

# How to Print Labels From Excel Spreadsheet: A Practical Workflow



- Goal: repeatable, low-error workflow for spreadsheet-to-label printing



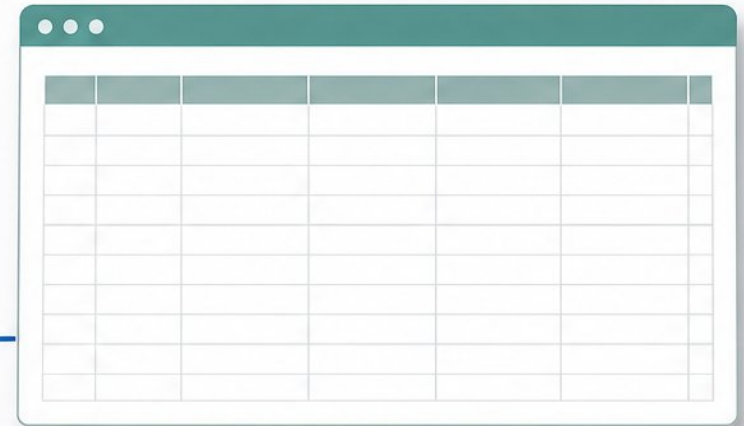
- Data preparation, mail merge vs. direct print, step-by-step Word workflow, troubleshooting



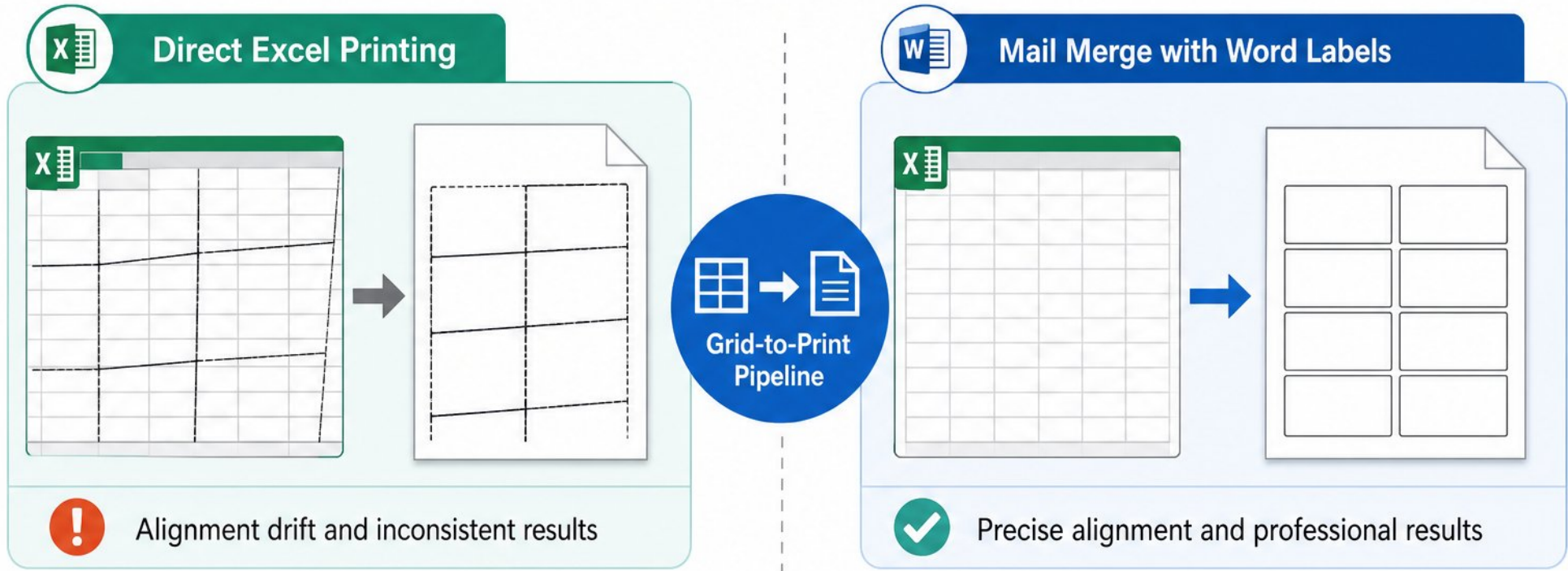
- No advanced databases, programming, or complex design



- For mailing labels, name badges, event badges, and inventory tags



# The Two Main Paths: Mail Merge vs. Direct Excel Printing



- Mail merge links Excel data to Word for bulk labels
- Precise vendor templates reduce manual alignment
- Direct Excel printing risks alignment drift
- Mail merge wins: reusable, fewer reprints, cleaner



# Prepare the Right Excel Data Structure



- Use a clean header row: no blanks, no merged cells



- One label record per row; one field per column



- Remove extra sheets, notes, and stray formatting



- Format ZIP codes and phone numbers as Text



- Prevent silent errors like lost leading zeros

## Well-Structured Excel Row (Example)

| First Name | Last Name | Address     | City    | State | ZIP   |
|------------|-----------|-------------|---------|-------|-------|
| John       | Doe       | 123 Main St | Anytown | CA    | 01234 |



Person's  
given name



Person's  
family name



Street  
address



City or  
town



State  
abbreviation

**Tt**

**Text Format**  
keeps leading  
zeros intact

Field-Level Annotations



A clean, consistent structure helps ensure accurate imports and reliable results.



# Start a Label Merge in Word

1



Open Word, go to  
Mailings > Start Mail  
Merge > Labels

2



Pick label vendor and  
product number,  
e.g., Avery US Letter 5160

3

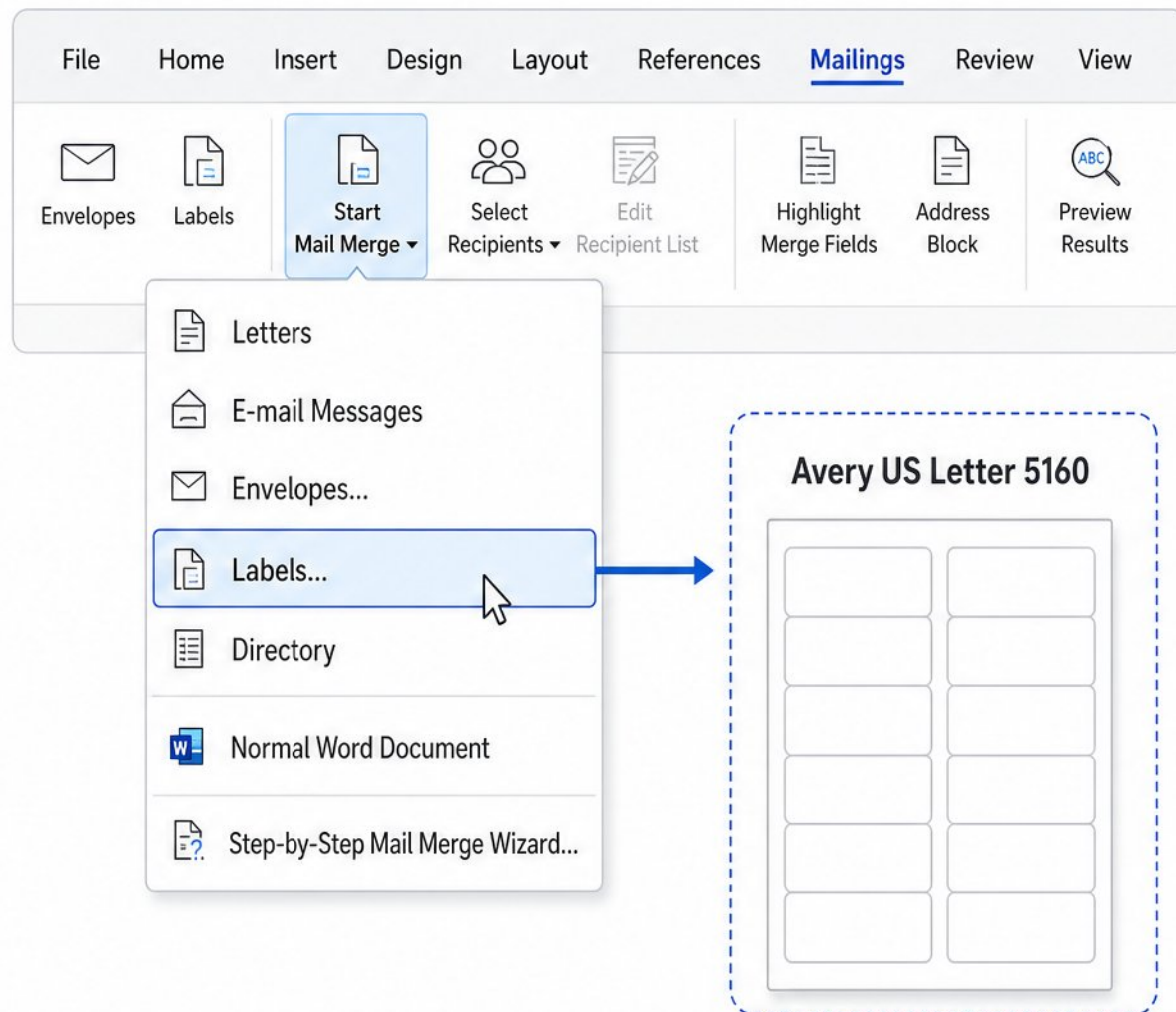


Link Excel data:  
Select Recipients >  
Use an Existing List

4

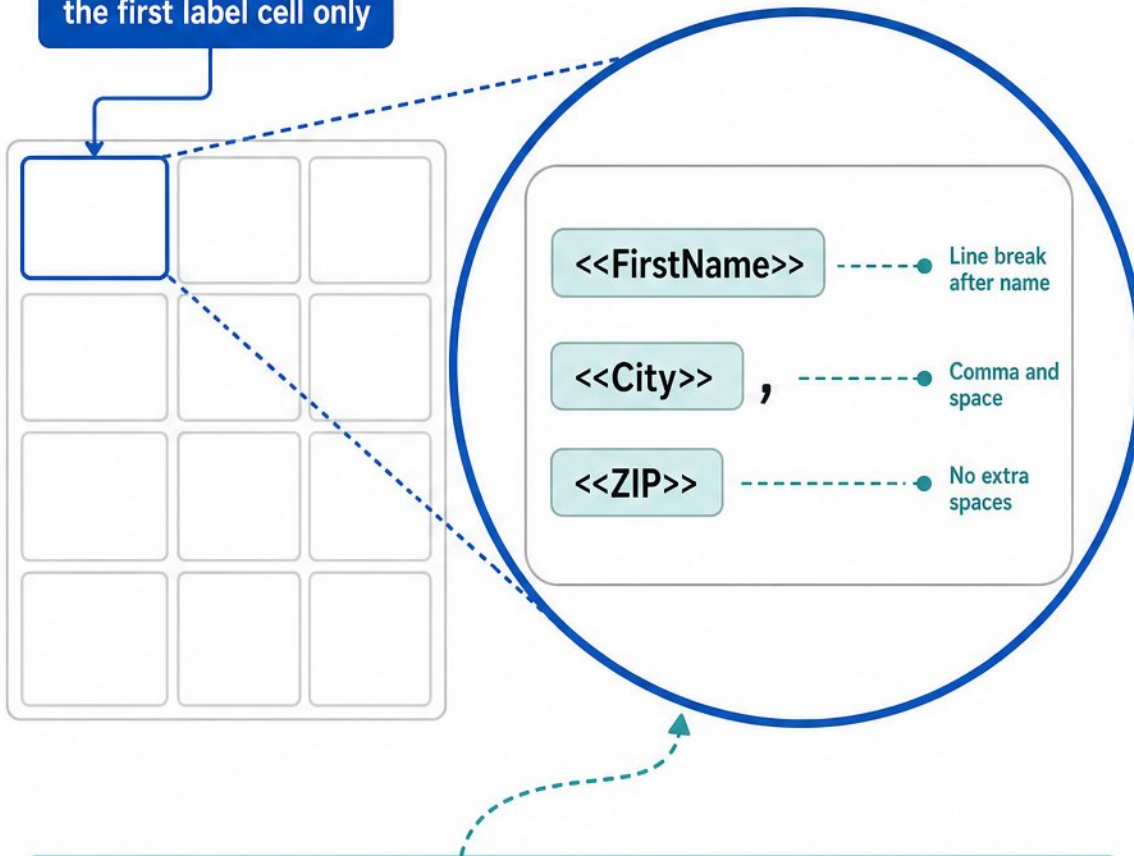


Confirm first row  
contains column  
headers when prompted



# Insert Fields and Build a Safe Label Layout

1. Insert fields into the first label cell only



Drag fields to build your label

<<FirstName>>

<<LastName>>

<<Address>>

<<City>>

<<State>>

<<ZIP>>



- Insert fields into the first label cell only



- Click Update Labels to fill every label on the sheet



- Add spaces, punctuation, and line breaks carefully



- Avoid extra spaces or you will see gaps in printed labels



- Missing lines usually mean you forgot Update Labels

# Preview, Validate, and Spot-Check Before Printing



- 1 Click Preview Results to view real data before printing.



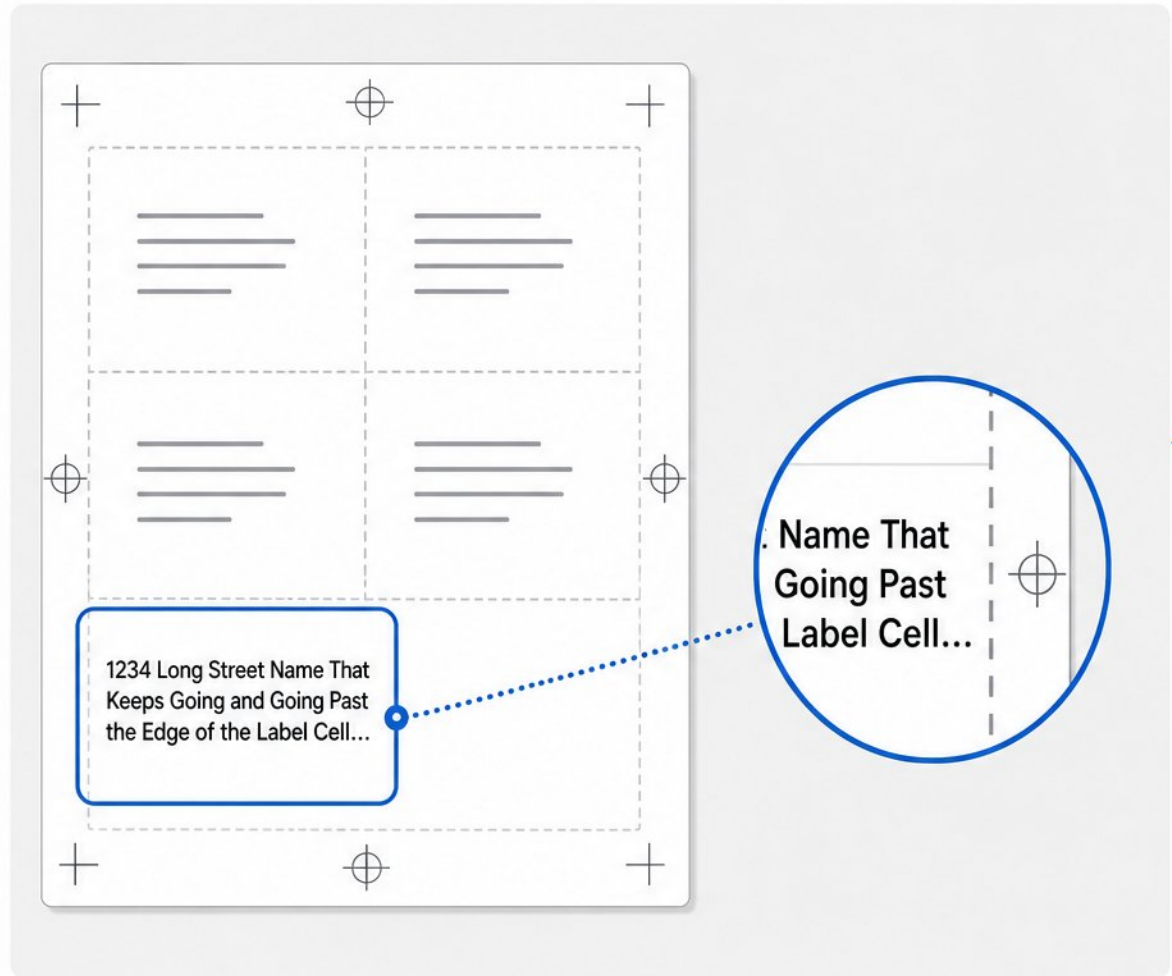
- 2 Spot-check first and last records, plus unusually long values.



- 3 Watch for truncation, misaligned lines, and missing fields.



- 4 Fix issues in first label, then click Update Labels to refresh.



# Print a Test Page and Adjust Printer Settings



– Print one test page on plain paper first



– Set paper size to match your label sheet



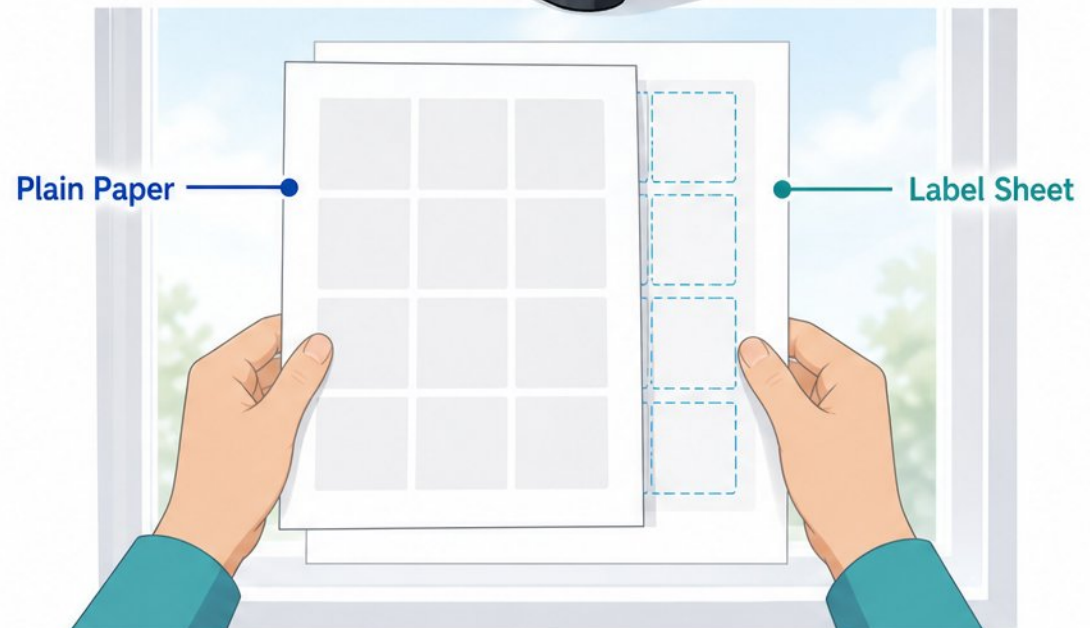
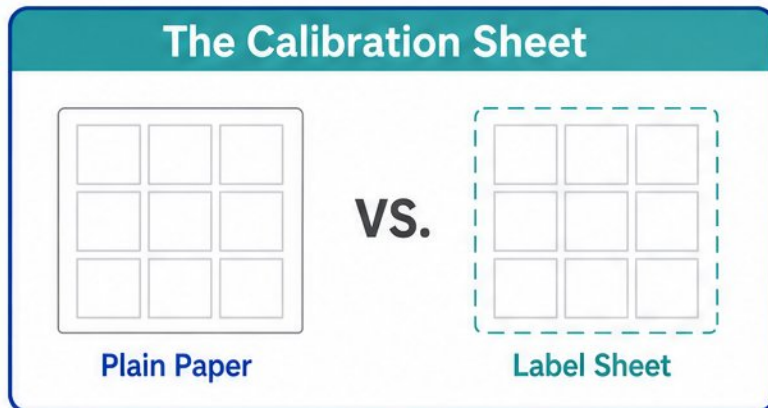
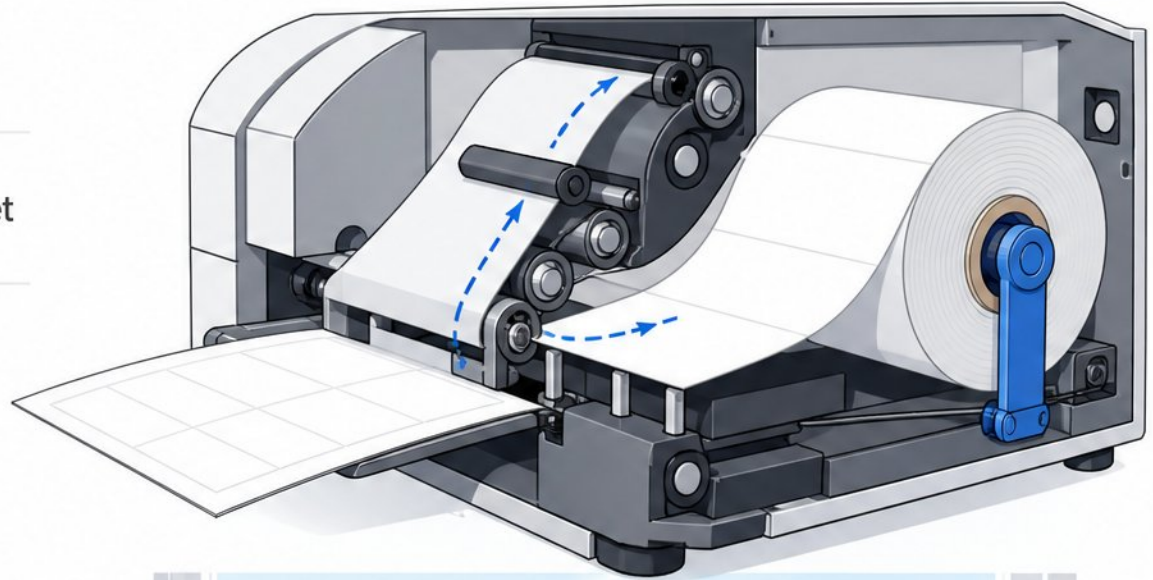
– Keep scale at 100% to preserve label alignment



– Match media type to label stock in printer options



– Hold test sheet behind label sheet against light to verify alignment



# Save the Merge for Reuse and Future Label Jobs



- Save Word merge and Excel data together in a shared folder



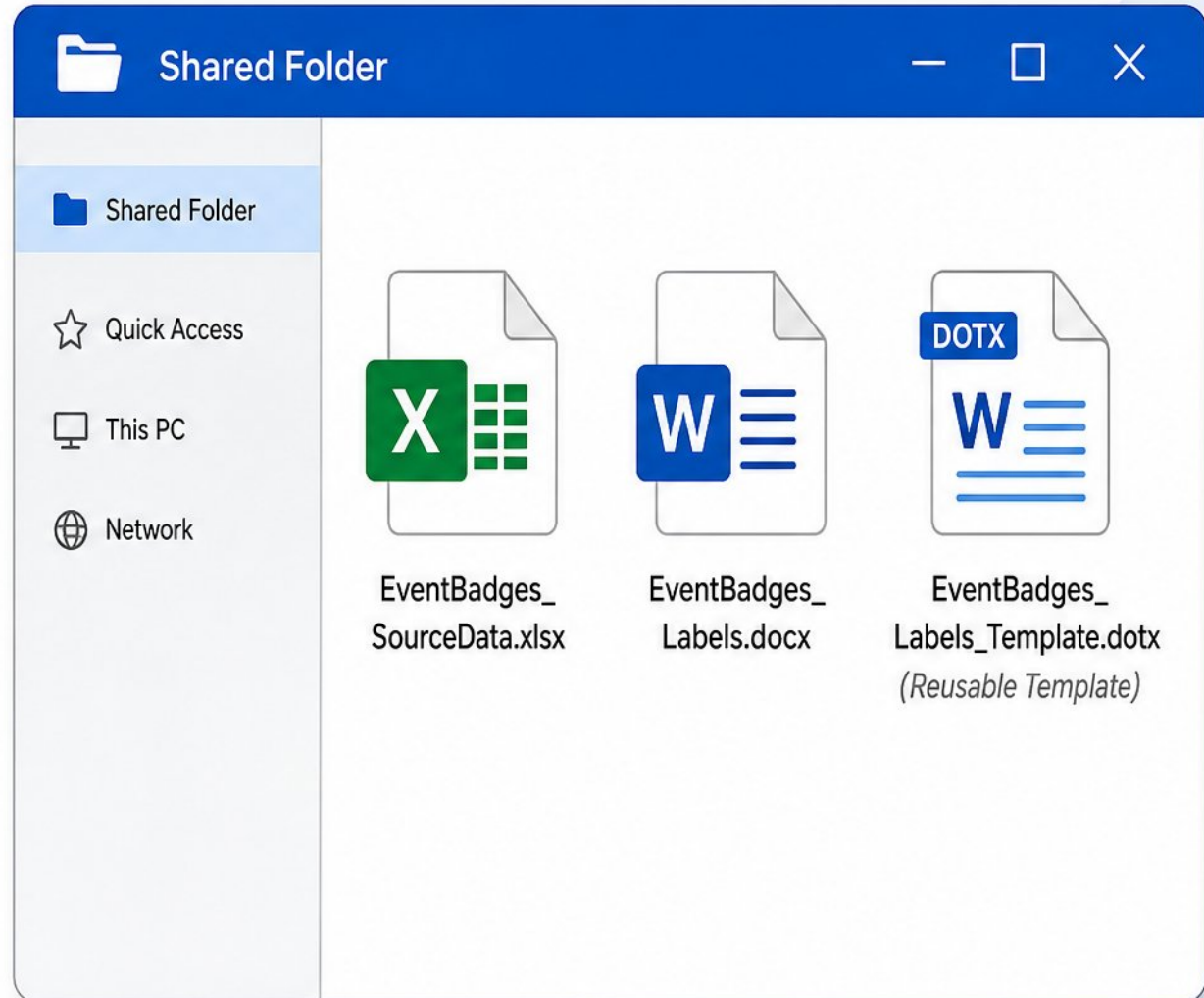
- Use clear naming like EventBadges\_SourceData.xlsx and \_Labels.docx



- Reopen merge and refresh when data changes, don't rebuild

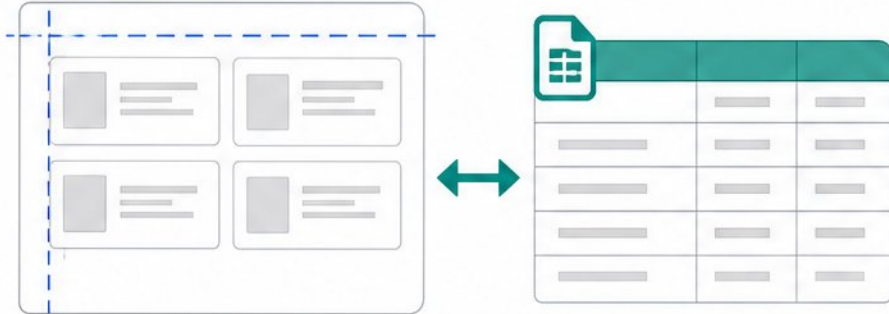


- Save .dotx template for recurring jobs with standard Excel file

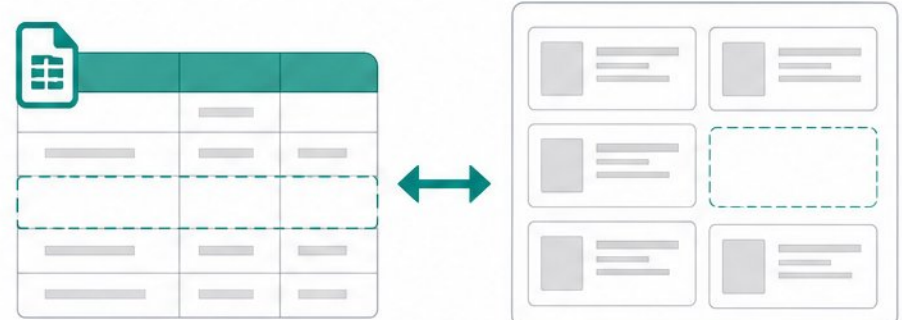


# Troubleshooting Common Label Printing Problems

- 1 Misaligned labels:** wrong product number, scaling, or paper size mismatch



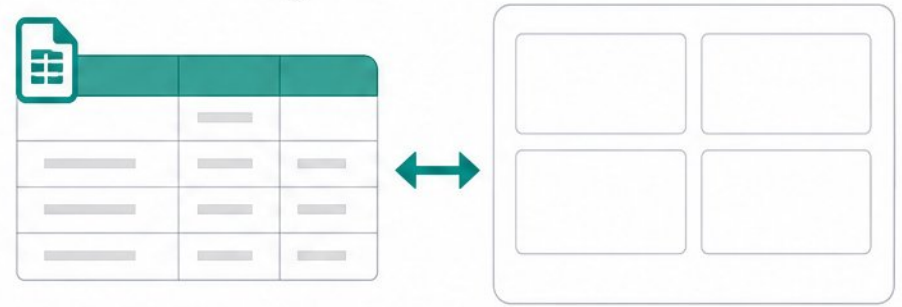
- 2 Missing data:** blank rows or inconsistent Excel columns



- 3 Text cut off:** font size, line spacing, or overly long values



- 4 Blank labels:** forgot to click Update Labels after inserting fields



## The Calibration Sheet



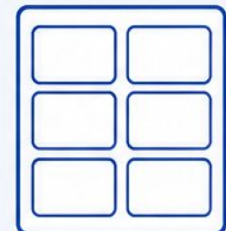
### Plain Paper

Use plain paper to design and position your labels.



### Label Sheet

Switch to the label sheet to print your labels.



# A Repeatable Workflow Summary and Checklist

## GRID-TO-PRINT PIPELINE



1. CLEAN EXCEL  
DATA



2. CONNECT  
IN WORD



3. BUILD  
LAYOUT



4. PREVIEW



5. TEST PRINT



6. PRINT



- Clean Excel data, connect in Word, build layout,  
preview, test print, then print



- Check label product number and first/last records



- Test on plain paper and confirm printer settings at 100%



- Reuse the same setup for mailing labels, badges, and inventory tags



# Common Scenarios: Mailing Labels, Name Badges, and Inventory Tags



## Mailing Labels

«First Name» «Last Name»

«Address Line 1»

«Address Line 2»

«City», «State» «ZIP Code»

«Country»

• Recipient Name

• Street Address

• City, State, ZIP Code

• Country



## Name Badges

«First Name» «Last Name»

«Company or Department»

• Person Name

• Company or Department



## Inventory Tags

Item Code: «Item Code»

Location: «Location»

Description: «Description»

• Item Code (as text)

• Location

• Description



- Mailing labels: keep fields separate to avoid address surprises
- Name badges: add company or department, keep font size consistent
- Inventory tags: protect item codes and leading zeros as text
- The same merge workflow adapts without new tools

# Handling Messy Data and Edge Cases



- Remove blank rows and unmerge cells before connecting to Word



- Suppress blank lines from optional fields using conditional field logic



- Format dates and numbers in Excel before merging—avoid strange Word output



- For international addresses, build a final Print Address field to control line order

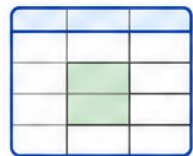
**Before: Messy Data**

| First Name | Last Name | Address Line 1                | Address Line 2 | City        | Country  |
|------------|-----------|-------------------------------|----------------|-------------|----------|
| John       | Doe       | 123 Main Street               |                | Springfield | USA      |
| Mary       | Smith     | 456 Oak Avenue                | Apt 5B         | Toronto     | Canada   |
|            |           |                               |                |             |          |
| Li         | Wang      | 789 Peace Road                |                | Beijing     | China    |
|            |           | 10 Downing Street Westminster |                | London      | UK       |
| Ana        | Garcia    | Calle 10 #25-30               |                | Bogotá      | Colombia |
|            |           |                               |                |             |          |

**After: Cleaned Data**

| First Name | Last Name | Print Address                 | City        | Country  |
|------------|-----------|-------------------------------|-------------|----------|
| John       | Doe       | 123 Main Street               | Springfield | USA      |
| Mary       | Smith     | 456 Oak Avenue Apt 5B         | Toronto     | Canada   |
| Li         | Wang      | 789 Peace Road                | Beijing     | China    |
|            |           | 10 Downing Street Westminster | London      | UK       |
| Ana        | Garcia    | Calle 10 #25-30               | Bogotá      | Colombia |

**Grid-to-Print Pipeline**



Raw Excel Data



Clean & Unmerge  
Remove Blanks



Apply Conditional  
Field Logic



Format Dates  
and Numbers



Build Print Address  
(International Order)



Merge to Word  
(Ready to Print)



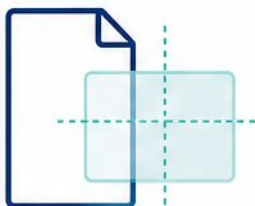
## Quick Reference: The Pre-Print Checklist



- Match label product number to your physical sheet



- Preview the first and last records before printing

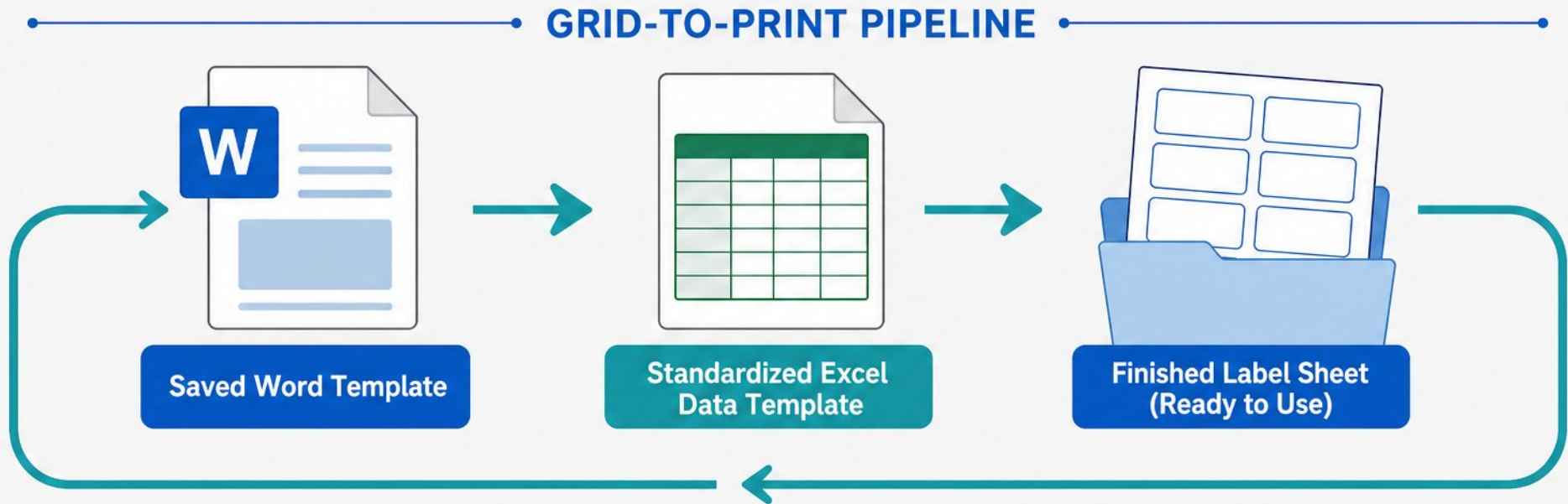


- Test one page on plain paper, check alignment against light



- Set printer scale to 100% and verify paper size, media type

# Next Steps and Confidence-Building Habits



- ✓ Use the same workflow for mailing labels, name badges, inventory tags
- ✓ Save pre-tested Word templates for frequently used label sizes
- ✓ Keep a standard Excel template with pre-formatted columns
- ✓ One successful merge builds confidence for any future job

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