

Databases

What is a database?

A structured collection of similar information to be sorted and searched through.

How is a database structured?

- All the information is stored in a **file**.
- Information on one particular item, say, a person, is called a **record**.
- Each individual piece of information in a record is called a **field**.

e.g. A phone book is a database file, a person's details are a record and each person's name, address and phone number are all fields.

How do you SORT on a field?

- Choose **Sort** option.
- Pick the field name to be sorted on from list of all fields.
- Choose **ascending** (e.g. 1 to 10 or A to Z) or **descending** (e.g. 10 to 1 or Z to A).
- Click on Sort.

How do you SEARCH on a field?

- Choose **Search** (or **Complex Search** when using 2 or more fields) option.
- In required field, type what is to be found, e.g. in a car make field type Vauxhall.
- Click on Find, and all Vauxhall cars will be displayed.

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What is the purpose of an ID number in a database?

- Uniquely identifies a record.
- There may be 2 John Smith's in a database, but they can be individually identified as the ID Number will be different.

How can the contents of a database be kept private?

- Create a password system that allows authorised users access to the database.
- Creating different passwords can allow different users different levels of access.
- E.g. A manager may have full access to the database (including financial information) with his password whilst a secretary may only be able to add new records and be restricted from viewing or changing certain information via their password.