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Layout...Layout - making your database look nice by Cindy O'Hora

As you build a database, you will find the fields are presented in the order of creation in a top down order. I suggest you get all your fields created and then go to Layout .. Layout. Layout permits you to change the appearance of you database. Changes made in a Layout will appear in every record in Browse view of that layout.
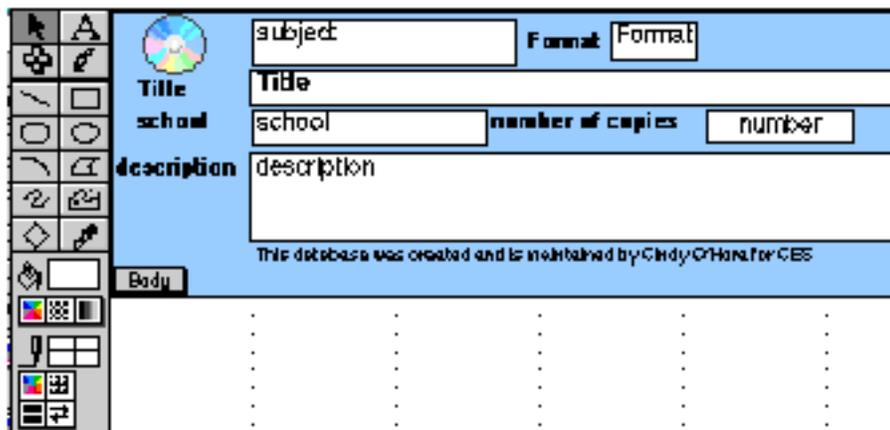
Note: When your database is in Layout mode the tools on the left hand side change to the Drawing tools. You'll also notice that the background has the grid of the drawing mode. The menu bar (at the top of the screen) has changed to the Drawing one, too.

If you are having trouble adjusting your layout, check out the basic   draw lessons I provide.

Click on a **bold** title word using the arrow tool and drag it into a new position.

Click on a field entry box and use the square black handles to resize it.

Use the arrow tool to drag the a single black handle to enlarge or reduce the field's size. I made "Format" and "number of copies" much smaller.

You can also drag them into a new position in the record.

Stylin'

Click on the field. Go Format...Style...Bold to make all the entries in a field appear **bold**. I did that to the **title** field.

Changing the background

I find that the plain white background leaves it dry and tough to read. It is not necessary to change any of these background attributes to make and use a database. But, if you will be using it often, it can be visually enhancing.

To color the background:

1. Select the rectangle tool and select a color in the paint can fill palette.

2. Start at the upper left hand corner of the record - draw a rectangle by holding down the mouse button and dragging to the bottom right corner of the record. It covers up everything!

3. **Go Arrange ... Move To Back.** That sends the colored rectangle to the base of the project and makes the fields visible again.

4. I suggest you lock it there by selecting it and then **Go Arrange...Lock**. You'll note that the handles will turn from black to gray. You will need to **Unlock** it to make any changes.

5. **Drag the Body line downward a small amount** to adjust the area of blank space surrounding each record.

   I like to see a little white to give me a visual sense of where one record ends and the next begins in Browse.

To add the CD clip art:

1. Put any CD in your drive. Copy the icon off of a CD (File ... Get info box.)

2. Return to the database layout and Edit ... Paste it.

I often use a straight line to visually divide one record from another in Browse view.

1. Click on the line tool in the tool palette.

2. Set the color and pattern using those palettes.

3. Draw the line above the Body line demarcation. [(My dashed line tip may be helpful](.)

Use [new view](to make it easier to see the outcome of your changes.

Back to the working database

When you are done tweaking go **Layout...Browse** to return to your original view of your database in the selected layout.

Adjust the tab order

You may find after you entered all the fields, that you want to **adjust the tab order**. To adjust it **Go Layout...Tab Order**. Create your new order by selecting the fields in the left hand box and "Moving" them to the right hand one in the tab order you desire.

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