

Basics

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Chapter 1

Basics

1.1 Datastore: Datastore Basics

Datastore Basics

This section of the help covers the basics on databases and Datastore.

There is information on:

What Is A Database?

How To Use Datastore Requesters

How To Use Requester Gadgets

How To Use File Requesters

Datastore Tool Types

1.2 Datastore: What Is A Database?

What Is A Database?

A database is a software program which lets you store and organise information on a computer. The main advantage is that once added, the information can be easily accessed and manipulated.

To use a database like Datastore effectively, it is important to understand some of the basic computer terminology:

File This is the container which holds the data (information).
In a file, the data is divided into sections, or records.

Record This is one section of the file (usually one page).
A record is divided into elements, or fields.

Field This is an element (usually one line) within the record.

For example, a file would contain all of the people, a record contains one person, and each field contains one part of the person's details.

With Datastore, you can easily open, save and close any number of files from the Project menu. When you open a file, the first record appears on the screen and you scroll through the other records using the Record Browser palette (the icons work like the controls on a VCR).

1.3 Datastore: Datastore Requesters

Datastore Requesters

Requesters are special windows that Datastore uses to request information. This normally occurs after you have chosen a menu command.

To exit a requester, using the default button (which normally executes the command), press the Enter key or Ctrl-Return key. The default button is displayed in bold type.

To cancel a requester press the Esc key.

Requester Gadgets

Requesters consist of the different types of gadget.

Gadgets are part of the Amiga operating system. They are standard items which appear on screen, like buttons, lists, check boxes or scroll bars.

When you select gadgets with the mouse, it is unnecessary to position the arrow pointer precisely, you can click the gadget or its title.

Buttons Click these pushbutton-like gadgets to confirm or cancel an action.

On a requester, one of these buttons may appear in a bold font, this is the default. You can select the default by clicking it, or pressing the Enter key (or Ctrl-Return key).

Here are a few example buttons:

Button Does
OK Accepts changes and closes requester

Use Accepts changes and performs the Use command

Options... Reveals Options requester

Apply	Accepts changes, requester stays open
Done	Closes requester
Cancel	Disregards changes and closes requester

You can also cancel a requester by pressing the Esc key. However, you cannot cancel any requester changes once you have clicked Apply.

Text Gadget Boxes into which you type information. Del and Backspace are used as normal along with the left and right arrow keys.

When editing:

Key Press	Does
Right Amiga-X	Deletes contents
Shift-Right Arrow	Move to end of box
Shift-Left Arrow	Move to beginning of box
Right Amiga-Q	Restore box contents
Tab	Move to next box
Shift-Tab	Move to previous box
Return key	OK's contents and exits box
Enter or Ctrl-Return key	Finish editing box and quit requester

If you are editing a text gadget, you can jump to another gadget using a keyboard shortcut. Hold down the Ctrl key and press the underline letter of the gadget title to which you wish to jump.

Radio Buttons Groups of buttons where only one may be selected. Selecting another radio button will deselect the previous one, similar to the buttons on some radios, hence their name.

They are used for presenting a variety of options only one of which may be selected.

Check Box Small, square box which can be turned on or off by clicking. Their status being shown by a check mark (tick) in the box.

Scrolling List Gadget Large boxes which present a list from which a selection is made by clicking one item. If the list contains more items than can be shown, you can

scroll through the list using the scroll bars and scroll arrows on the right of the list box.

Slider Gadget	Drag the bar in the gadget to select a value. As you move the slider bar, different values are displayed. You can also click either side of the bar.
Pop-up Gadget	<p>These are buttons which display the selection, and when clicked, reveal a list of options. Drag the mouse through the list to change the selection. To cancel a selection release the Selection button with Arrow pointer away from the list.</p> <p>Datastore places an inactive scroll bar next to large lists to indicate that more options are available. You can display these extra options by dragging the mouse beyond the top or bottom of the list (not clicking the inactive scroll bar).</p>
Pop-up Text Gadget	The same as pop-up gadgets, except you can also type and edit in the same way as text gadgets. To scroll through the list of options, use the Up and Down Arrow keys when editing the text.
Read Only Gadget	For displaying information and cannot be edited.

1.4 Datastore: File Requesters

File Requesters

There are two types of file requester: The Open requester which appears with a grey background to the File list, and a Save requester which appears with a black background.

A menu can be displayed by holding down the menu-button (right mouse key), this menu is called the Control menu.

Control Menu

To Open or Save a file, select the file from the File list and click either the Open or Save button, alternatively choose OK from the Control menu.

In the case of Open, you may double-click the file from the list to Open it.

You can delete a file by selecting it from the list and choosing Delete (Control menu).

A new drawer can be created by typing the name into the Drawer text gadget and pressing Return. A confirmation requester will then appear.

The default path for the contents of the File List can be specified by changing a
tool type
on the Datastore program icon.

Keyboard

The Up or Down cursor keys will move the selection bar up and down the list.

Alt-Up/Down will move the selection bar up or down a page at a time.

Shift-Up/Down will move to the top or bottom of the list.

1.5 Datastore: Tool Types

Tool Types

Tool types are parameters used by the program. Tool types are usually in the form of 'KEYWORD=argument'. Case differences do not matter when entering the information and spaces should not be typed.

Tool types can be commented, or disabled, so that the program ignores them on loading. Commented tool types are enclosed in parenthesis of preceded by a semi-colon (;).

Datastore Tool Types

Default Files Drawer

The tool type "DEFFILES=<path>" specifies the default drawer for Open, Save and New (templates).

Replace '<path>' with the default drawer path.

Default Picture Drawer

The tool type "DEFPICTURES=<path>" specifies the default drawer for Picture Fields and Picture Items.

Replace '<path>' with the default drawer path.

Help Drawer

The tool type "HELP=<path>" specifies the Help files drawer. This is useful if you wish to make room on the 'DS-Files' disk for more database files.

Just move the Help drawer onto another disk and replace '<path>'

with the new Help destination.

Windows

The tool type "SIMPLEREFRESH" specifies that all of the windows used by Datastore are redrawn by the program instead of the operating system. Simple Refresh windows use less memory but are slower.

To make the windows smart refresh (redrawn by the operating system) just disable this tool type.

Miscellaneous

The tool type "LANGUAGE=<country>" specifies which language files Datastore should use and the value of certain program defaults.

For example, the default Currency format (Number Field Options requester) is changed depending on the language specified.

Supported Languages:

- English
- German
- Australian
- American

The tool type "MEASUREMENT=<unit>" specifies the default measurement unit that Datastore uses on the rulers and in the requesters.

The <unit> can either be "INCH" (for inches) or "CM" (for centimetres).
