TORUS TRAIN OPS

Import & Export Guide

Bulk-loading Rolling Stock and Locomotives from a file, and getting your data back out.

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Bulk-loading Rolling Stock and Locomotives from a file.

Overview

If you already have your roster somewhere else — a spreadsheet you've been keeping, an export from JMRI, or data from another program — you don't need to type it all into Torus Train Ops by hand. Rolling Stock and Locomotives can both be bulk-imported from a plain CSV file.

This guide walks through the whole process: preparing your file, mapping its columns to Torus fields, reviewing and fixing anything that needs attention, and completing the import. It also covers exporting a CSV from JMRI specifically, since that has a couple of extra steps worth knowing about.

> **Note:** This is entirely optional. If you'd rather enter cars and locomotives one at a time through the normal Rolling Stock and Locomotives screens, that works perfectly well too — importing is just a shortcut for bringing in a lot of data at once.

Preparing your file

The importer reads plain CSV (comma-separated values) files. This matters because some common spreadsheet formats look similar but are actually completely different file types internally — using the wrong one is the single most common thing to trip up an import.

From Excel, Google Sheets, or LibreOffice

1. Open your spreadsheet.
2. Use **Save As** (Excel/LibreOffice) or **File** → **Download** (Google Sheets).
3. Choose **CSV (Comma-separated values)** as the file type specifically — not `.xlsx`, not `.ods`, not `.numbers`.

> **Note:** A native LibreOffice (`.ods`) or Excel (`.xlsx`) file is actually a small ZIP archive internally, not plain text. Torus will detect this and tell you clearly if you accidentally upload one instead of a real CSV.

From JMRI

JMRI has two separate things both loosely called a "roster," and it's easy to use the wrong one:

- **DecoderPro's "Export Complete Roster"** (File menu) — a ZIP bundle meant only for moving your DCC programming roster to another JMRI installation. It is **not** usable for importing here.
- **Operations' Locomotives/Cars window → Tools → "Export to file"** — this is the one you want. It creates a real CSV file.

If you've only ever used DecoderPro for programming decoders and never touched JMRI's Operations module, your locomotives won't be in Operations' roster yet. One extra step first:

1. In JMRI, open **Tools** → **Operations** → **Locomotives**.
2. In that window's own Tools menu, choose **Import Locomotives from Roster** — this pulls your existing DecoderPro locomotives into Operations.
3. Still in that same window, go to **Tools** → **Export to file**. This creates a real CSV, saved into JMRI's `operations\Export` folder.

For rolling stock (cars), the equivalent is JMRI's **Operations** → **Cars** window → **Tools** → **Export to file** — no extra import step needed there, since cars normally already live in Operations.

Starting an import

1. Go to **Build Your Railroad** → **Rolling Stock** (or **Locomotives**).
2. Click **Import from File**.
3. Drop your CSV file onto the window, or click it to browse for the file.

> **Note:** If the file isn't a valid CSV — a spreadsheet saved in its native format, or JMRI's wrong export type — Torus will tell you specifically what's wrong instead of showing confusing garbled text.

> **Note:** Importing and exporting are desk work, so **Import from File** and **Export CSV** appear on a computer or a tablet rather than on a phone. The phone roster keeps its search, its filters and **+ Add Car** — everything a crew needs at the layout — and the file work waits for a bigger screen.

Mapping your columns

Every source file organizes its columns a little differently, so the next screen shows exactly what columns your file has and lets you say what each one means. Torus makes a reasonable first guess for common column names, but always double-check it.

For each column, choose what it maps to from the dropdown — or leave it as **Ignore this column** if it's not something Torus needs. JMRI files especially tend to have many columns with no use here, like Load Count or RFID Code.

Combining two columns into one field

Some sources — JMRI included — split what Torus treats as a single **Road Number** into two separate columns, like "Road" (e.g. `LVR`) and "Number" (e.g. `1446`). Map **both** of those columns to Road Number and they will be combined automatically.

Since different files list these columns in different orders, a **Swap Order** control appears automatically whenever two or more columns map to the same field, showing exactly how they'll combine — for example `1446 LVR` instead of the correct `LVR 1446`. One click flips the order.

> **Note:** This combine-order control is easy to miss on a long file with many columns — it's pinned near the bottom of the screen with a gold border specifically so it stands out. If you've mapped two columns to the same field, look for it before continuing.

Reviewing before you import

Once your columns are mapped, click **Continue to Preview**. This screen shows every row from your file and exactly what will happen to it — nothing is saved until you click the final Import button.

Row statuses

Status	Meaning
New	Will be created as a new car or locomotive
Update	The Road Number already matches something here, so the existing record is updated instead of creating a duplicate. Spacing, hyphens and capitalization don't matter — `BRW-1001`, `BRW1001` and `brw 1001` all match a car stored as `BRW 1001`
Fix needed	Something needs your attention before this row can be imported

Home Location, Current Location, and Commodity

These three fields are **dropdown-only** in the preview — you can never type a value directly into them. This is deliberate: they only work if they match something that already exists exactly, and typing leaves room for a typo that fails silently. Picking from the dropdown makes a mismatch structurally impossible.

If your file's value doesn't match anything, the dropdown shows exactly what your file said — for example `⚠ "Coal-Grain" — no match, pick one:` — so you know what to look for, and can choose the closest real match or go create that Commodity or Location first if it's genuinely new.

> **Note:** For new cars, Current Location defaults to whatever Home Location resolves to, if your file doesn't separately provide one — the sensible starting point for a car just entering the roster. If your file *does* specify a Current Location but it doesn't match anything, that still shows up as needing your attention rather than being silently overridden.

Fixing many rows at once

For a home or current location that's the same across a block of rows:

1. Click the row number of the first row in the block.
2. Shift-click the row number of the last row to select the whole range.
3. Pick the correct value from the dropdown in the first selected row.
4. Click **Fill Down** for that field — it applies to every row in your selection.

Repeat for each block that shares a value. For scattered rows with no repeating pattern, click each one and pick from its dropdown; there's no way to batch those, since each one is genuinely different.

If Current Location should simply match Home Location for every row, **Copy Home → Current (all rows)** does that in a single click.

Duplicates and rows you don't want

If the same Road Number appears more than once within your file itself — an accidental double entry, for instance — both rows are flagged, naming which other row number they conflict with.

Every row also has a **Skip** checkbox. Check it and that row won't be imported, whatever its status — useful for a retired car, or for resolving a duplicate by excluding the one you don't want. Skipping one side of a flagged duplicate automatically clears the warning on the row you're keeping.

Completing the import

Once everything looks right, click **Import**. A backup is saved automatically first, every time, before anything changes — so if this turns out to be the wrong file entirely, restoring that one backup from **Trainmaster → Backup & Restore** undoes the whole thing in one step, rather than deleting cars one by one.

The final summary tells you exactly what happened: how many were created, how many existing records were updated, and how many were left out — whether because they still needed fixing or because you chose to skip them.

Exporting your data

Both roster screens have an **Export CSV** button beside Import from File:

- **Build Your Railroad → Rolling Stock → Export CSV**
- **Build Your Railroad → Locomotives → Export CSV**

The file that comes out is a plain CSV you can open in any spreadsheet — useful for a printed roster, for editing many records at once and importing them back, or simply as a second copy of your data outside the app. Names and descriptions that contain commas or quotation marks are fine; they come through whole in both directions.

Because an export re-imports cleanly, "export → edit in a spreadsheet → import" is a practical way to make bulk changes that would be tedious one record at a time.

Reports has an **Export CSV** of its own, which saves whatever report is open — a yard inventory or a wheel report as a spreadsheet rather than a printout.

> **Note:** An export covers the roster only. For a complete copy of your railroad — locations, industries, consignments, jobs, orders and history — use **Trainmaster** → **Backup & Restore** instead.

Troubleshooting

"This doesn't look like a valid CSV file"

You likely selected a spreadsheet's native format (`.xlsx` , `.ods`) or JMRI's DecoderPro roster bundle instead of a real CSV. Re-export using **Save As** → **CSV** or, for JMRI, **Operations** → **Tools** → **Export to file**.

A dropdown field won't match anything

The dropdown shows the exact text your file had for that field. Check that the Location or Commodity actually exists yet under that name — if it doesn't, either create it first in **Build Your Railroad** or pick the closest existing match.

I imported the wrong file

Go to **Trainmaster** → **Backup & Restore** → **Restore from File** and choose the backup saved right before the import — its name starts with `before-import_` . Restoring it undoes the import completely.

Thanks for choosing Torus Train Ops. We hope it helps make every operating session more organized, more realistic, and more enjoyable.

— Brian & Diana, Founders, Railworks Studio