What is a CSV File?

CSV files can be generated from (and used with) common spreadsheet program, such as Microsoft Excel, Open Office Calc, or Google Spreadsheets.
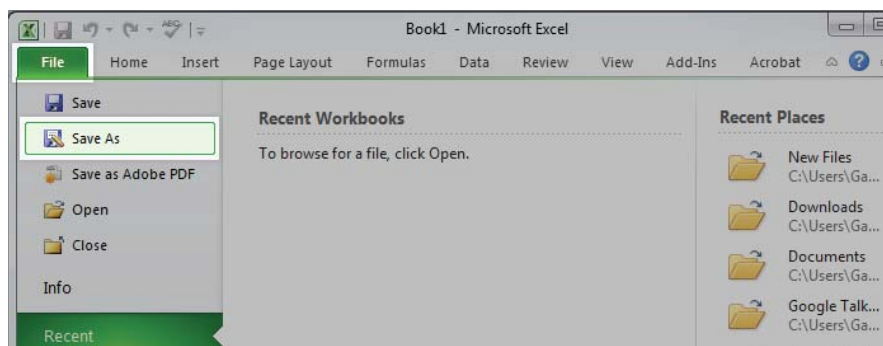
A CSV is a comma separated values file, which allows data to be saved in a table structured format in plain text. Each line of the file is a data record and each record consist of one or more fields separated by commas. CSVs look like a spreadsheet but with a .csv extension, for example template.csv.

They differ from other spreadsheet file types in that you can only have a single sheet in a file, they cannot save cell, column, or row styling, and cannot save formulas.
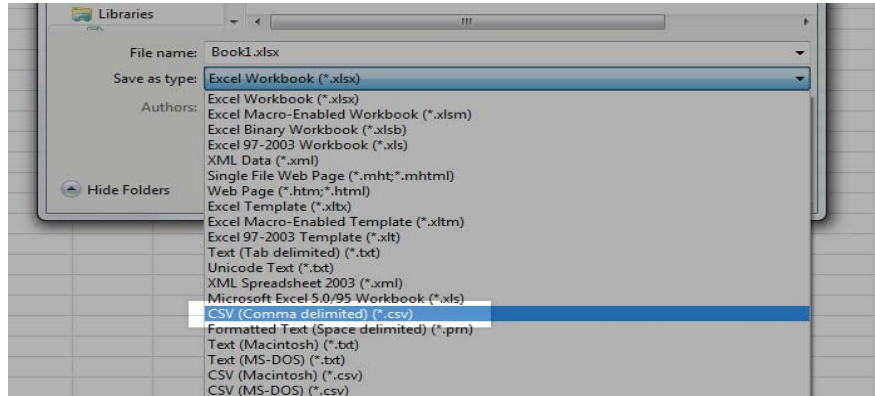
Saving your spreadsheet as a CSV file

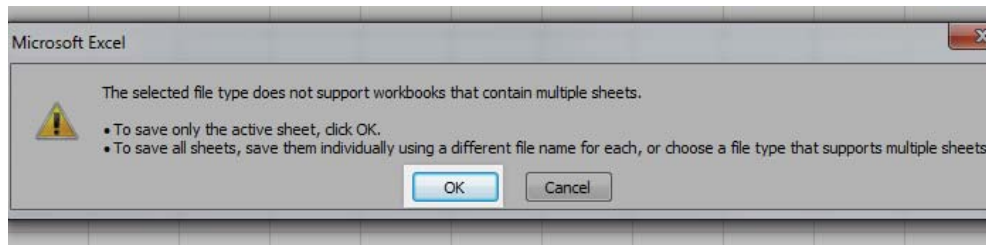These instructions are for Microsoft Excel 2010, but any spreadsheet software will follow a similar process.

1. Open your Microsoft Excel spreadsheet program.

2. Click on **File** and choose **Save As**.

3. Under **Save as type**, choose **CSV (Comma delimited)**. Click **Save**.

4. You may see a message that your file "may contain features that are not compatible with CSV". Click **Yes** to continue. This message is to inform you that any formatting you may have (such as colours or bold text) and any formulas will not be preserved in the CSV formatted file.

5. You may use your spreadsheet program to open the CSV file generated as above and verify your data.