

**Question:** I want to group my date information in my pivot table into months, but it is not working. How do I find out what the problem is?

**Answer:** By using the Go To dialogue box

**Process (Excel 2003 and 2007):**

Grouping of dates in a pivot table is a very powerful tool and has been covered in a previous tip. Without reorganising the data, you can tell the pivot table to group dates together into month, quarters, years and more.

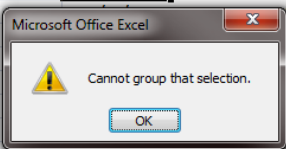
However, unless the date information is correct and in the right format, the grouping option won't work. This example will use the table of information below, with a basic pivot table in columns G and H.

G10    2010/02/07

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	<b>Product Name</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Unit Price</b>	<b>Product Sales</b>			
2	Maxilaku	2010/02/02	30	16	480			
3	Gnocchi di nonna Alice	2010/02/02	70	30	2128		<b>Row Labels</b>	<b>Sum of Product Sales</b>
4	Tunnbröd	2010/02/28	60	7	432		2010/01/31	236
5	Pavlova	2010/02/30	21	14	292		2010/02/02	2608
6	Singaporean Hokkien Fried Mee	2010/02/03	40	11	448		2010/02/03	448
7	Boston Crab Meat	2010/03/07	2	15	29		2010/02/04	201.6
8	Inlagd Sill	2011/03/07	5	15	76		2010/02/05	393
9	Chai	2010/03/07	10	14	144		2010/02/06	224
10	Gudbrandsdalsost	2010/03/07	15	29	432		2010/02/07	159.6
11	Queso Cabrales	2010/03/07	30	17	504		2010/03/07	1109.4
12	Chai	2010/04/14	24	14	346		2010/04/14	345.6
13	Teatime Chocolate Biscuits	2010/04/16	20	7	146		2010/04/16	11050
14	Original Frankfurter grüne Soße	2010/04/16	35	10	364		2010/04/21	29.2
15	Côte de Blaye	2010/04/16	50	211	10540		2010/05/21	240
16	Teatime Chocolate Biscuits	2010/04/21	4	7	29		2010/05/22	49.8
17	Röd Kaviar	2010/05/21	20	12	240		2010/05/23	140
18	Gumbär Gummibärchen	2010/05/22	2	25	50		2010/05/24	192
19	Gorgonzola Telino	2010/05/23	14	10	140		2010/05/30	912
20	Pâté chinois	2010/05/24	10	19	192		2011/03/07	76
21	Gnocchi di nonna Alice	2010/05/30	30	30	912		2010/02/28	432
22	Tourtière	2010/01/31	40	6	236		2010/02/30	291.9
23	Gustaf's Knäckebröd	2010/02/04	12	17	202		<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>19138.1</b>
24	Perth Pasties	2010/02/05	15	26	393			
25	Sasquatch Ale	2010/02/06	20	11	224			

If we attempted to group the date field in the pivot table, we would receive an error:

	Row Labels	Sum of Product Sales
2128		
432	2010/01/31	236
292	2010/02/02	2608
448	2010/02/03	448
29	2010/02/04	201.6
76	2010/02/05	393
144	2010/02/06	224
432	2010/02/07	159.6
504		1109.4
346		345.6
146		11050
364		29.2
10540		240
29		49.8
240	2010/05/23	140

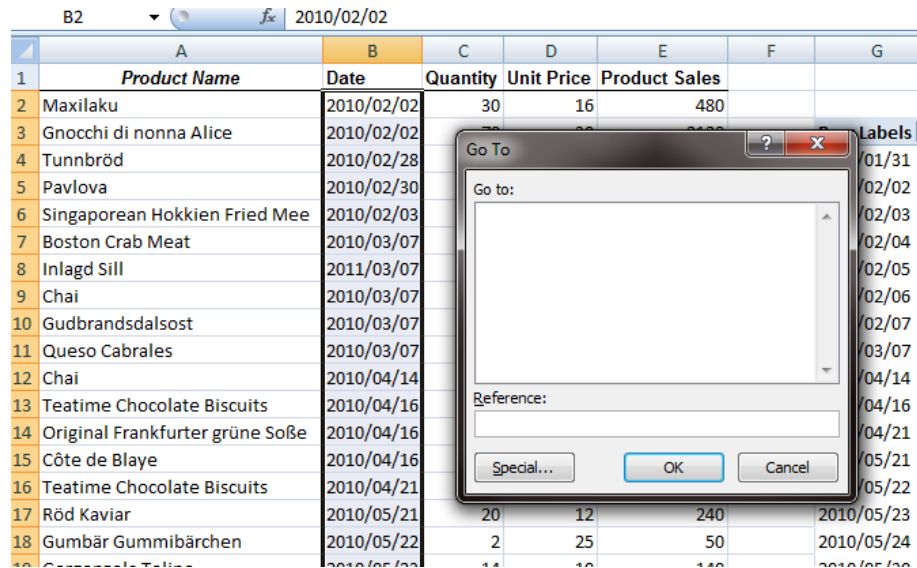


This error occurs when one of the fields in the Date column is not the 'date' format, or if there is an error with the information. The easiest way to identify which cell in the Date column is creating the problem is to use the Go To... utility. The following steps use the information supplied in the first graphic:

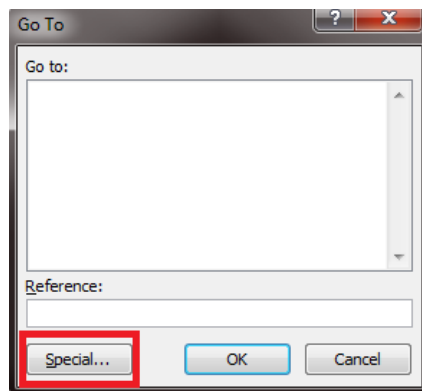
1. Select cell **B2**. This is the first cell of data in the column and the heading should not be selected.
2. Press **CTRL + SHIFT + Down Arrow** keys together. This will select all cells in the column to the bottom of the table

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	Product Name	Date	Quantity	Unit Price	Product Sales	
2	Maxilaku	2010/02/02	30	16	480	
3	Gnocchi di nonna Alice	2010/02/02	70	30	2128	
4	Tunnbröd	2010/02/28	60	7	432	
5	Pavlova	2010/02/30	21	14	292	
6	Singaporean Hokkien Fried Mee	2010/02/03	40	11	448	
7	Boston Crab Meat	2010/03/07	2	15	29	
8	Inlagd Sill	2011/03/07	5	15	76	
9	Chai	2010/03/07	10	14	144	
10	Gudbrandsdalsost	2010/03/07	15	29	432	
11	Queso Cabrales	2010/03/07	30	17	504	
12	Chai	2010/04/14	24	14	346	
13	Teatime Chocolate Biscuits	2010/04/16	20	7	146	
14	Original Frankfurter grüne Soße	2010/04/16	35	10	364	
15	Côte de Blaye	2010/04/16	50	211	10540	
16	Teatime Chocolate Biscuits	2010/04/21	4	7	29	
17	Röd Kaviar	2010/05/21	20	12	240	
18	Gumbär Gummibärchen	2010/05/22	2	25	50	
19	Gorgonzola Telino	2010/05/23	14	10	140	
20	Pâté chinois	2010/05/24	10	19	192	
21	Gnocchi di nonna Alice	2010/05/30	30	30	912	
22	Tourtière	2010/01/31	40	6	236	
23	Gustaf's Knäckebröd	2010/02/04	12	17	202	
24	Perth Pasties	2010/02/05	15	26	393	
25	Sasquatch Ale	2010/02/06	20	11	224	
26	Wimmers gute Semmelknödel	2010/02/07	6	27	160	

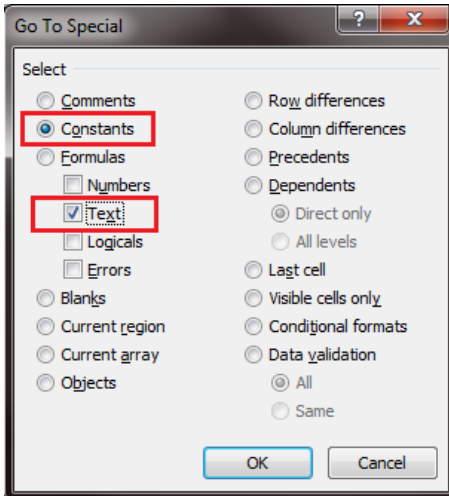
3. Press the F5 key. This will bring up the Go To window



4. Click on the **Special...** button in the bottom left hand corner



5. Select the **Constants** radio button, then remove the ticks from **Numbers**, **Logicals**, and **Errors**.



Each cell that is showing as text values is now selected. Two cells are selected: **B5** and **B20**.

	A	B	Qt
1	<b>Product Name</b>	<b>Date</b>	
2	Maxilaku	2010/02/02	
3	Gnocchi di nonna Alice	2010/02/02	
4	Tunnbröd	2010/02/28	
5	Pavlova	2010/02/30	
6	Singaporean Hokkien Fried Mee	2010/02/03	
7	Boston Crab Meat	2010/03/07	
8	Inlagd Sill	2011/03/07	
9	Chai	2010/03/07	
10	Gudbrandsdalsost	2010/03/07	
11	Queso Cabrales	2010/03/07	
12	Chai	2010/04/14	
13	Teatime Chocolate Biscuits	2010/04/16	
14	Original Frankfurter grüne Soße	2010/04/16	
15	Côte de Blaye	2010/04/16	
16	Teatime Chocolate Biscuits	2010/04/21	
17	Röd Kaviar	2010/05/21	
18	Gumbär Gummibärchen	2010/05/22	
19	Gorgonzola Telino	2010/05/23	
20	Pâté chinois	2010/02/31	

The dates in those cells contain errors; **B5** shows a date of **2010/02/30**, with **B20** showing **2010/02/31**. February only has 28 or 29 days, so Excel changes these to text constants rather than leaving them as dates. The cells are edited to represent **2010/02/28**, allowing for the date to be grouped after the pivot table has been refreshed.

If you have any suggestions for an Excel Tips & Tricks topic, or you would like help with a particular function, please email [enablement@alchemex.com](mailto:enablement@alchemex.com) and yours could be the next Tip Of The Week.



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