

Get to know Access

Tables

The screenshot displays three overlapping table views in Microsoft Access. The 'Products' table is the largest and shows columns for Product Name, Category, and Unit. The 'Categories' table is smaller and shows Category Name and Description. The 'Shippers' table is the smallest and shows Company Name. Red lines connect the 'Employee ID' field in the 'Orders' table to the 'Employee ID' field in the 'Employees' table, with a yellow circle containing the number '1' at the connection point. Another yellow circle containing the number '2' is located below the 'Orders' table.

Products : Table			
	Product Name	Category	Unit
▶	Chai	Beverage	\$18
	Chamomile		
	Aniseed Tea		
	Cherries		
	Chocolate		
	Grandma's		
	Uncle		

Categories : Table		
	Category Name	Description
	Beverages	Soft drinks,
	Condiments	Sweet and
	Confe	
	Dairy	
	Grains	
	Meat/	
	Produ	

Shippers : Table	
	Company Name
	+ Speedy Express
	+ United Package
	+ Federal Shipping

Tables store data, so they're essential building blocks of any database.

A database should have a separate table for every major subject of information, such as employee records, customer orders, shipping methods, or suppliers. Data should not be duplicated in multiple tables.

Each table contains rows called records and columns called fields.

Primary key

The diagram shows two tables: 'Employees' and 'Orders'. The 'Employees' table has columns for Employee ID, Last Name, and First Name. The 'Orders' table has columns for Order ID, Customer ID, and Employee ID. A red line connects the 'Employee ID' field in the 'Orders' table to the 'Employee ID' field in the 'Employees' table. A yellow circle containing the number '1' is placed at the connection point. Another yellow circle containing the number '2' is located below the 'Orders' table.

Employees: Table			
	Employee ID	Last Name	First Name
▶	1	Davolio	Nancy

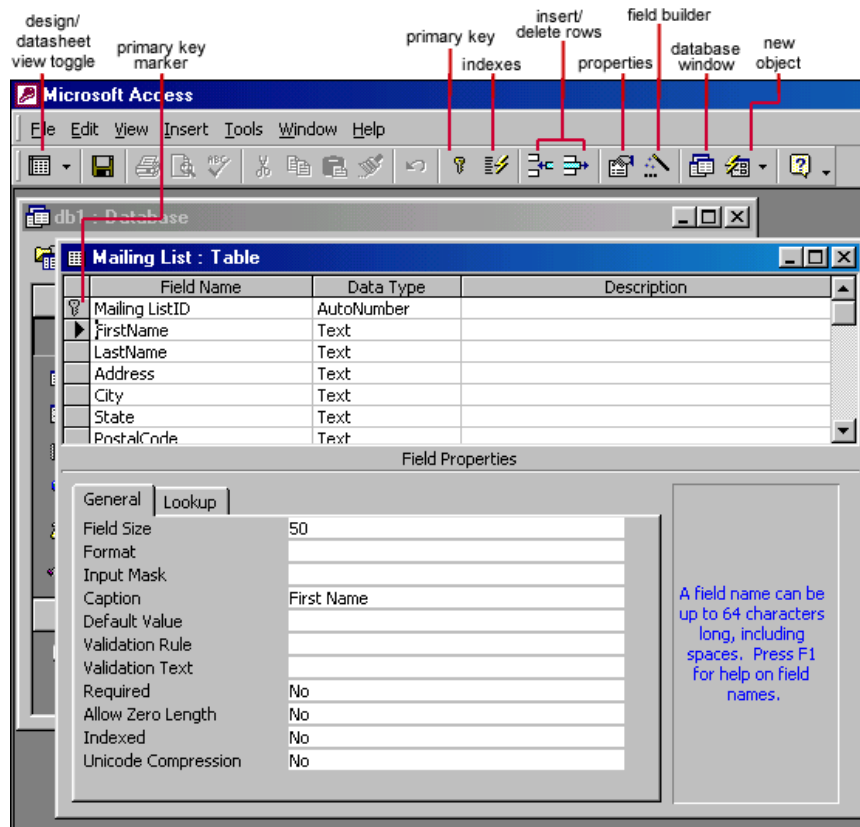
Orders: Table			
	Order ID	Customer ID	Employee ID
▶	10022	LAMA	1

To distinguish one record from another, tables can contain a primary key field.

The primary key is an identifier—such as a part number, a product code, or an Employee ID—that's unique to each record.

The primary key should be a piece of information that won't change frequently.

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Data Type is the type of value that will be entered into the fields.

- **Text** - The default type, text type allows any combination of letters and numbers up to a maximum of 255 characters per field record.
- **Memo** - A text type that stores up to 64,000 characters.
- **Number** - Any number can be stored.
- **Date/Time** - A date, time, or combination of both.
- **Currency** - Monetary values that can be set up to automatically include a dollar sign (\$) and correct decimal and comma positions.
- **AutoNumber** - When a new record is created, Access will automatically assign a unique integer to the record in this field. From the General options, select Increment if the numbers should be assigned in order or random if any random number should be chosen. Since every record in a datasheet must include at least one field that distinguishes it from all others, this is a useful data type to use if the existing data will not produce such values.
- **Yes/No** - Use this option for True/False, Yes/No, On/Off, or other values that must be only one of two.
- **OLE Object** - An OLE (Object Linking and Embedding) object is a sound, picture, or other object such as a Word document or Excel spreadsheet that is created in another program. Use this data type to embed an OLE object or link to the object in the database.
- **Hyperlink** - A hyperlink will link to an Internet or Intranet site, or another location in the database.

