shopify *resources*

Understanding the product CSV file

This article explains how to build your csv file to import products into your store.

A CSV (comma-separated values) file is a spreadsheet file that can be used by Shopify to import products into your store.

Download and view a sample product CSV file. You can use this as a template for creating your CSV file. Just remember to remove the example products.

> **In this article:**
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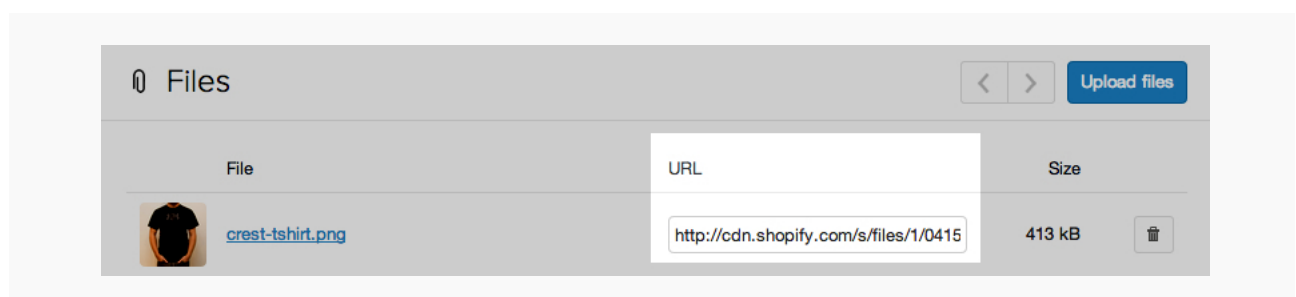>
> Create your product CSV file

Prepare your images

A CSV file can only contain text. So you'll need to ensure all product images are on an existing website. Those image URLs will *only* be used during the CSV importing process (in other words, you can delete them when your import is done).

- If you only have the files on your computer, you must upload them to your Shopify store or another image hosting service so that you can link to them via their URL.

- If you are switching to Shopify from another platform, you're all set: just copy the current image URLs and use them in the CSV file.

- If the product CSV file was produced by exporting your products from Shopify then you don't need to do anything since your images are already on your website.

> **Caution**
>
> If you remove products or product images from your store after exporting and try to import those products without updating their image URLs, your import will fail.

When you have URLs for each product image, you can start building your CSV file.

Q&A

Want to add **multiple product images** for each product? Check out this guide called **"How to add multiple product images using a CSV file"**.

Product CSV file format

The first line of your product CSV has to include the field headers described below, in the same order, with each separated by a comma. Subsequent lines in the file should contain data for your product using those same fields in that exact same order. Here's a description of each field:

- Handle

  Handles are unique names for each product. They can contain letters, dashes and numbers, but no spaces. A handle is used in the URL for each product. Example: the handle for a "Burton Snowboard" should be burton-snowboard, and the product's URL would be http://yourstore.myshopify.com/product/burton-snowboard

  Every line in the CSV starting with a different handle is treated as a new product. If you want to add multiple images to a product, or want the product to have variants, you should have multiple lines with the same handle. More on that in the next section.

- **Title**

  The title of your product. Example: Burton Snowboard

- **Body (HTML)**

  Description of the product in HTML format. This can also be plain text without any formatting.

- **Vendor** *(min. 2 characters)*

  Name of the vendor for your product. Example: Burton

- **Type**

  Product type. Example: Snowboard

- **Tags** *(can be left blank)*

  Comma-separated list of tags used to tag the product. Most spreadsheet applications automatically add quotes around the tags for you. If you are using a plain text editor you will need to manually add the quotes so they look like so "tag1,tag2,tag3".

- **Published**

  States whether or not a product is published on your storefront. Valid values are `TRUE` if the product is published on your storefront, or `FALSE` if the product is hidden from your storefront. Leaving the field blank will publish the product.

- **Option1 Name**

  If a product has an option, enter its name. Example: Color

  For products with only a single option, this should be set to "Title".

- **Option1 Value**

  If a product has an option, enter its value. Example: Black

  For products with only a single option, this should be set to "Default Title".

- **Option2 Name** *(can be left blank)*

  If a product has a second option, enter its name. Example: Size

- **Option2 Value** *(can be left blank)*

  If a product has a second option, enter its value. Example: Large

- **Option3 Name** *(can be left blank)*

  If a product has a third option, enter its name.

- **Option3 Value** *(can be left blank)*

  If a product has a third option, enter the value of the option.

- **Variant** SKU *(can be left blank)*

  The SKU of the product or variant. This is used to track inventory with inventory tracking services.

- **Variant Grams**

  The weight of the product or variant in grams. Do not add a unit of measurement, just the number.

> **Reminder**
>
> Shopify will always import and export weight in grams, even if you specify a different unit. You must use accurate weights if you intend to offer carrier-calculated shipping or use a third-party fulfillment service.

- **Variant Inventory Tracker** *(can be left blank)*

  Include your inventory tracking for this variant or product. Valid values include "shopify", "shipwire", "amazon_marketplace_web" or blank if inventory is not tracked.

- **Variant Inventory Quantity**

  Number of items you have in stock of this product or variant.

- **Variant Inventory Policy**

  How to handle orders when inventory level for this product or variant has reached zero. Valid values are "deny", or "continue". "deny" will stop selling when inventory reaches 0, "continue" will allow sales to continue into negative inventory levels.

- **Variant Fulfillment Service**

  Product or variant fulfillment service. Valid values are: "manual", "shipwire", "webgistix", "amazon_marketplace_web". If you use a Custom Fulfillment Service you can add the name of the service in this column. For the custom name, use only lowercase letters. Spaces aren't allowed, replace them with a dash (-). Periods and other special characters are removed. E.g. if "Mr. Fulfiller" is your fulfillment service's name, enter "mr-fulfiller" in the CSV file.

- **Variant Price**

  Price of the product or variant. Don't place any currency symbol there. Example: 9.99

- **Variant Compare at Price**

  "Compare at Price"" of the product or variant. Don't place any currency symbol there. Example: 9.99

- **Variant Requires Shipping** *(blank = FALSE)*

  Option to require shipping. Valid values are "TRUE", "FALSE" or blank.

- **Variant Taxable** *(blank = FALSE)*

  Apply taxes to this variant. Valid values are "TRUE", "FALSE" or blank.

- **Variant Barcode** *(can be left blank)*

  Barcode, ISBN or UPC of the product.

- **Variant Weight Unit** *(can be left blank)*

  Convert the **variant grams** field to a different unit of measure by entering `kg`, `g`, `oz`, or `lb`. If this field is left blank, your store's default weight unit will apply.

- **Image Src**

  Put the URL for the product image. Shopify will download the images during the import and re-upload them into your store. These images are not variant specific. The variant image column is where you specify variant images.

> **Reminder**
>
> You won't be able to change your image filename after that image has been uploaded to your shop. Don't upload images that have `_thumb`, `_small`, or `_medium` suffixes in their names.

- **Image Alt Text** *(can be left blank)*

  Text that describes an image. Useful if an image cannot be displayed or a screenreader passes over an image, the text replaces this element.

- **Gift Card**

States whether the product is a Gift Card or not. Valid values are "TRUE", or "FALSE". The addition of this column also allows you to edit other Gift Card details, such as the Body or Tags columns, and import these changes. Still, **a gift card can only be created and activated in the Shopify admin.** You cannot initially create a gift card through a product CSV import.

Metafields

- **SEO Title** (does not require the Google Shopping App)

  The SEO Title is found on a product's details page under the **Search Engines** header. The SEO Title has a character (letters & numbers) limit of 70.

- **SEO Description** (does not require the Google Shopping App)

  The SEO Description is also found on a product's details page under the **Search Engines** header. The SEO Description has a character (letters & numbers) limit of 160.

- **Google Shopping / MPN**

  The MPN, or Manufacturer Part Number, is a string of alphanumeric digits of various lengths (0-9, A-Z).

- **Google Shopping / Age Group**

  What age group does this product target? Valid values are `Adult` or `Kids` only.

- **Google Shopping / Gender**

  What gender does this product target? Valid values are `Female`, `Male`, or `Unisex`.

- **Google Shopping / Google Product Category**

  Google has a proprietary set of product categories. The full list is quite large to allow merchants to be very specific towards their target audience. You can upload any value you want using the CSV file, however if your language format does not match Google's full product taxonomy, you may not be able to publish the products to Google.

  For more information, read this article from Google.

- **Google Shopping / Adwords Grouping**

  This is used to group products in an arbitrary way. It can be used for Product Filters to limit a campaign to a group of products, or Product Targets to bid differently for a group of products. You can input any "string" data (letters and numbers).

  For more information visit https://support.google.com/merchants/answer/188494?hl=en.

- **Google Shopping / Adwords Labels**

  Very similar to adwords_grouping, but it will only only work on Cost Per Click (CPC). It can hold multiple values, allowing a product to be tagged with multiple labels.

  For more information visit https://support.google.com/merchants/answer/188494?hl=en.

- **Google Shopping / Condition**

  State what condition the product will be in at the time of sale (what quality?). Valid values are `new`, `used`, or `refurbished`.

- **Google Shopping / Custom Product**

  False means that this product does not have an MPN or a unique product identifier (UPC, ISBN, EAN, JAN) set as a variant barcode. Valid values are `TRUE` or `FALSE`. Learn more here.

- **Variant image**

  Put the URL for your variant image. Shopify will download the images during the import and re-upload them into your store.

The Collection column exception

To organize your products into collections during the CSV upload, you can **add** a new *column* anywhere in your CSV file with the header name `Collection`. This is the only column you can add to the CSV that will not break the format. Therefore:

- **Collection** (must create a new column, can be left blank)

  Enter the name of the collection you want to add this product to. If the collection does not already exist, one will be created for you. You can only add a product to one collection using this method.

Create your product CSV file

For each product, you'll need to decide if it is a simple product or one with variants:

- **Simple Product (Does Not Contain Variants)**

  If you are uploading a product that does not have variants, then enter all the fields (as described above) for the product on the first line along with the URL for the first image. On the following lines, enter just the handle and the URL for each additional additional image.

- **Product With Variants**

  If you are uploading a product that has variants, then enter all the fields (as described above) for the product on the first line along with the URL for the first image. On the following lines, enter the handle. Then, **skip** the Title, Body (HTML), Vendor, and Tags. Fill out the rest of the variants details and each image URL.

Once you've added all your products and images, save your CSV file in UTF-8 format using LF-style linefeeds. If you are not familiar with encodings, please see your spreadsheet or text editor program's documentation.

That's all you need to create your product CSV file. To view an example CSV file, click on the **Import** button on the Products page and click or the **sample CSV template** link.