

Make a Merge File Look and Feel Like a Database
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Did you know that WordPerfect has a built-in database feature? No, I'm not talking about DataPerfect or even Borland's Paradox in the new PerfectOffice suite. WordPerfect can create and manage a simple database using WordPerfect's Merge feature.

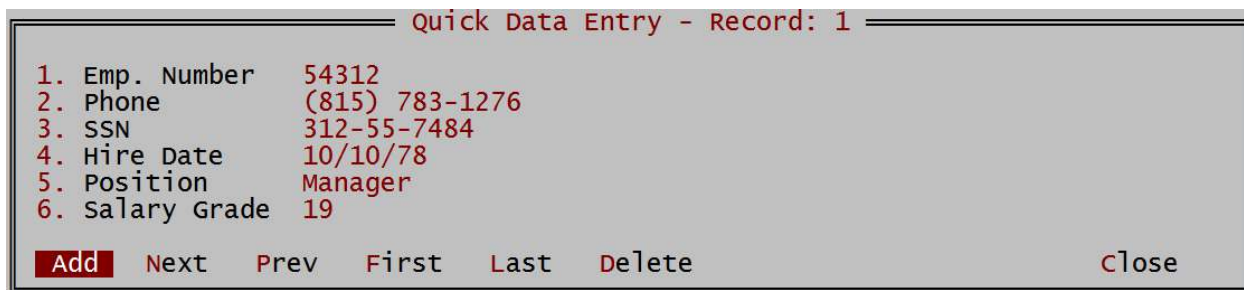
While WordPerfect's Merge feature normally requires you to deal with merge data files, you can easily give this feature the look and feel of a real database (see Figure 1 below). The included DB.WPM macro lets you create and manage data. With the macro, you can add or delete a record, edit the previous or next record or go to the first or last record in the database.

Using the Macro

To use the macro, retrieve your data file to the screen. (See sample data file in Figure 2 below.) The data file must have field names defined or the macro won't run. The data file should also be correctly formatted as a data file.

If you want to create a new data file, go to a clear screen and press Merge Codes (Shift+F9), (2) Data [Text]. Define the data file's field names by pressing (3) Field Names. Type the field name and press (Enter). Continue entering the rest of the field names. If possible, don't use more than nine field names. After you've entered the last field name, choose OK to close the Field Names dialog box. The field names make the first record in your new data file.

With your data file on the screen, run the macro by pressing Play Macro (Alt+F10), typing "db" and pressing (Enter). The Quick Data Entry dialog box appears, similar to Figure 1. The dialog box automatically displays all the field names from the current data file. Edit the field contents displayed in the dialog box or choose (N) Next to move to the next record or (P) Prev to move to the previous record. You can also choose (F) First to move to the very first record in the data file, (L) Last to move to the very last record, (D) Delete to delete the current record or (A) Add to add a new record. When you've finished adding and editing records, press (C) Close to stop the macro, then save your data file by pressing Save (Ctrl+F12).



Quick Data Entry - Record: 1	
1. Emp. Number	54312
2. Phone	(815) 783-1276
3. SSN	312-55-7484
4. Hire Date	10/10/78
5. Position	Manager
6. Salary Grade	19
Add Next Prev First Last Delete Close	

Figure 1

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FIELDNAMES(Emp. Number;Phone;SSN;Hire Date;Position;Salary Grade)ENDRECORD

54312ENDFIELD
(815) 783-1276ENDFIELD
312-55-7484ENDFIELD
10/10/78ENDFIELD
ManagerENDFIELD
19ENDFIELD
ENDRECORD

54399ENDFIELD
(312) 658-3614ENDFIELD
847-37-3712ENDFIELD
01/19/88ENDFIELD
TechnicianENDFIELD
15ENDFIELD
ENDRECORD

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Figure 2

Understanding the Macro

Line 1 calls the LIBRARY.WPM macro, which is a library of procedures and functions used by macros that ship with WP. Display is also turned off.

Line 2 defines a few variables for use later on in the macro. Line 3 calls label GetField. This label (lines 65-83) moves to the top of the data file (line 67), gathers the field names and stores them in an array named FName[FNum] (line 78). The length of the longest field name and the screen size are also obtained for later use when creating the dialog box. Macro execution returns to line 3, and the cursor is then returned to its original location in the data file.

Line 6 calls the ReadData label (lines 48-63) to obtain the data from the current record. Line 51 clears the array FData[fnum] for a new record. The fornext loop on lines 52-61 gathers the field information and stores it in the array FData[fnum] (line 60). Line 53 checks to see if the cursor is at the end of the record or the end of the file. When it is, the macro breaks out of the fornext loop and returns to line 6.

Lines 7-24 display the Quick Data Entry dialog box with the data for the current record (gathered in lines 48-63). Lines 11-13 pad the spacing after the field names so the entry fields will line up in the data column.

The rest of the lines add the fields and buttons to the dialog box, then display it on the screen. When you choose a button on the dialog box, lines 26-33 update the record in the data file. Lines 34-45 check which button was chosen from the dialog box and respond accordingly. If you choose the Delete button, lines 41-43 use the Ask function from the library.wpm macro (mentioned earlier) to prompt with a Delete this record? Yes/No dialog box.