

Sample Software Tutorial

What Is a Database?

A database is simply a collection of data organized for rapid access and retrieval. You probably use a number of databases every day without even knowing it. A phone book, for example, is basically a paper-and-ink database containing a list of entries that include the names of individuals and their telephone numbers. In database parlance, each complete entry is a record, and each discrete piece of information in each record—i.e., each individual's first name, their last name, and their phone number—is a field. Entries (or records) in a phone book database are listed alphabetically by last name to make information retrieval easy and intuitive.

Microsoft Access is a powerful software application that creates and manages databases. It is therefore known as a database management system, or DBMS. While Access is easy to use, it is capable of storing, manipulating, and organizing vast quantities of data. As a result, you can use Access to organize and manage anything from a personal CD collection to the inventory of a large manufacturing company.

Using the Database Wizard

1. In the New File task pane, under Templates, click **General Templates**
2. The Templates dialog box will appear. On the Databases tab, click the icon for the kind of database you want to create, and then click **OK**.
3. In the File New Database dialog box, specify a name and location for the database, and then click **Create**
4. Follow the instructions in the Database Wizard to select the tables and fields that you want your database to contain

Try It!

1. Create a new database. Name it "CD Collection."
2. In the database window, double-click **Create table in Design view**. A new table, named Table1, will appear in design view.
3. Create the following fields (data types are given in parentheses):
 - CDID (AutoNumber)
 - CDTitle (Text)
 - Price (Currency)
 - ArtistID (Number)