Gametrak Help Contents

The Contents lists Help topics available for Gametrak.   Use the scroll bar to see entries not currently visible in the Help window.

To learn how to use Help, press F1 or choose Using Help from the Help menu

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GT General: Purpose

I built this program for a few reasons.   First, It can easily track all your video game hints and cheats.   Second, you can track all those large faqs you download from the internet.   Also, you can use it to track ratings and generate reports that can help decide which games to purchase.

Quick Start Instruction
- In the upper left corner is a navigation bar.   Click on the left/right arrows to move one record backward/forward. Click on the arrows with a bar to move to the first/last record.
- Any changes you make to any of the fields will be saved when you move to another record or click on the save button.   If you made a change unintentionally, choose Edit|undo from the menu BEFORE you move to another record.
- Click on the New button to add a new game to the database.
- Click on Remove to delete the current game from the database.
- Type a game title or part of a title in the Title search bar.   Then press enter to find the first occurrence.   Click Clear to clear the title search bar.

Here are some useful tips/tricks:
- If you want to generate a report of hints with just the games you own first click the own box for all games you have.   Then, choose OWN under filter.   Then choose report from the File Menu.   Choose current filter for the source.
- To change the sort order of a report you must use the Custom SQL feature.
   example: to sort by system and then rating I would enter -
   order by: system, average.   Then choose View|Refresh.
- I recommend backing up frequently just to be safe especially if you entered a lot of data.   You can use the back features or just copy or zip up gamdb.mdb which holds all of the data.
- use Edit|Erase Hint to erase large hints with many chunks quickly
- If you are entering a lot of data for a particular system, change the filter to that system first.   It will setup some defaults for you like Media and System when you click on New.   Example: if the current filter is Saturn, then every New record will have a default of Media - CD-ROM and System - Saturn.
- If you are entering a game with a manufacturer that is not listed, enter it by using File|Table Maintenance| Manufacturer.   The reason you are forced to pick from a list of Manufacturers is to keep spelling consistent for reporting, sorting, and filtering reasons.
- If you plan to do a lot of heavy editing on a large hint it is probably easier to just export the hint to a file, load it into your favorite word processor, save it, and import the file back in.
- If you are adding a lot of large faqs you should compact the database more often to save space.   Actually the overhead for storing a faq in the database is very little (< 15K).
- If for some reason   you want to start with a clean database, a file called blank.mdb is included.   Close Gametrak. Then, copy blank.mdb gamdb.mdb.   Restart Gametrak.   WARNING: this will delete ALL your data.

General: Features

- Flexible search capabilities
- Can handle text files of almost any size.   No 64K limit!
- Easily import and export text
- View your data in many different ways
- Write your own custom queries
- Reports that can be sent to a window, printer, or file
- Fully open ended database that you can customize to the way you want it.
- Preloaded with hints for over 500 different games

General: Main Screen

Title search: At the top you have a Title Search bar.   Enter any string.   It can be a part of a title.   Case doesn't matter.

Keyboard Short Cuts: There are many keyboard short cuts to allow mouse free searching and editing.   Notice all the underlined letters.   Just hold Alt and press the corresponding underline letter to execute that action.

Find First: Find first button is the default so you can just enter a search string and press enter.

Clear: Clear refers to clearing and changing focus to the title search bar.

Filter: This drop down list box filters out records.   The basic filters include all the different system types.   There are also some custom ones:

> All - All the records.   No filter.   Records are sorted by system, title
> Own - Shows only records that have the Own box checked

Save: You normally don't need to press this button.   Records are automatically saved whenever you change to another record.

Hints: Click anywhere in the hint box to scroll around.   Hints can be any size and is only limited by the amount of memory you have.   Because this is a 16 bit application I ran into some memory constraints.   Normal, you wouldn't be able to have hints large than 32K.   With some special programming I was able to over come this limitation. Hints are broken up into 15K chunks.   At the bottom you will see the total hint size and the current/total # of chunks.   Click anywhere in the hint box to scroll around.   Use CTRL-PAGE UP and CTRL-PAGE DOWN to move from one chunk to the next.   Page up and Page down without ctrl will move you around only in the current chunk.   You can do some limited editing in the hint and they will be saved back to the database.   If you fill up the last chunk, click save and a new chunk will be added so you can add additional text.

Large Hint: This is a non editable check box.   It is here for informational purposes only.   I use Crystal Reports to generate most of the reports.   Crystal Reports also has a limit on hint size.   It is about 60K.   If the hint is larger than 60K then this check box will automatically be checked.   Read the section on reports for more information.

GT **General: Main Menu**

<u>File</u>
Notes: Opens up gamdb.txt in notepad. Use this to make notes to yourself. Use it to keep track of things like the last magazine you entered hints from.

Import Text File: This imports a text file into the Hint box of the current record.

Export Hint: Export the current hint to a text file

Table Maintenance: Use this to customize the 3 drop down list boxes on the main screen (manufacturer, system, and theme). If you get a new system or come across a new manufacturer you can add them. Also, be aware that any new system you add will also automatically create a new filter for that system.

Custom SQL: Write your own SQL. I'm not going to try to teach you sql here but if you know how to write simple statements you can pretty much select and order the data any way you want. Very powerful but only for the advanced user. For examples just change the Filter and then go to Custom SQL and see what kind of statement it generated. Make sure you Refresh after using custom SQL for the effects to take place.

Reports:
> Hint - Produces a report with just a little header information and the complete text of the hint. Due to a
> limitation of crystal reports Large Hints (> 60K) will be skipped. If any records were skipped you will
> be notified and a list will be provided of all the skipped records.
> Detail - Produces a report with detailed header information but no hint text.
> Stats - Generates some statistics about the database

<u>Edit</u>
All the clipboard functions apply to the hint box

<u>View</u>
If you like to view the data in a tabular fashion use this menu.

External View Hints: Lets you view the hint with an external editor. Note: any changes made while in the external editor will not be saved to the database.

<u>Tools</u>
Backup Database Now: Makes a backup of the database file called gamdb.bak

Restore Database: Restores from gamdb.bak. Warning - you will lose all changes since the last backup.

Repair database: If for some reason the database gets corrupt you can usually repair it. A backup of the database is automatically made before this action.

Compact Database: If you have deleted a lot of large records or just repaired the database, it is usually a good idea to compact. A backup of the database is automatically made before this action.

<u>Options</u>
Auto Backup: If this is checked then the database is automatically backed up every time you start the application.

Set default editor: Set the default editor you want to use for External View Hints.

GT General: Registration

If you find this program useful and wish to continue using it after your 30 day trial period, please show your support and register for only $14.95.   Please note that the money is for the development and support of the program and not the hints.   I threw in the hints as sort of a bonus and take no credit for them.

Make payment out to Robin Chen.
Register now by sending only $14.95 (check or money order) to:

Robin Chen
P.O. BOX 682183
Houston, TX   77268

Please include the following information when sending payment:
Name
Address
Phone # (optional)
email (optional)

As soon as I receive your order I'll send you a personal ID and serial number that will remove the Shareware notice at the beginning.   I can send it by email or by regular mail if you don't have email.

If you would like the program shipped to you on 3.5" floppy disks please include an additional $9.95 for shipping and handling.