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Private Music Collection

Private Music Collection is a database to gather information about your Music Collection. Private Music Collection is meant for use at home. It can contain up to 8000 records.

You can use Private Music Collection together with MC Cover Builder. MC Cover Builder supports the database made by Private Music Collection.

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For questions or suggestions you can E-mail me at avdlogt@worldaccess.nl. Please use PMC in your subject line. For more details about updates and other applications check out my homepage <http://www.tomb.demon.nl>.

The database

Creating a database

When you start Private Music Collection for the first time you'll have to create a new database. You can create a database by clicking the NEW button or selecting New from the menu option File. Choose the directory where you want to create the database and enter a filename using eight characters. An extension is not needed.

Opening a database

To open an existing database, click on the Open button or select Open from the menu option File. Then select the directory where the database is located and select the database or enter its name.

Closing a database

Before you can open or create a database you must close the database that is currently open. To close your database Click the Close button or select Close from the menu option File.

PMC will close the database automatically when you Exit PMC. Do NEVER shut down the computer without closing the database. You may lose information or even lose the whole database because the index file is loaded into the memory of your computer.

General

The database of PMC needs three files: the index named <database>.ndx, <database>.alb containing the general information about your albums and <database>.sng with information about the songs on the albums. Every record in the database will use about 1.5 kB disk space (depending on the amount of songs). The images you can display in PMC are always displayed at a size of 125 x 125 pixels. A Windows BMP image of 125 x 125 pixels will use about 50 kB disk space. You can save disk space by using a small palette or by saving the image at 100 x 100 pixels.

Records

General

The records of Private Music Collection are stored in two databases. The general information is stored in the <database>.alb file the information in the songlist is stored in the <database>.sng file. The index is used to sort the records and to link the records in the album file and the song file.

Inserting a new record

Before you can enter the data of a new record you'll have to click on the Insert button. Otherwise you will overwrite the data of the record currently displayed. When you click on the Insert button you get an empty screen. You must enter the fields Artist and Title before you can save the record. Before you can enter the songs you must enter the soundcarrier and the number of disks or tapes on the Details tab.

Editing a record

You can always change a record. Search the record you want to change and enter the field you want to change. Before you can save the record, you must enter the name of the Artist and the Title of the album.

You can select the Genre from the list in the combo box, but you can also enter it yourself. If you have registered your copy of PMC you are able to edit your Genre list in the menu Options.

You can enter the number of disks or tapes of an album. If you enter the number of disks or tapes you can specify on which Disks or tape a song is located.

You can use the field ID number for the ID number of the album or for your own code for this album.

The Obtained by field is meant to specify from whom you got this album if you need to. For example to remember who recorded a tape for you. Then you know who to turn to when you lose this tape.

When you have an album with songs from multiple artists you can check the Show Artist Of Song box. Now you can enter the artist of each song in the songlist. This box can be checked by default when you choose so in the Options menu.

Inserting an image to the record

You can enter the filename of an image of the cover of an album. The filename can't be longer than eight characters and the image has to be of the Windows bitmap format. The images must be in the same directory as the database they belong to. In the registered version of PMC you can select an image by clicking on the button at the right of the field where you must enter the filename. When an image is missing PMC won't prompt you it just can't show the image. You can give friends a copy of your database without the images.

The songlist

To enter the songs you must select the Soundcarrier and give the number of disks or tapes. It's also possible to insert more songs afterward if you want to. If you forgot a song then you can insert it between two other songs by pressing <SHIFT>-<INSERT>. To delete a song you can press <SHIFT>-<DELETE>.

Sorting the records

You can sort the records by clicking the Sort button. When you select Sort at close in the Options menu, PMC will sort the records when you close the database. When you use it as your default option you are always sure that your database is sorted when you open it. In the Options menu you can choose to sort the albums of an artist by alphabetic order of the title or by release date. When you choose one of these

make sure to make it permanent for later sessions by selecting Save settings in the Options menu.

Deleting, undeleting and purging records

You can delete a record by clicking on the delete button. The record will no longer be shown in the database, although it still exists. You can view and select the deleted records on the tab Deleted Records.

You can undelete a record by selecting it from the list of deleted records. When you select a deleted record it's data will be shown together with the warning that it is an deleted record. The Undelete button will also be enabled and when you click it the current record will be undeleted.

To remove a record from your database you have to delete it. Be sure that you have selected Purge at Close in the menu Options. Now when you close the database all deleted records will be removed from the database. When you don't select Purge at close all deleted records will be kept save in the database.

Searching

Searching records

To look up a record click the Search button. A dialogbox will open where you can enter the searchstring and the field to search. The options Artist and Title are the fastest way to search the database. The other options are slower because PMC has to read from the disk for these options. You can also enable search in deleted records if you want to. All records found will be placed in the Search list and unless you check the 'Don't prompt' box you get a prompt for every matching record.

You can export the Searchlist to ASCII or print the searchlist.

Printing and exporting data

Selecting a font for your printer

PMC enables you to select a font for your printer. To do so Select Printer Font in the File menu. All your installed fonts can be selected at a fontsize of 10 to 14.

To install a font as default Select Default Printer Font in the Options menu.

Printing your whole list, the search list or the current record

You can print your whole list by selecting whole list. When you select Search List the list generated during your last search action will be printed By selecting Current record the current record will be printed.

With the checkboxes you can specify which fields you want to be printed.

Exporting data

You can export your list or one record to a text file. Again you can choose between the whole list, the Search list or the current record. And choose the fields to be exported.

Playing a CD

The CD player in PMC will only work properly when you have both a CD-ROM and a soundcard. If one of these doesn't work properly PMC will prompt you with an error message when you start PMC and the CD display will say 'NOT READY'. To play a CD audio you must connect the audio cable between the CD-ROM and your soundcard properly. Otherwise it might look as if the CD is playing but you won't hear any music.

When you insert a new CD into your CD-ROM player, it is possible that the display still shows old information. Don't worry, it might take a few seconds to change the information. You can just click the play button and your CD will start to play immediately.

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Inserting a record step by step

Creating a database

Before you can start entering records you have to create a database to put the records in. To do so, click the [new] button. Now you will see a dialogbox. Use this dialogbox to select the directory where you want to locate your database. Now enter a name for your database. You can use up to 8 characters. Click [OK] and you are ready to enter your records.

Inserting a record The very first record can be entered immediately. When there are a few records in the database you must click the [insert] button at the database navigator. To cancel this operation simply click the [cancel] button. The artist and the title of the album must be entered before a record can be saved.

entering the header data When you can a screen with empty fields you are ready to enter the data of the next album. You have to enter a value for the artist and title of this album. You may leave the other fields in the header empty if you want to. You have to enter most field yourself, but the Genres can be chosen from a pull-down menu.

entering the details When you are finished with the data in the header that is allway visible you move on to the tab named 'details'. The important fields here are the 'Soundcarrier' and 'Number of disks'. You have to enter these fields. These fields are used to help you with entering the songs. You can leave the other fields empty in this tab if you wish.

You can enter your own ID code for an album in the field 'ID Number'. When you have an album with songs performed by various artists you can check 'Show Artist of Song' to be able to enter the performing artist in the songlist. When you have a lot of albums with various artists you can check 'Show Artists of Each Song'. Now 'Show Artist of Song' is checked by default when you insert a new record.

To show an image of an album, make a Windows BMP image of it with the size of 125 x 125 pixels with your favorite graphical application. Place the images into the same directory as the database. Enter the name of the image or use the Browse button to choose one. When you give the database to friends you don't have to supply the images. PMC won't report that the image is missing that should be there according to the database. It will only show an error that it can't find a file when you enter a filename that doesn't exist. This is done to make it easy to transport a database to other systems.

entering the songs When you've entered all the details you can move on to the 'Songs'. Click on the first column and enter the title of the first track. Press <TAB> to move to the next column. When you have selected 'Show Artist of Song' the cursor will be in the 'Artist' column, now enter the name of the artist and press <TAB> again. In the next column you can enter the playingtime of the song. ow you can press <TAB> until you are at the next row. PMC will enter this data automatically. You only have to change it when the next song is on side B of a tape or on another disk. And PMC will restart counting the tracks. But you can allways change it manually. When you press <TAB> in the last column a new row will appear when you are at the last row of the list.

When you've forgotten to enter a song somewhere in the middle move to the song that should be under that song and press <SHIFT-INS>. To delete a song move to it and press <SHIFT-DEL>.

Now you are ready. The data will be save automatically. You can do what you want now. Insert a new album, search, browse or print a list.

Editing the Genrelist

To edit the Genrelist choose 'Edit Genrelist' in the menu 'Options'. You will see a window with the current genres in the list. You can insert new genres and delete genres the same way as in a normal editor. Every genre must be on a next line.