



BOOKS

Importing Transactions (CSV)

Upload bank CSVs when bank feeds aren't supported. Map columns, detect duplicates, categorize after import.

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If your bank isn't supported by Plaid (or you prefer not to connect a feed), you can import transactions from CSV files exported from your bank. This guide covers the three-step import flow.

Before You Start

- Download a CSV export from your bank — most banks let you export by date range from their web portal
- The CSV should have at minimum: a date column, a description column, and an amount column
- If your bank only exports OFX or QFX, convert it to CSV first (free tools like CSV Converter Online or Bank2CSV work)

Step 1: Upload

1. Go to **Banking** and pick the bank account to import into.
2. Click **Import Transactions** and drag your CSV file onto the upload area.
3. Books parses the file and shows a preview of the first 10 rows.

Step 2: Map Columns

Books tries to auto-detect which CSV column is which (date, description, amount). Verify and correct if needed:

- **Date column** — pick which CSV column holds the transaction date. Books supports most common formats (MM/DD/YYYY, YYYY-MM-DD, DD-Mon-YY).
- **Description column** — what the bank called the transaction. Becomes the transaction's payee suggestion.
- **Amount column** — single-column with positive/negative, OR two columns (debit + credit). Books handles both.
- **Category column** (optional) — if your bank exports a category, you can map it. Otherwise Books uses your defaults.

Step 3: Review & Import

Books shows a final preview with auto-detected duplicates flagged. Common duplicate scenarios:

- **Exact-match duplicate** — same date, amount, and bank reference as an existing transaction. Auto-skipped.
- **Fuzzy-match duplicate** — same date and amount but different reference. Flagged with a "Duplicate?" badge; you decide whether to import or skip.
- **No duplicate** — clean import.

Confirm the import and Books adds the transactions to the bank account, ready for you to categorize.

After Import — Categorizing

Imported transactions land in your bank account uncategorized. Go through them and assign a payee + category. Books learns your patterns — once you categorize "STARBUCKS #1234" as Meals (Office), it'll auto-suggest the same category for future Starbucks transactions.

ADVISOR TIP

For a backlog of months' worth of imported transactions, use **bulk actions** to categorize fast. Filter by description pattern, select all matches, assign the category — done.

Imports vs. Bank Feeds

You can use both at once. Books de-duplicates across both sources. Common pattern: connect a bank feed for your active operating account, and CSV-import historical transactions or a credit card the feed doesn't support.