

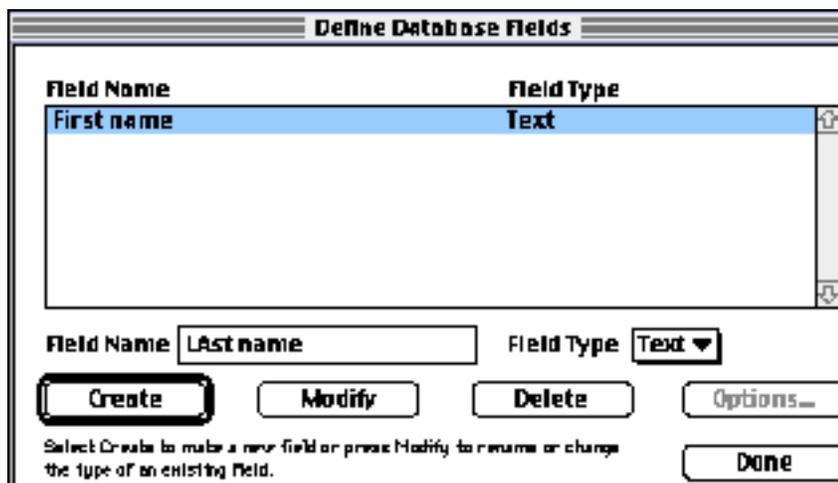
Fancy Field stuff in AppleWorks Database by Cindy O'Hora

Making use of customized field types and default settings will speed data entry into your database.

When you create a "field" take advantage of the Field Type pull down menu.

I'll explain two of them. You can learn more by using the AppleWorks Help feature.

Let's say you are creating a database of addresses. Many of the addresses you enter have the same zip code. As you create the zip field customize the field type.



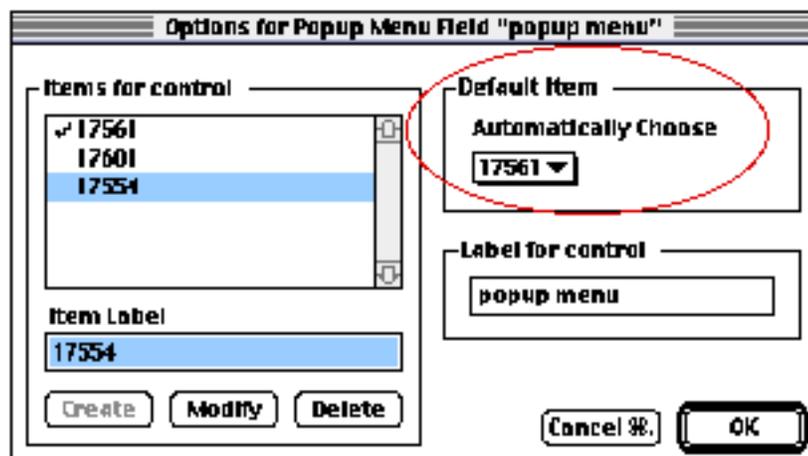
In Field Type - Select Popup Menu.

Popup Menu

1. Enter one of the zip codes in the Item Label box.

2. Click the Create button. The zip will appear in the Items for control box. Continue entering the zip codes you need.

If you make a mistake, select the zip in the "Items for control" box and modify or delete as indicated.



Default Item: Set which one will be presented first at Automatically Choose.

Click **OK** when you are finished entering data.

Look at your database and you'll see that this popup menu is in the appropriate field. Rather than typing the zip codes, choose from here. Another advantage to using this feature is that all the zip codes will be entered correctly. This is important for sorting features.

You can go into an existing database and modify a field type.

1. Go Layout ...Define Fields.
2. Click on the field in the Field Name box.
3. Now change the field type. Be aware that if your database has records, changing the field type may cause a loss of data in that field.

Make your field type change to a copy of your database. If the loss of data is too great then, pitch the copy and live with the field as it is already set.

Value List Menu allows you to create a list of items that would be appropriate for the field. The difference is you can easily select the entry from the keyboard. On the school's cd database, we chose to provide information about the area of content. We wanted to sort for just the math or just the language arts titles. For this to work correctly, the data entered must be consistent. We identified eleven content areas. We used the Value list option to save entry time and to assure all the entries were correct.

To add a Value List to your database:

1. Open your database. You might want to work on a copy if you are adding this to a large database. That way you won't lose data if you have a misadventure.
2. **Go Layout .. Define Fields.** You will see the dialog box we used to create the fields. Select the field that you want to modify.
3. **Change the Field Type to Value List.** Click Modify.

You will be presented with a dialog box warning you that data that cannot be converted will be lost. Suppose we were entering Macintosh or IBM in a platform field. If we now make the choices MAC and PC the computer will not be able to accurately transfer the data. We will end up with blank fields.

4. In the **Item Text** box, enter the first value. In my example it is science. **Click Create.**

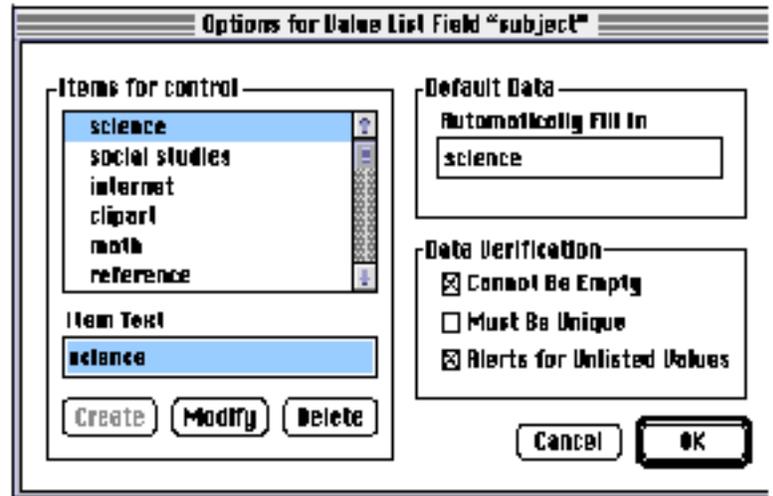
Repeat the process until you have all the values listed in **Items for Control.**

Take advantage of the **Automatically Fill In** feature. Most of our titles are science. I made that the auto fill.

If you make an error, just select the problem one in the **Items for Control** box and Modify or hit the Delete button.

Click OK when you are satisfied with the list

5. You will notice that when you tab into the value list field of your database, a list opens with all your options shown. To select one, just hit the first letter of the word and the return key. Your choice will be entered in the field. If you just hit the return key, the "automatically fill in" will be entered in the field.



Use Value List in your address book. I made a directory for our school. All the students come from three towns. Rather than repeatedly typing the towns, I made a value list. In addition to accuracy, it sped up my work and reduced my aggravation substantially. ;-)

[Changing the order of items on a value list](#)

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"Don't be afraid to take a big step. You can't cross a chasm in two small jumps." ~ David Lloyd George

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