

# A Simple Database with AppleWorks

**Question:** What were computers invented to do? OK! OK! They were invented to calculate the trajectories of cannon balls, but what did everybody except the military want them for? Databases! And, what do most computer users never do? Make databases! So, let's make a database.

A database is a list of stuff. It might be a list of addresses, recipes, a store's inventory, a catalog, insurance records, a library card catalog, your checking account (*Quicken* is just a non-customizable database) or anything else. What makes a computer database useful is that items can be sorted quickly and easily. An example might be a recipe database with perhaps 1000 recipes. With such a database, you could instantly pull out all recipes that contained both eggs and cheese without manually sorting out Yorkshire pudding and chocolate cake. In fact, you could sort such a database by any attribute like title, ingredients, cooking time or who in the family likes it. So, let's make a recipe database.

Our old friend *AppleWorks* does databases as one of its many abilities and, since most of us have *AppleWorks* (or its pre-cursor, *ClarisWorks*), let's use *AppleWorks* to make our recipe database.

**First, a bit of thought.** Before we open *AppleWorks*, we need to plan. What categories of information do we want to have? It's best to make a list, here's mine:

- 1) Category (appetizer, entree, dessert, etc.)
- 2) Title
- 3) Ingredients
- 4) Directions (method of preparation)
- 5) Notes

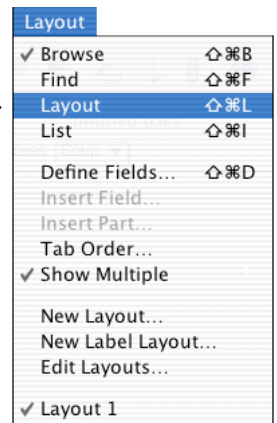
**Launch *AppleWorks*.** When *Starting Points* appears, click the *Database* icon. The *Define*

*Database Fields* window opens. You need to name each field. Call the first one **Categories** and, from the *Field Type* list, choose: *Pop-up Menu* and click once on the *Create* button. The *Options for Pop-up Menu Field* window appears, type the first category: **Soup** in the *Item Label* field and click *Create*. Soup is added to the list above. Repeat for Appetizer, Entree, Salad and Dessert (add some more categories if you like). When all have been added to the list, click the *OK* button. Notice that *Categories* is now in the list of *Field Names*.

Now, we need a Title field. Type **Title** in as *Field Name* and change the *Field Type* to *Text*. Click the *Create* button. Repeat this for the Ingredients, Directions and Notes fields. When all of the fields are listed under *Field Name*, click the *Done* button.

It begins to look like a database. You can now see the fields and their labels. However, much is yet to be done.

**The *Layout* menu.** Pull down the *Layout* menu. Notice the four view options: *Browse*, *Find*, *Layout* and *List*. The check mark indicates which view you are currently using. Change views by selecting with your mouse. *Browse* allows



you to manually search through your records (each recipe is called a *record* in database-talk). *Find* is for searching for a specific word or phrase. Use *Layout* to design the look of your database. *List* shows your records in a compact list. Below the views you see a check mark next to *Show Multiple*, click this to remove the check mark. By doing so, you will

only see one recipe record at a time rather than several on each page. I find this easier to read. If you prefer to see multiple recipes simultaneously, recheck *Show Multiple*.

Choose *Layout* from the *Layout* menu. Suddenly, you see the size and shape of the fields that will contain your information. Now, you can get creative with the database's look and organization.

Here is how the raw layout of your database looks. →

We need more working room, so click on the little box marked *Body* and drag it down to the bottom of the window.

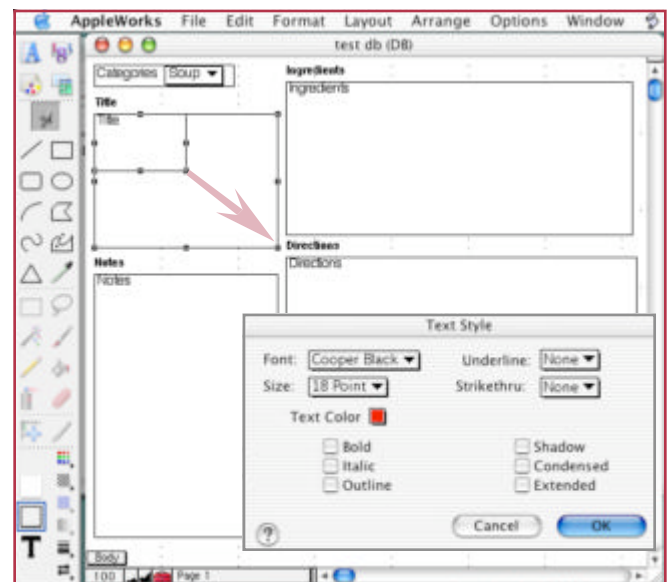
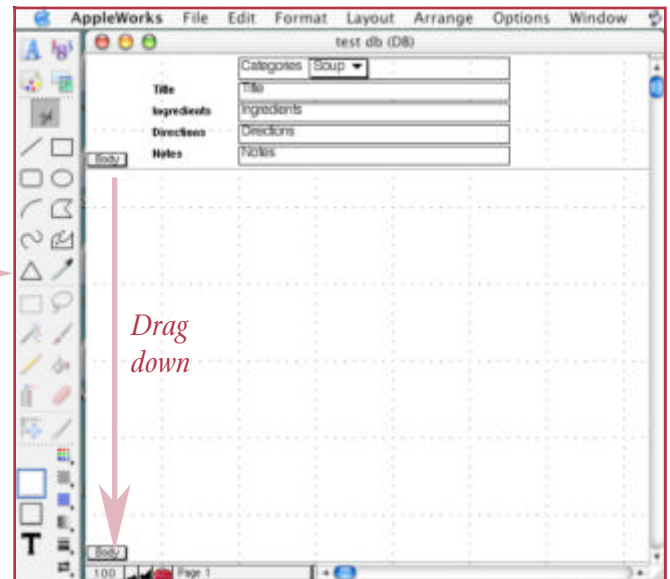
Next, move the fields around by clicking on them and dragging them to new positions. You can change field sizes by clicking on the little boxes, that appear on the borders of selected fields, and dragging them (as is shown at right for the Title field). Move the bold-face field labels into position, if you like.

You can further customize the layout by adding colors to the fields and the lines that define their edges. Use the drawing and color tools in the *Tool Palette* to make these changes.

Double-click on a field to show the field's *Text Style* attributes. Change font, size and color to fit your whims.

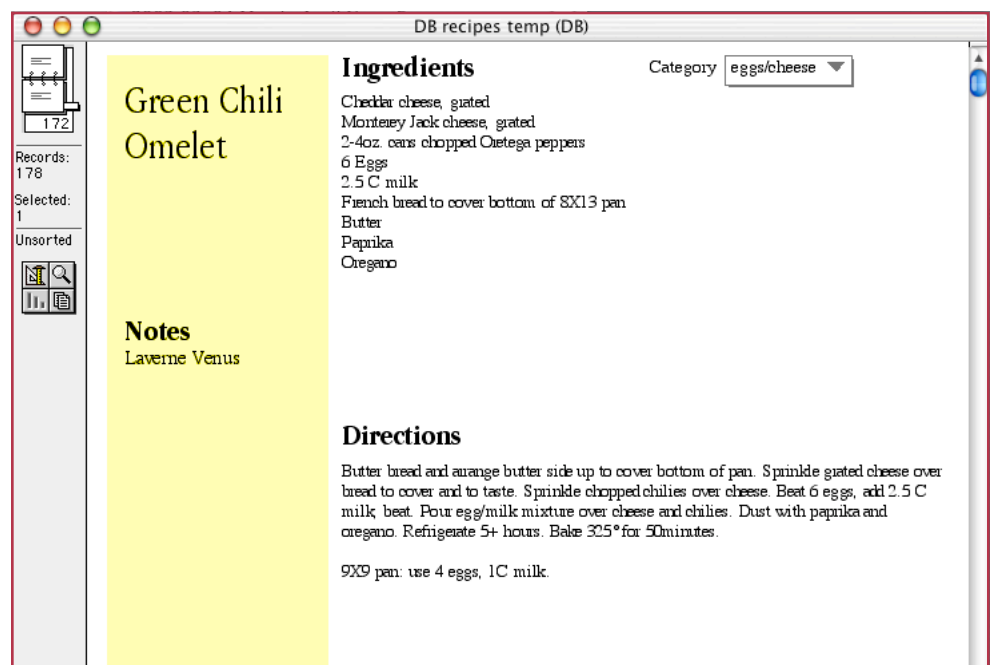
To change the font, size, etc. for the labels, click on one, highlight the words (just as you do with other text) and choose your font preferences from the *Format* menu.

As you make your changes, use the *Layout* menu to switch frequently from *Layout* mode to *Browse* mode. In *Browse* mode, you see how the database will look when you use or print it. Change back to *Layout* mode to make changes and adjustments to the look of the database. Below right is the final look of my recipe database. (By the way, my mother-in-law's Green Chili Omelet is fabulous!)



At last, we get to add the recipes. The information that is added to a database is, of course, data. Gather your data: 3 by 5 recipe cards, magazine clippings, cookbooks and add your data like so:

- 1) From the *Edit* menu, choose *New Record*.
- 2) A blank form appears. Click once on the empty *Title* field, a flashing insertion point appears. Type in the title of the first recipe.
- 3) Click once on the *Ingredients* field and type in the ingredients. Do the same for *Directions* and *Notes*.
- 4) Click and hold on the *Categories* field and choose from the pop-up list.



**Getting around.** Keep adding recipes until you have at least 20 (any less and you may as well just keep using the old 3 by 5 cards). If you are feeling really ambitious, add a couple of thousand (you really could!). Now that you have so many recipes, you can put the database to work for you.

In order to find things in the database, you need to know how to navigate around it. *AppleWorks* makes this easy by imitating a *Rolodex* filing system. The graphic at right shows how this works. Just click to flip the cards forward and back to page through the records. Notice the little tab that sticks out of the right side of the “Rolodex”. Click on and slide this tab up and down to speed through your records. As you move the tab, you’ll see that if you move it half way down and stop, you will be approximately at the mid-point in your records. Move the tab one quarter of the way and you will be at the 25% point, and so on.

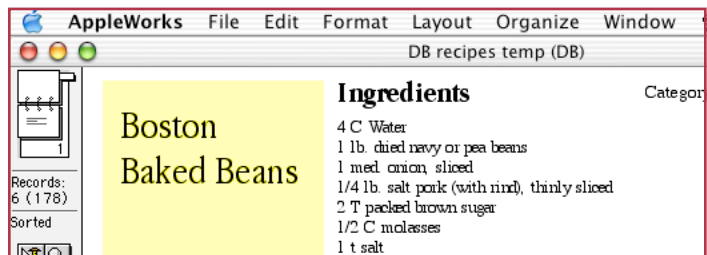
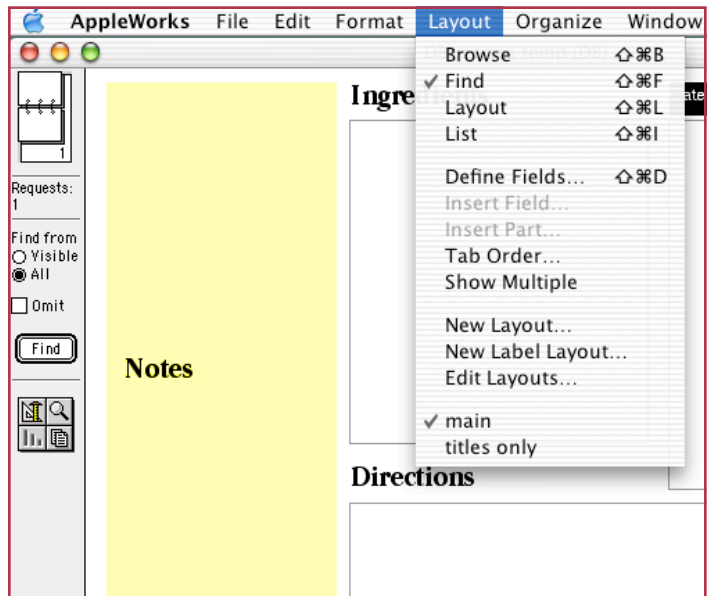
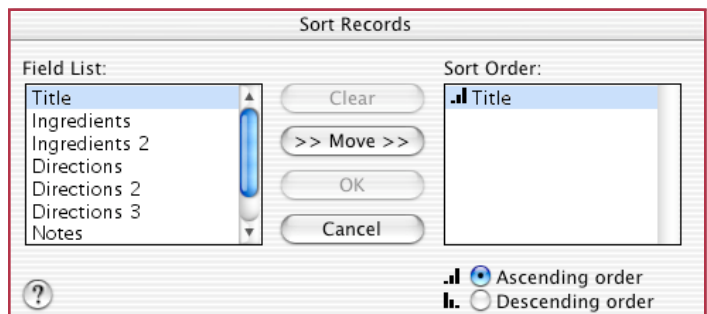
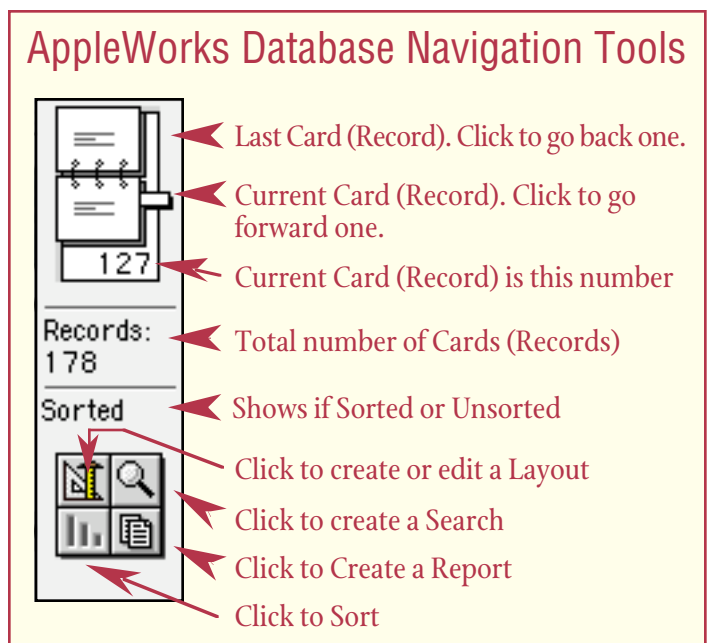
**Get it in order.** Let’s put the database in alphabetical order by title. Here’s how:

- 1) Choose *Sort Records...* from the *Organize* menu.
- 2) The Sort Records window opens.
- 3) Click on *Title* in the Field List to highlight it.
- 4) Click the *Move* button and *Title* moves to Sort Order.
- 5) Click the *Ascending order* button to alphabetize A to Z (click *Descending order* to alphabetize Z to A).
- 6) Click the *OK* button to complete.

**Find it.** The easy way to find a record is to use the database’s *Find* layout. Do this:

- 1) From the *Layout* menu, choose *Find*. This puts the database into the *Find* layout. Note that the fields are now empty of data and ready for input.
- 2) Click in the field that you want to search. Click in the *Title* field to search by title. Click in the *Ingredients* field to search for recipes that use a specific ingredient, etc.
- 3) Type in what you want to search for.
- 4) Click the *Find* button (or tap your *Return* or *Enter* key).

*AppleWorks* will search through all of your records and select only the ones that contain the words that you requested. I searched on Beans and found six bean recipes. *AppleWorks* shows this where it lists **Records: 6 (178)**. This note means that there are six bean recipes out of 178 total recipes. If I click the “Rolodex,” I will be able to page through the six bean recipes without having to sort through the 172 non-bean recipes. This makes finding records quick and easy. It also allows for a bit of serendipity. If I had searched on Boston Baked Beans I would have found only that. By searching on Beans I see five other recipes as well.



**Get back to it.** Once you are done searching, choose *Show All Records* from the *Organize* menu and all 178 records become visible again.

**Multiple searches.** You can search on more than one criterion at a time. Just enter search terms in more than one field and *AppleWorks* will only show you records that match your request. This can be very handy with address lists. You may want to send out holiday cards first to folks in New Jersey. To do so, you could search your addresses for only folks who are on the card list AND live in New Jersey. The *Match Records...* command under the *Organize* menu, allows very complex and specific searches. *AppleWorks Help* (found under the *Help* menu) can aid you in learning how these work.

**Label it.** Speaking of address databases, one of the most needed functions is printing sticky-back address labels. *AppleWorks* has built-in, most of the *Avery* line of labels (don't buy any other brand as damage to your printer may result). Here's how to use them:

- 1) Create your address database and enter your data.
- 2) From the *Layout* menu, choose *New Layout*.
- 3) Give the new layout a name (I like to

name label layouts after the *Avery* number that I'm using).

- 4) Click the *Labels* button.
- 5) Click and hold on the *Custom* button and choose your particular *Avery* label from the list.
- 6) Click the *OK* button.
- 7) The *Set Field Order* window appears.
- 8) In the *Field List* box, click on a field that you want to appear on the labels.
- 9) Repeat for all fields that you want to appear on the address labels.
- 10) Click the *OK* button.
- 11) The new layout appears (to switch back to your original layout, go to the bottom of the *Layout* menu and choose the layout without a check mark).
- 12) Choose *Layout* from the *Layout* menu. Drag the fields around to the order you like and the appearance you want. Choose font and size now, too, just like when you originally created the database.
- 13) Once you have the appearance set, choose *Browse* from the *Layout* menu.
- 14) The labels will NOT appear on screen as they will print on the *Avery* label sheet, so a test print is in order. Sacrifice a label sheet to the database gods and print a sample page. Odds are that the data will not perfectly align with the diecut labels on the sheet. If you need to adjust the alignment up, down or left and right, use the *Docu-*

*ment* command from the *Format* menu to adjust the margins. Do another test print to see if things align properly now. Once alignment is set, you need not worry about it again. Now, you can print as many labels as you like.

**Databases are fun and useful.** Give them a try. You'll soon have lists of everything in the house!

### *March/April Tip*

ComputerWare is gone again. Marin Co. has once more lost its best authorized Mac retailer and repair center. Elite Computers, who bought the ComputerWare name from the previous owners, has decided to quit business entirely citing problems with their relationship with Apple. Once again, many good people have lost their jobs and a good resource for Mac products, repair and advice is no more.

Options for Marin Co. are thin, but many Apple resellers and warranty repair centers can be found in San Francisco and Santa Rosa. To find an authorized sales and service center, go to:

<http://buy.apple.com>

and click on the appropriate link.

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