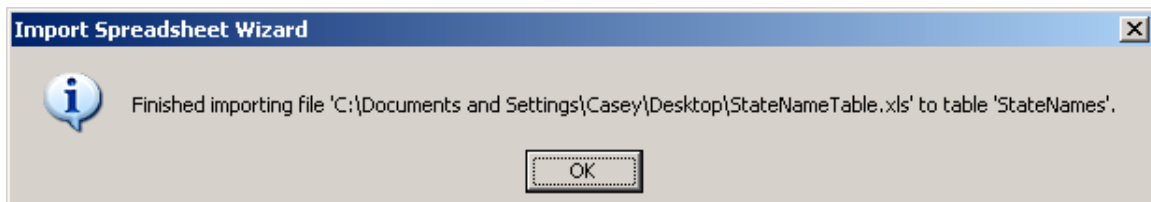
Step 1.8: On the next screen, for Import to Table, enter (case sensitive, no blanks): StateNames

NOTE: you MUST assign the table name exactly as shown, or else the queries that rely on this table will not run properly.

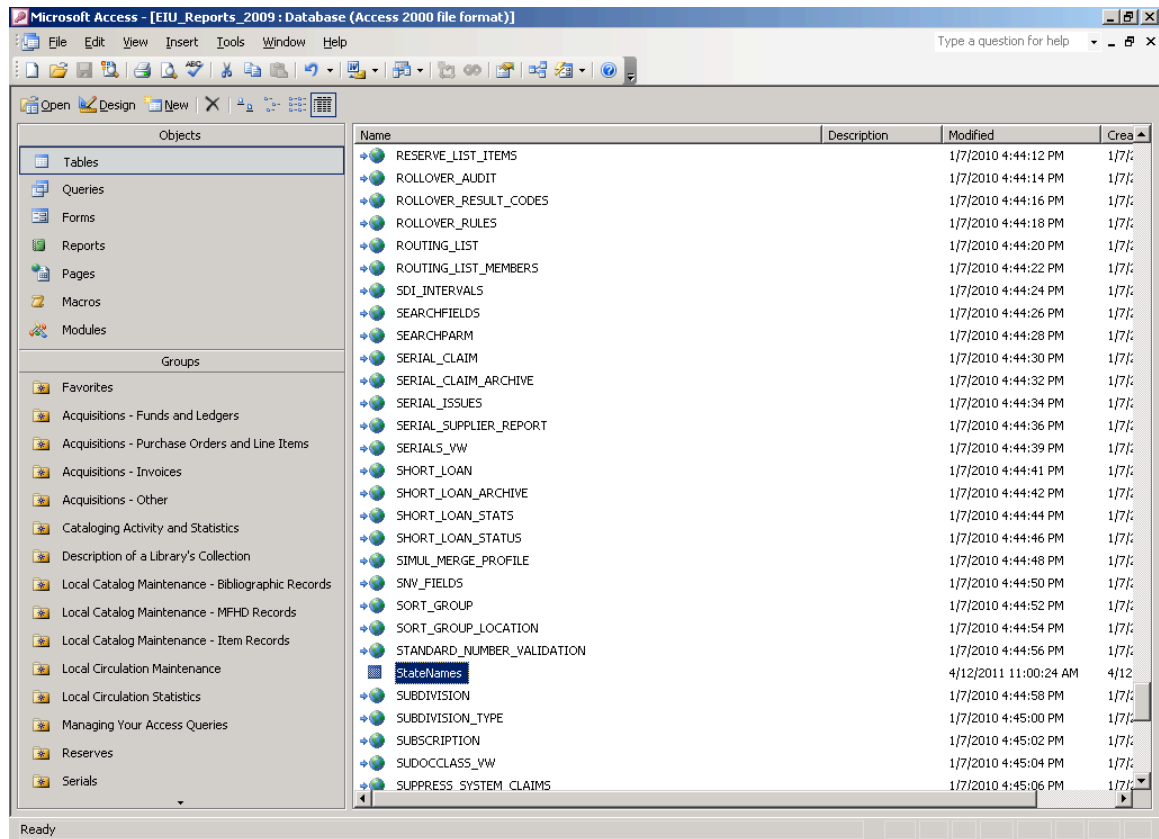
Then click Finish.



Step 1.9: Click OK to close the Import Spreadsheet Wizard dialog box.



Step 1.10: The new table is now available for use in queries.



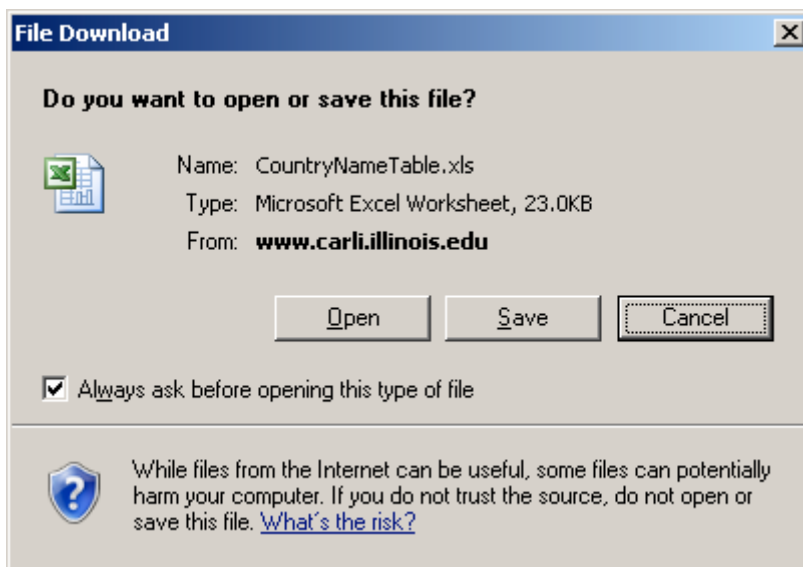
EXAMPLE 2: Step-by-step instructions for importing an Excel file into Access to create a new table called CountryNames

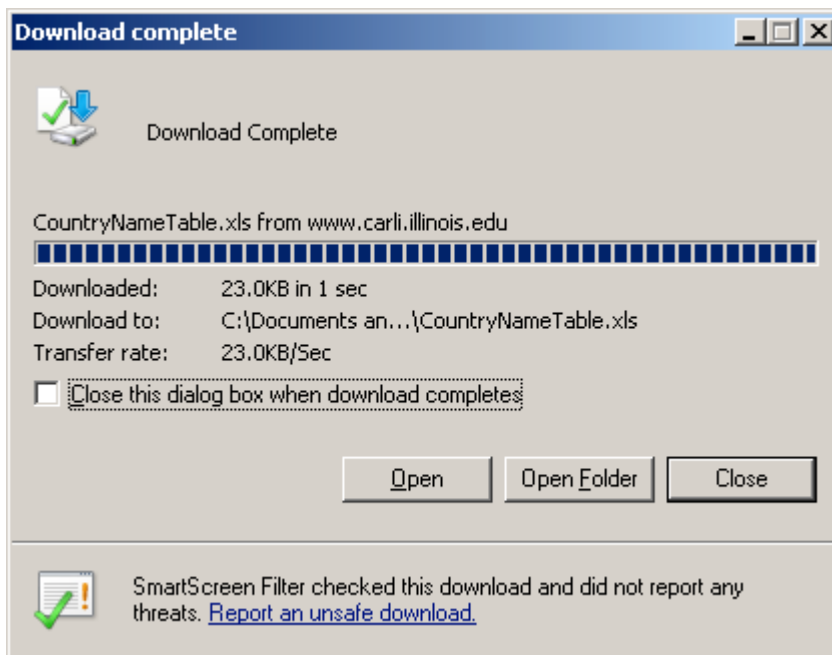
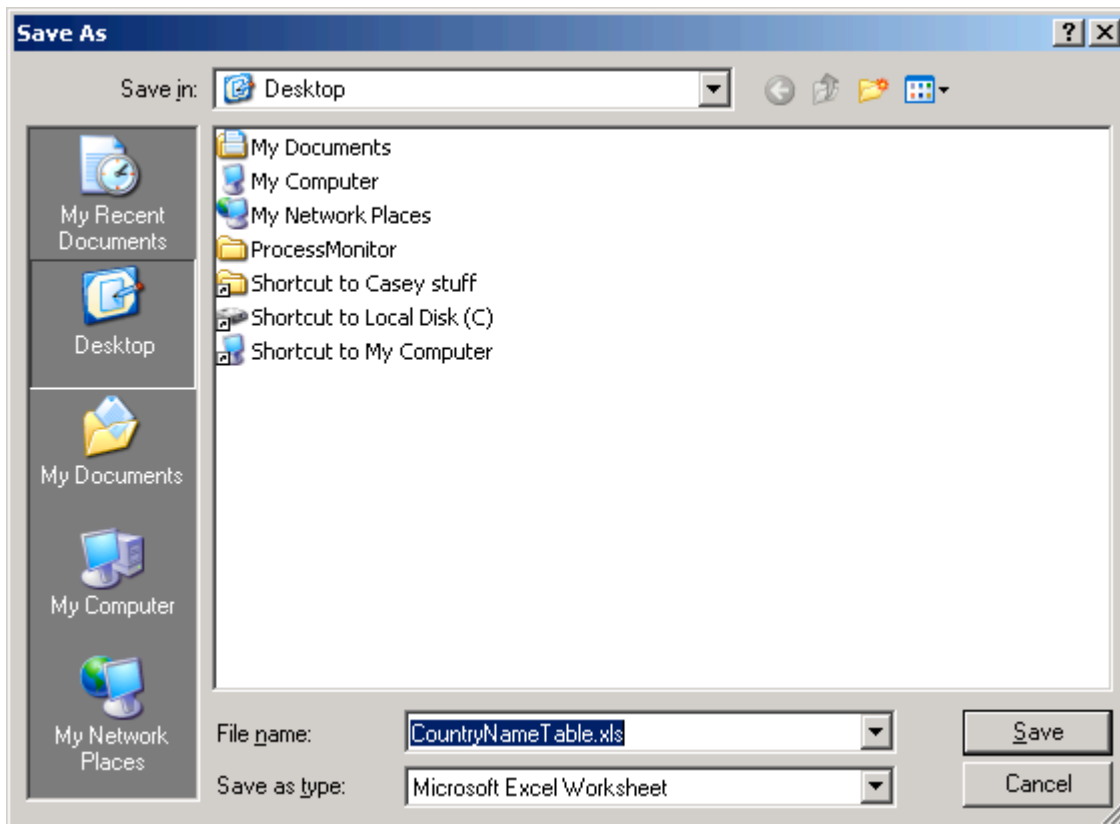
Step 2.1: Point a browser to the I-Share Shared SQL page

<<http://www.carli.illinois.edu/mem-prod/I-Share/secure/sql.html>>, Resources for Report Writing section. Locate the file called CountryNameTable.xls and use your browser's functionality to download/save the Excel file to a convenient place on your PC. The PC's Desktop is used in the screen shots below.

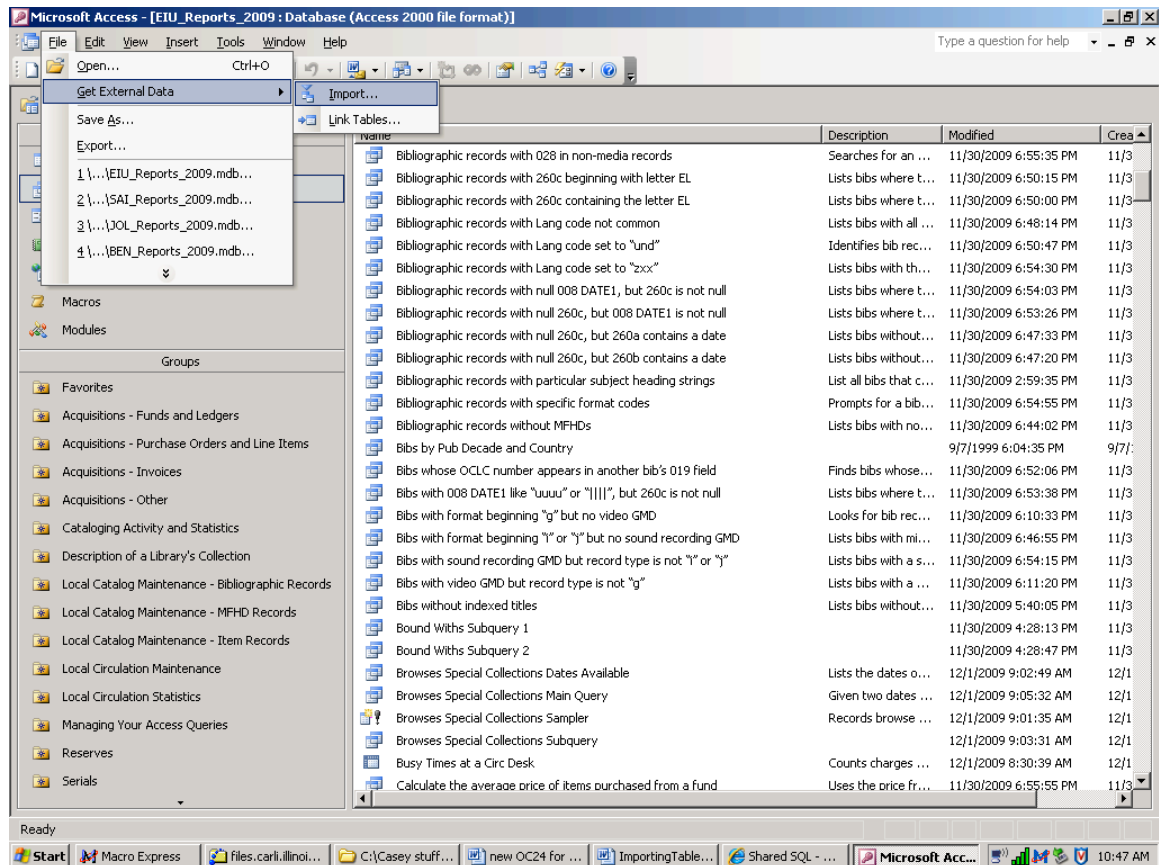
Alternatively, point your browser directly to the URL below and follow the prompts to download/save the file:

www.carli.illinois.edu/mem-prod/I-Share/secure/sql/CountryNameTable.xls

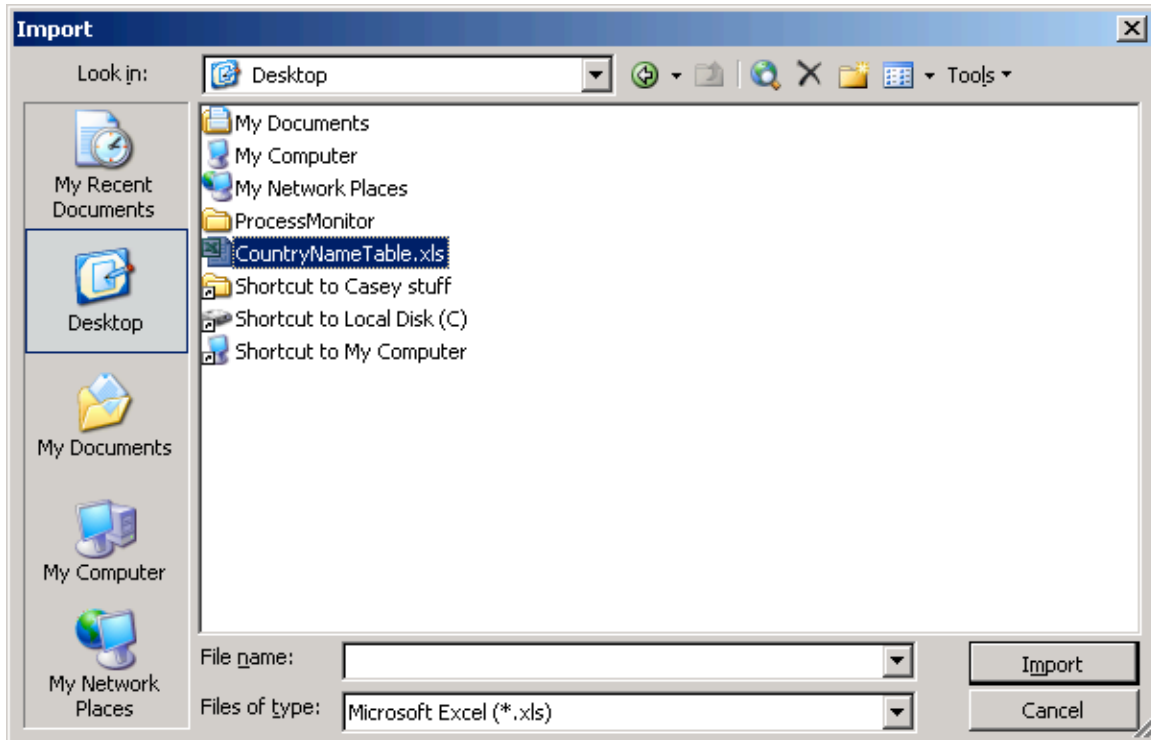




Step 2.2: Open your Access .mdb file (e.g., CARLI_reports_2009.mdb) on your PC. Go to File -> Get External Data -> Import.



Step 2.3: Navigate to wherever the Excel file was saved on the PC (e.g., the Desktop in this example). You may need to change the Files of type value in the dialog box to Microsoft Excel in order to display the CountryNameTable.xls file. Highlight the CountryNameTable.xls file and click Import.



Step 2.4: The Import Spreadsheet Wizard should open. Click the box that says “First Row Contains Column Headings” and then click Next.

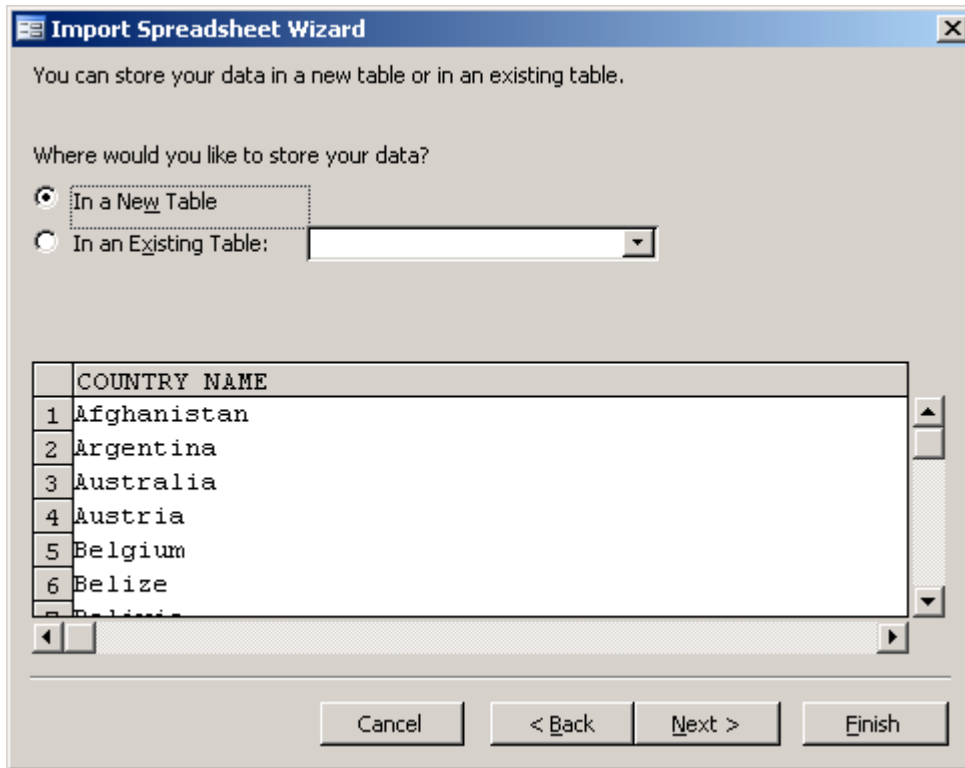
Microsoft Access can use your column headings as field names for your table. Does the first row specified contain column headings?

☒ First Row Contains Column Headings

	COUNTRY NAME
1	Afghanistan
2	Argentina
3	Australia
4	Austria
5	Belgium
6	Belize
7	Bolivia

Cancel < Back Next > Finish

Step 2.5: On the next screen, keep the default of In a New Table, and then click Next.



The image shows a Windows-style dialog box titled "Import Spreadsheet Wizard". It contains the following elements:

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- Question:** "Where would you like to store your data?"
- Radio Buttons:**
 - ☒ In a New Table
 - ☐ In an Existing Table: [Dropdown menu]
- Table:** A table with a header "COUNTRY NAME" and a list of countries. The first six rows are visible:

	COUNTRY NAME
1	Afghanistan
2	Argentina
3	Australia
4	Austria
5	Belgium
6	Belize
- Buttons:** "Cancel", "< Back", "Next >", and "Finish" are located at the bottom right.

Step 2.6: On the next screen, keep the default of COUNTRY_NAME for Field name. For Indexed, select Yes (No Duplicates), and then click Next.

Import Spreadsheet Wizard

You can specify information about each of the fields you are importing. Select fields in the area below. You can then modify field information in the 'Field Options' area.

Field Options

Field Name: Data Type:

Indexed: ☐ Do not import field (Skip)

	COUNTRY NAME
1	Afghanistan
2	Argentina
3	Australia
4	Austria
5	Belgium
6	Belize

Buttons: Cancel, < Back, Next >, Finish

Step 2.7: On the next screen, keep the default of Let Access add primary key, and then click Next.

Import Spreadsheet Wizard

Microsoft Access recommends that you define a primary key for your new table. A primary key is used to uniquely identify each record in your table. It allows you to retrieve data more quickly.

☒ Let Access add primary key.

☐ Choose my own primary key.

☐ No primary key.

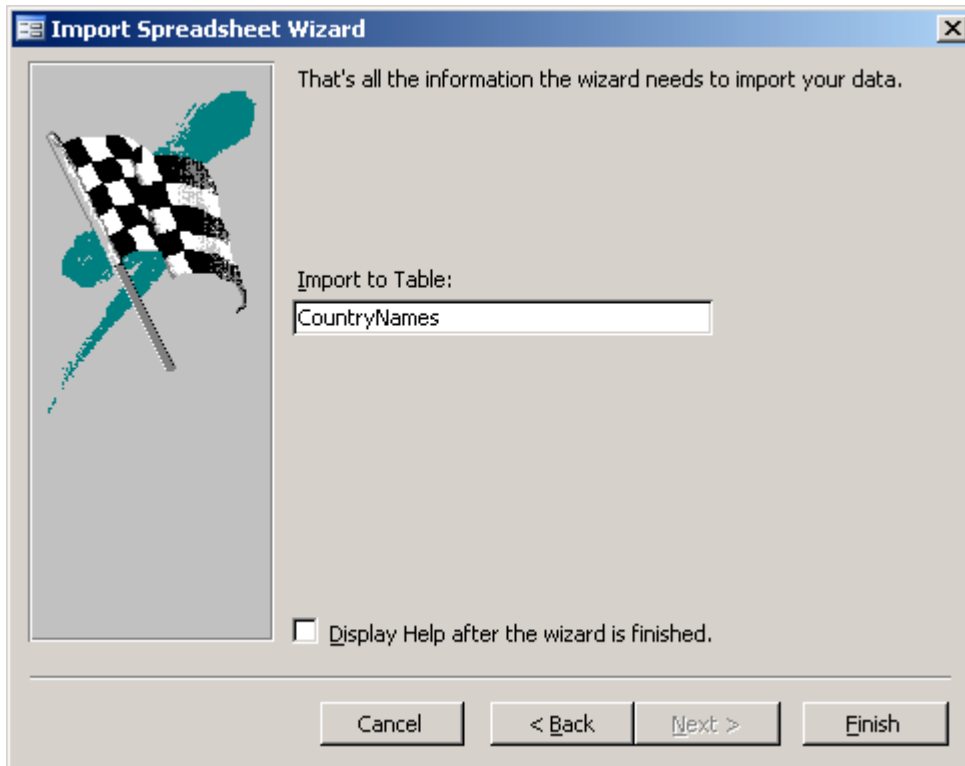
ID	COUNTRY NAME
1	Afghanistan
2	Argentina
3	Australia
4	Austria
5	Belgium
6	Belize

Cancel < Back Next > Finish

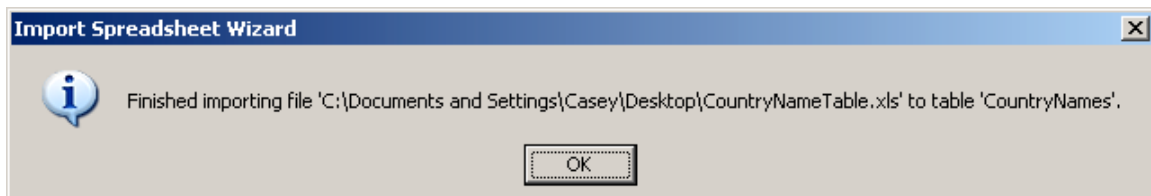
Step 2.8: On the next screen, for Import to Table, enter (case sensitive, no blanks):
CountryNames

NOTE: you MUST assign the table name exactly as shown, or else the queries that rely on this table will not run properly.

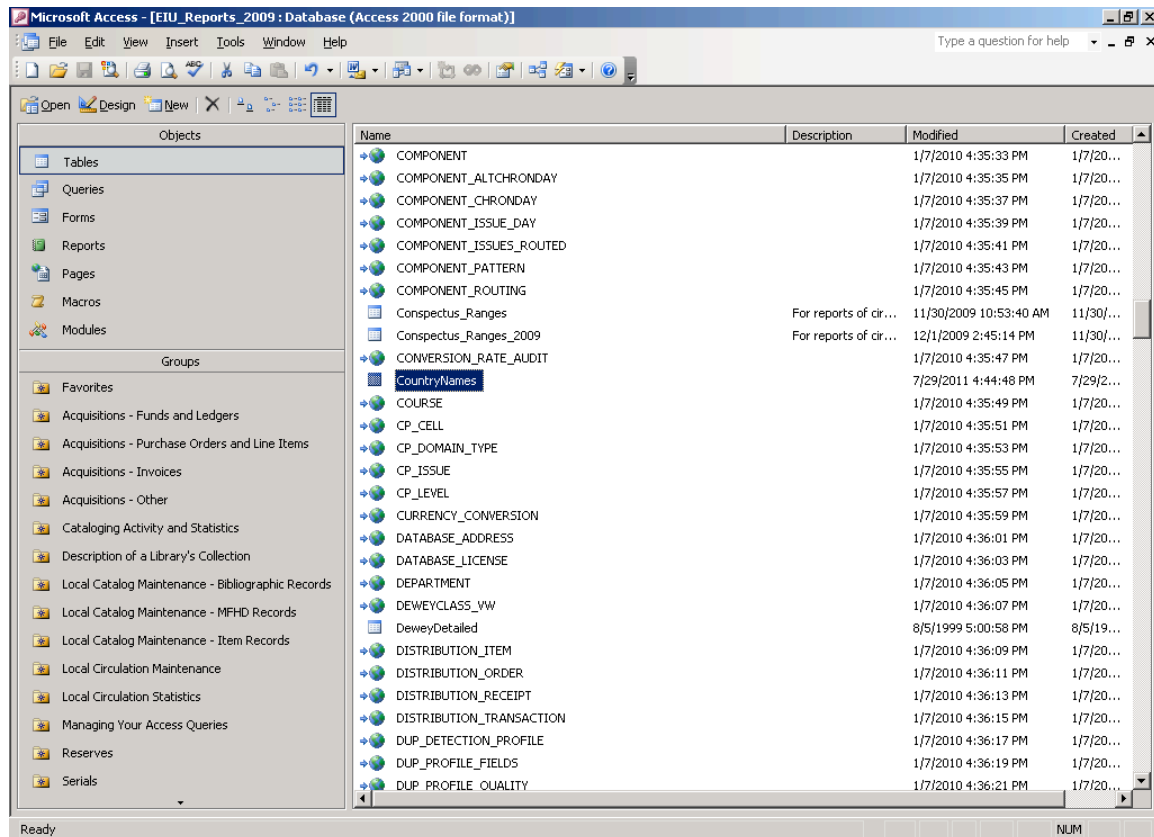
Then click Finish.



Step 2.9: Click OK to close the Import Spreadsheet Wizard dialog box.



Step 2.10: The new table is now available for use in queries.



Getting help

Contact the CARLI Office (support@carli.illinois.edu) if you have any questions about the content of this document.