

STUDENT DATABASE – Lesson #2

Creation of a form for data entry

Objectives: You are going to create a form through which data about students can be entered. You also be will be shown 2 ways in which the user is restricted to data entry of particular permitted values.

You must have completed **Lesson #6** of the database lessons at www.ictgcse.net/practcal.html before continuing.

1 Open the database **Students**. You should have the table that was created in **Lesson #6**.

Click **Forms** in the left part of the database window.



Double click on **Create Form in design view**.

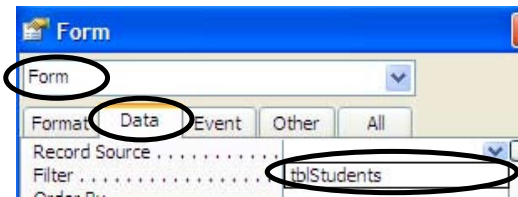
2 The next few steps are quite easy but look difficult so you need to concentrate

The widow that opens now shows a blank form. In the state it is now there is no data displayed because there has been no instruction as to what data to connect to the form nor where on the form any data should be displayed. These are the next two steps.

To get the table **tblStudents** connected to the form you need to click on the properties button in the toolbar....

and you will see  this window displayed.

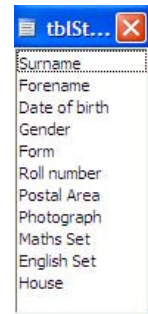
Ensure that **Form** is displayed in the top white stripe, and then click on the **Data** tab. Now choose **tblMemberDetails** in the drop down list alongside **Record Source**.



Straight away another little window opens which contains a list of all the fields available to you. You can then close the window headed **Form**.

Click and hold each field name and then drag and release over the form. [If you click once on the top field name, hold down the **shift** key and click on the last field name, you can select all the fields in one go.]


Drag all the fields onto the form and then you can close this window with the list in it.



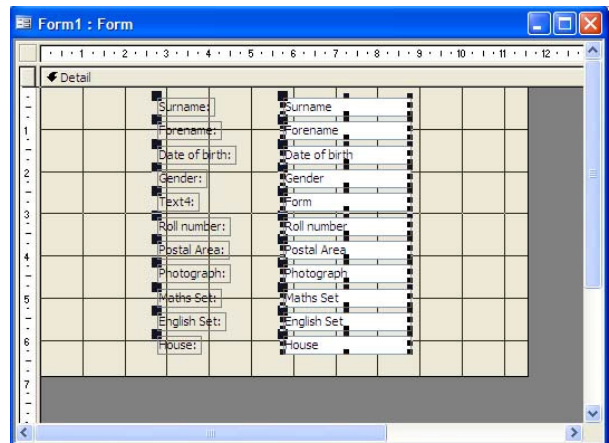
3 This is what you see now...


The arrangement of the fields is the first task we will tackle.

There are a couple of things to note before we start.

On the toolbar there is a button looking like this 

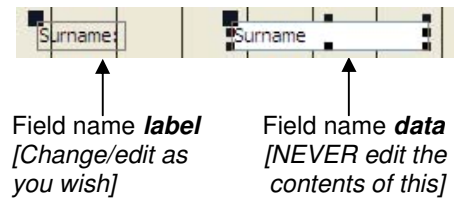
If you click on it you are shown the form as the user will actually see it. Now in the



toolbar the button has changed to this 

Click now and you go back to the design view. Basically these buttons just switch you between the 2 views. This is really handy as you rearrange things because you can keep on checking that the user view is coming along as you want.

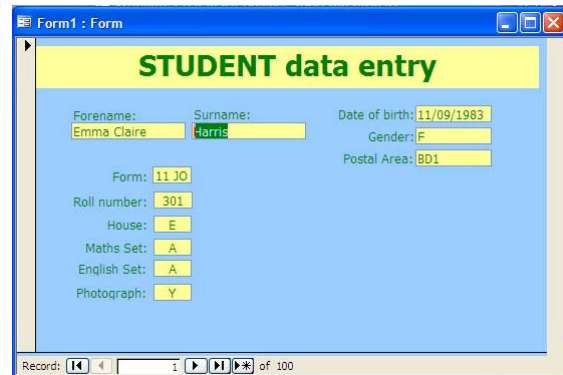
Click anywhere on the form and the small black squares around the *fields* will disappear. Now click on one *field* and the small black will appear around that *field*. For example, here the *Surname* field has been selected. The two parts are connected in quite a simple way. One part is the label that refers to the data, the other is the data placeholder. The contents of the label can be changed but **NEVER** change what appears in the data placeholder.



The black squares are significant as well. As you move the pointer over the field it changes shape. Over the field generally it is in the shape of a flat hand. As you move over the larger of the squares on the top left corners the hand has a pointed finger. If you click and drag when you have a flat hand, both the label and data move together. If you click and drag with the pointed finger just that element (label or data) moves.

To change the appearance of the label or data click on the element once to select it. Once you have done that the formatting toolbar is displayed so you can change things just as if you were in the word processor. Spend time now changing the appearance of the data elements and their position.

- 4 Try to get to something like this (leave the large area in the bottom left for pictures to be inserted):



Questions:

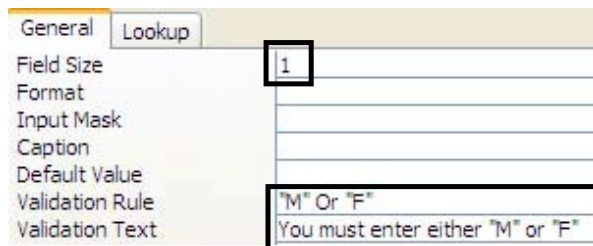
- Can you get the background of the form itself to change colour?
- Can you get a line around a data field?
- Where did the heading come from?
- How come some of the data is centred in its box and not on the left?
- Resizing of the data boxes?

Close the form and save as: **frmDataEntry**

- 5 There are two ways in which data entry can be restricted. That is, there are 2 ways in which you, the database designer, can control the way in which the user enters data. For example we can ensure that the user only enters “M” or “F” for gender.

Click on the **Tables** button and open the table but in design view.

Click on *Gender* in the field list. Look at the bottom part of the window. Type in the three lines exactly like this.



Validation means ensure that the data that is entered is accurate and acceptable.

Now close the table. You will be asked a series of questions. Answer: Yes, Yes and Yes.

Basically you have said that you know that the rules about what can be entered into this field have changed are you are prepared to lose some data as the new rules are applied. Normally of course you would set up this validation rule before any data gets entered.

Open the form **frmDataEntry** and try to change the *Gender* of a student to anything other than M or F. The error message comes up to tell you what you can type in – whatever you typed in as the validation rule gets displayed.

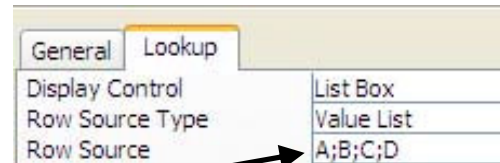
Correct the data and close the form.

- 6 The second method of restricting data entry is to create a pull down list that is attached to the field – users get to click on the available values. These are called **value lists**.

Open the table in design view again. Click on **Maths Set** in the field list and again look down at the lower half of the window and click on the **Lookup** tab.

Select **Combo Box** in the drop down list for Display Control.

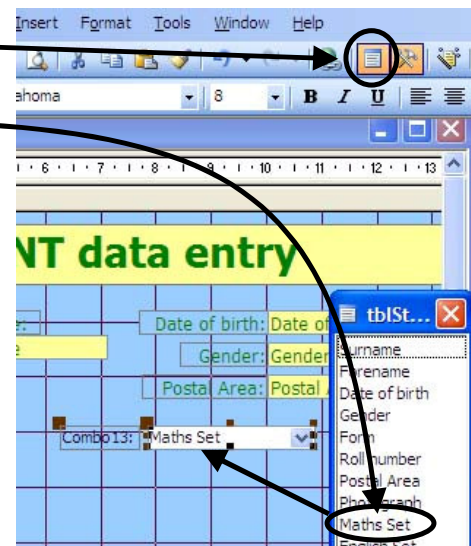
Select **Value List** in the drop down list for Row Source Type.



In **Row Source** type in what you see here.

Close the table and open the form again but in **design** view.

Click on the *Field List* button



From the field list window drag onto the form the field *Maths Set*.

You will need to delete the original Maths Set field on the form. Just click on it once to select it and press delete on the keyboard.

Format/edit the new field on the form – especially changing the **label** from **Combo** to **Maths Set**.

Look at the form in its normal view.

You now have a drop down list for the maths set where particular values can be chosen.

Close and save the form.

- 7 Now it is your turn to take this further. The **English Set** and the **House** can also be changed. You decide whether you want to use a combo box or a validation rule. Either way make the changes so that you have 4 fields where the data entry is restricted to values that you want.

Close the database.