



HOUR 18

Entering and Displaying Access 2003 Data

You're now ready to enter and edit Access database data. Once you enter the data, you need to print the data to proofread for accuracy and to keep a hard copy as a backup. Although Access provides advanced and fancy reporting tools, you don't have to master those tools to print your Access data, as you will learn in this hour. When you gather a large amount of data, being able to print the data in a meaningful format is important and Access gives you the tools to do just that.

Finally, this lesson explains how to use the Form Wizard to generate forms that match your data. Forms offer a different perspective from datasheets. The Access forms you create resemble printed forms onscreen.

The highlights of this hour include the following:

- How to enter data into tables
- Which table-editing commands Access supports
- How to print tables
- When to use the Form Wizard to generate forms from tables
- How to use forms for data entry and editing
- How to print forms

Entering Table Data

Access gives you two primary means for adding data to tables that you create:

- Datasheet view
- Forms

The Datasheet view that you saw in Hour 17, “Access 2003 Basics,” enables you to enter and view several records at one time as well as edit any record that you view. When you use a form, on the other hand, you typically work with only one record at a time. The record takes on the format of a printed form, giving you a better focus on individual records. You learn more about forms in a later section, “Using Forms to Enter and Edit Data.” The next section focuses on the Datasheet view.

Using the Datasheet View

In the previous hour, you learned how to display the Datasheet view. The Datasheet view offers one of the simplest ways to enter and edit data in an Access database. The rest of this section shows you how Access makes entering data easy.

Entering Data

To enter data in the Datasheet view after you display the Datasheet view, just click the Datasheet view’s first field and enter the field information. When you enter data into the first field, Access opens an additional blank record below the one you are entering. Access always leaves room for additional records. As you enter data, press Tab, Shift+Tab, or the arrow keys to move from field to field. You can also click any field into which you want to enter data. As you enter data, watch the status bar at the bottom of your screen. When you designed your table, if you enter a description for a field, Access displays that description in the status bar as you enter data in that field.



If, while entering data, you see a number automatically appear in a field, don’t panic. Access is automatically entering an AutoNumber into a field defined as an AutoNumber field (such as the key).

Figure 18.1 shows a Datasheet view that contains several records. The record selector always moves as you enter and edit data to show the current record. When you edit one row and then move to another, Access automatically saves that row to the table. As you make an edit, the Editing icon appears to the left of the row to indicate the row being edited. A second kind of record selector, an asterisk, always appears to the left of the next empty record and indicates a new record into which you can enter data.

FIGURE 18.1
A Datasheet view can show several records of data.

Supplier ID	Company Name	Contact Name	Contact Title
1	Exotic Liquids	Charlotte Cooper	Purchasing Manager
2	New Orleans Cajun Delights	Shelley Burke	Order Administrator
3	Grandma Kelly's Homestead	Regina Murphy	Sales Representative
4	Tokyo Traders	Yoshi Nagase	Marketing Manager
5	Cooperativa de Quesos 'Las Cabras'	Antonio del Valle Saavedra	Export Administrator
6	Mayumi's	Mayumi Ohno	Marketing Representative
7	Pavlova, Ltd.	Ian Dewling	Marketing Manager
8	Specialty Biscuits, Ltd.	Peter Wilson	Sales Representative
9	PB Knäckebröd AB	Lars Peterson	Sales Agent
10	Refrescos Americanas LTDA	Carlos Diaz	Marketing Manager
11	Heli Süßwaren GmbH & Co. KG	Petra Winkler	Sales Manager
12	Plutzer Lebensmittelgroßmärkte AG	Martin Bein	International Marketing Mgr.
13	Nord-Ost-Fisch Handelsgesellschaft mbH	Sven Petersen	Coordinator Foreign Markets
14	Formaggi Fortini s.r.l.	Elio Rossi	Sales Representative
15	Norske Meierier	Beate Vileid	Marketing Manager
16	Bigfoot Breweries	Cheryl Saylor	Regional Account Rep.
17	Svensk Sjöföda AB	Michael Björn	Sales Representative
18	Aux joyeux ecclésiastiques	Guyane Nodier	Sales Manager
19	New England Seafood Cannery	Robb Merchant	Wholesale Account Agent
20	Leka Trading	Chandra Leka	Owner



Often, multiple records contain the same data in certain fields (as is the case with city and state names in a table). When you are about to enter data in a cell and the previous record contains the same data, press **Ctrl+'** to copy the previous record's field value into the current field's cell.

As you enter data, take advantage of the Office AutoCorrect feature. Just as Word and Excel support AutoCorrect entries, so does Access. All the Office products share the same AutoCorrect abbreviations you have defined.

When you enter AutoCorrect abbreviations and shortcuts, Access substitutes the shortcut for the AutoCorrect correction. Access does not automatically enable automatic spell-checking as you enter data because much of your table data contains data such as formal names and product codes that would appear to the spell-checker as misspellings. You can check your table's spelling by selecting **Tools, Spelling**.

To change a mistake, such as a transposed number, click the mistake to display the insertion point inside the Datasheet view's field and correct the entry. You can also press the arrow keys to move to any field and press **F2** to edit the field's text.

Formatting Your Data

Access is forgiving when you enter special data such as dates, times, monetary amounts, and memo field values. You can basically enter data in these fields in whatever way

seems best to you! You can enter a date in a date field, for example, using any of the following formats:

05/12/2005
5/12/2005
May 12, 2005
May 12 2005

Access uses a predefined date format to display dates and times in the Datasheet view, so after you type a date, it can be immediately reformatted to match this view. By default, Access uses the date format mm/dd/yyyy.

As with dates, you can enter time in several common ways. Add a.m. or p.m. or use 24-hour clock time. Access, by default, formats your time values to the hh:mm:ss format.

Quickly Entering Date and Time Values

You can press Ctrl+; to enter the current date in a field and press Ctrl+: to enter the current time. Access gets these values from your computer's clock and calendar setting.

Ctrl+; causes the date to display using the format dd/mm/yy (unless your Windows international settings specify a different date format), although Access stores the date using the current four-digit year.

Access currency fields accept a wide variety of formats. You can type a dollar sign (or whatever currency symbol matches your Windows international country setting) and decimals, and you can even place commas in currency values. After you enter a currency amount, Access displays the amount with the default format. The default currency format is based on your International settings. For North America, the default will be a dollar sign. If you fail to type the dollar sign, Access supplies one automatically.

Your Windows Control Panel contains an icon labeled Regional and Language Options. (Pre-Windows XP versions typically call this icon *Regional Settings*.) The language specified in your PC's regional settings determines how Access displays data. Therefore, you can maintain one database for multiple users around the world. The PC running the Access database determines how the data appears on the screen and in reports.



If you need to format a currency amount in a different format from your Windows international settings, you can do so by specifying the format in the Design view's property settings.

If you enter a value that does not meet the Field Properties requirements, such as placing two decimal points inside a single dollar amount, Access displays a dialog box (shown in Figure 18.2), indicating that you should correct the value before entering the next field.

FIGURE 18.2

Access lets you know if you enter an incorrect format.



Access does not let you leave a record that contains a bad format. As a matter of fact, Access will not even let you move to another row in the database if a field does not meet the Field Properties requirements. Therefore, when you close your tables, you can be assured that Access saves all the data with the proper data type. Although the data values might not be correct, you will know that the data does fit within the specified formats you declared for the table.

Editing Data

All the editing skills you mastered with the other Office products work with Access. You can rearrange the order of fields and records by dragging the record or field selectors with your mouse. You can select more than one field or record at a time by dragging your mouse through the record or field selectors or by holding down Shift while you click record or field selectors. Press Ctrl+A to select all the records in the table.

To delete one or more records or fields, select the records or fields you want to delete and right-click the record selector to display a shortcut menu. Select Delete Column or Delete Record.

Access provides several shortcut menus that help you perform needed tasks. For example, when you right-click the selected records or fields, the shortcut menu that appears provides familiar Cut, Copy, and Paste commands as well as Insert and Delete commands for records and fields. When you right-click a record selector, a different shortcut menu appears that enables you to work with the rows.

Right-clicking a column selector produces a shortcut menu with the Hide Columns command that temporarily hides fields (they physically stay in the table). These fields stay out of the way while you work with other data, and you can choose Format, Unhide Columns to reveal the data when you are ready to work with the entire table again. Other right-click options can be helpful too, such as the sorting commands. You can sort records in *ascending order* or *descending order* with the shortcut menu's options when you right-click over data in the table.



If you often need to adjust the width or height of records and fields, consider changing your table's font size and style (by selecting Format, Font) .

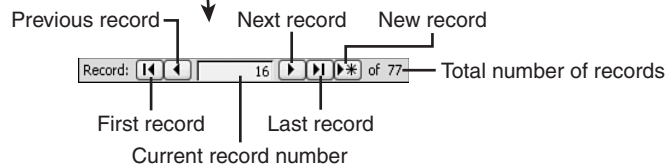
Navigating Large Tables

Use the navigation buttons at the bottom of the Datasheet view (see Figure 18.3) to move through and jump over large blocks of records that don't interest you at the time. The navigation buttons work similar to those on a VCR, enabling you to move forward and backward through your data.

FIGURE 18.3

The Navigation buttons help you navigate through database tables.

Quantity Per Unit	Unit Price	Units In Stock	Units On Order	Reorder Level	Discontinued
+ 10 boxes x 20 bags	\$18.00	39	0	10	<input type="checkbox"/>
+ 24 - 12 oz bottles	\$19.00	17	40	25	<input type="checkbox"/>
+ 12 - 550 ml bottles	\$10.00	13	70	25	<input type="checkbox"/>
+ 48 - 6 oz jars	\$22.00	53	0	0	<input type="checkbox"/>
+ 36 boxes	\$21.35	0	0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
+ 12 - 8 oz jars	\$25.00	120	0	25	<input type="checkbox"/>
+ 12 - 1 lb pkgs.	\$30.00	15	0	10	<input type="checkbox"/>
+ 12 - 12 oz jars	\$40.00	6	0	0	<input type="checkbox"/>
+ 18 - 500 g pkgs.	\$97.00	29	0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
+ 12 - 200 ml jars	\$31.00	31	0	0	<input type="checkbox"/>
+ 1 kg pkg.	\$21.00	22	30	30	<input type="checkbox"/>
+ 10 - 420 g pkgs.	\$39.00	86	0	0	<input type="checkbox"/>
+ 2 kg box	\$6.00	24	0	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
+ 40 - 100 g pkgs.	\$23.25	35	0	0	<input type="checkbox"/>
+ 24 - 250 ml bottles	\$15.50	39	0	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
+ 32 - 500 g boxes	\$17.45	2	10	10	<input type="checkbox"/>
+ 20 - 1 kg tins	\$39.00	0	0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
+ 16 kg pkg.	\$62.00	42	0	0	<input type="checkbox"/>
+ 10 boxes x 12 pieces	\$9.20	25	0	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
+ 30 gtt boxes	\$91.00	40	0	0	<input type="checkbox"/>
+ 24 pkgs. x 4 pieces	\$10.00	3	40	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
+ 24 - 500 g pkgs.	\$21.00	104	0	25	<input type="checkbox"/>
+ 12 - 250 g pkgs.	\$9.00	61	0	25	<input type="checkbox"/>
+ 12 - 355 ml cans	\$4.50	20	0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
+ 20 - 450 g glasses	\$14.00	76	0	30	<input type="checkbox"/>
+ 100 - 250 g boxes	\$31.23	15	0	0	<input type="checkbox"/>



Here are a few pointers:

- Click Next Record to move the record selector to the next record.
- Click Previous Record to move the record selector to the previous record.
- Click First Record to move to the table's first record.
- Click Last Record to move to the table's last record.
- Click the Specific Record box, type a new record number, and then press Enter to jump directly to that record.

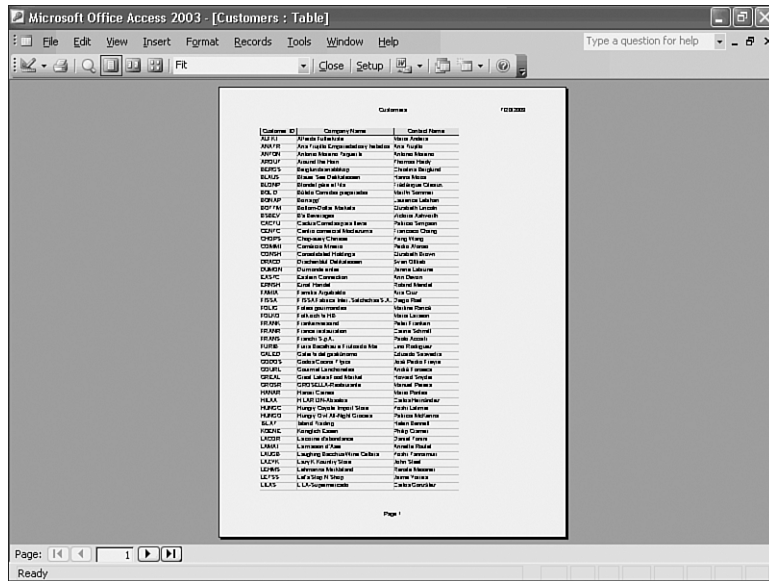
Simple Printing

Access includes powerful reporting tools, but they take some time to master. You learn about reporting in Hour 20, “Reporting with Access 2003.” If you just want to print a listing of your data, however, you can do so easily from the Datasheet view. Access automatically prints the Datasheet view with field titles.

Perhaps you need to check a table listing for errors, or you want a printed listing (called a *hard copy*) so that you can proofread the data values that you entered. Before printing, display a preview (similar to the one shown in Figure 18.4) by selecting File, Print Preview. Move the magnifying glass mouse pointer over any portion of the preview and click to see a close-up. To close the print preview without closing the table, click the toolbar’s Close button.

FIGURE 18.4

Get a preview of printed datasheet tables.



To print a Datasheet table, select File, Print (or click the Print button on the toolbar).

Using Forms to Enter and Edit Data

When you computerize your records, you want to make it as easy as possible for people to enter, edit, and view data in your database. Often, Access reduces paperwork. A credit agency might use Access to keep track of loan applications that borrowers fill out, for example. As borrowers bring in their completed applications, a clerk types the data from the application into an Access table. Although a Datasheet view would work fine for the

data entry, a form works even better! The form can, while onscreen, mimic the look and feel of paper forms that many people are accustomed to using. You do not have to keep files of paper forms now that you use Access.

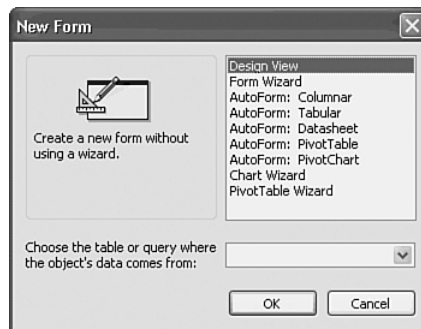
To Do: Use the Form Wizard to Generate Forms

You probably want to use the Form Wizard to create your first form. The Form Wizard generates simple forms that work well in most cases.

Follow these steps to start the Form Wizard:

1. Display the Database window with your database open.
2. Click the Forms object to display the tasks you can perform with forms.
3. Click the Database window's New button to display the New Form dialog box (shown in Figure 18.5).

FIGURE 18.5
Creating a new form.

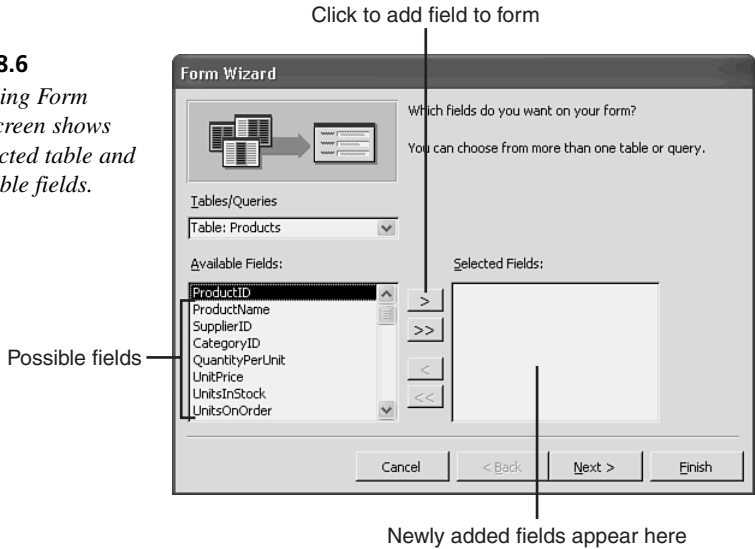


4. Click to select the Form Wizard option.
5. Select the table or query in the lower part of the dialog box to use as a basis for the form. If your database contains multiple tables and queries, each table and query appears in the drop-down list. You must select a table or query before continuing.
6. Click OK to display the opening Form Wizard screen (shown in Figure 18.6). This screen lists the available fields that you can include for your selected table.

You might or might not want to include every field on every form you create. Suppose, for example, that you want to create a form for your company's personnel that contains employee names and extension numbers but not employee pay rates. The next step in creating your form is to indicate to Access which fields to include.

To add table fields to the form, select a field and click the button labeled >. Access adds that field to the selected field list. To include all the fields, click the button labeled >>. The Form Wizard sends all the table's fields to the selected field list.

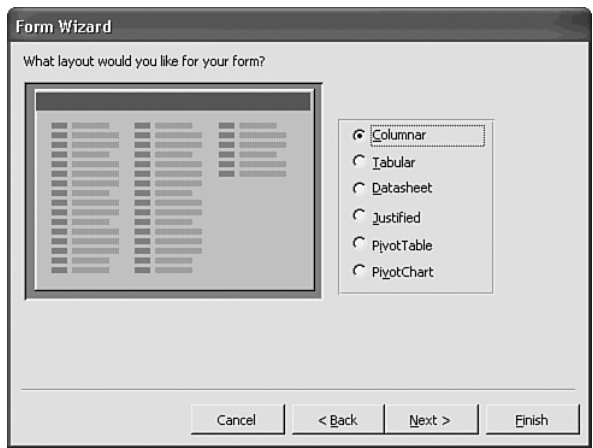
FIGURE 18.6
The opening Form Wizard screen shows your selected table and its available fields.



If you send a field to the form accidentally, select that field and click the button labeled < to remove the field from the form. Clicking << removes all the fields, so you can start over if you want to rearrange the fields or copy new ones from scratch.

Click the Next button to display the Form Wizard layout screen (shown in Figure 18.7). Click the different options to see a preview of how that option changes the form's layout.

FIGURE 18.7
Select a layout for your form.



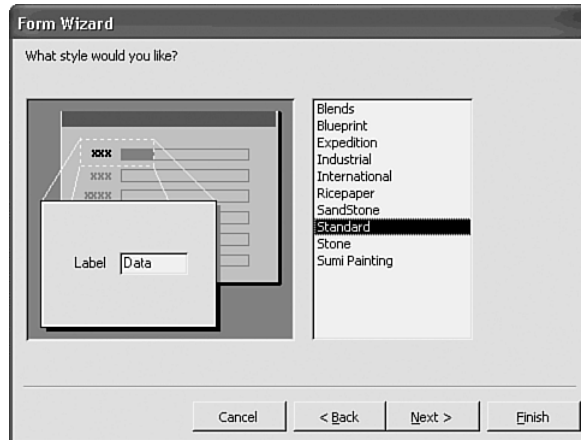


The Tabular and Datasheet form layouts are similar to the Datasheet view. The Columnar and Justified layouts look similar to typical paper forms. As you click each option, Access displays that option's resulting form layout.

When you click the Next button, the Form Wizard displays a screen from which you can select a form style (as shown in Figure 18.8). Click through the style selections to see a preview of those available. Many styles have unique personalities that can add eye-catching appeal to an otherwise dull form.

FIGURE 18.8

The Form Wizard supports several form styles.



When you click the Next button, you see the Form Wizard's closing screen, which asks for a form title. (The default title is the name of your selected table.) Click Finish to generate the form.



After you learn more advanced Access commands (see Hour 20), such as how to use the form-creation and editing tools, you can open the generated form's Design view and change specific parts of the form. The Form Wizard generates your form, and you can then modify the form to look exactly the way you want it. For now, the Form Wizard's generated forms work well.

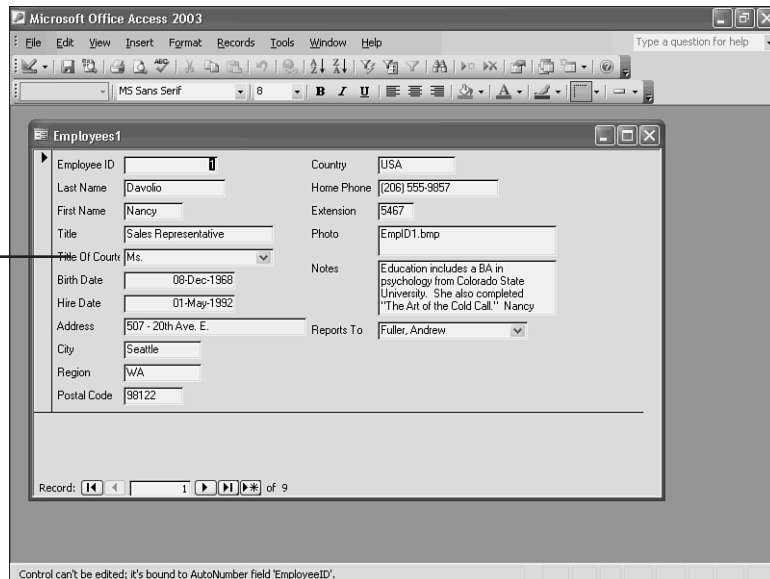


In some cases, generated forms contain problems, but you can correct those problems with a little editing from the form's Design view. Figure 18.9 shows a generated form that needs slight editing. The Form Wizard automatically uses field names for the form prompts and data descriptions. If your field names are long, the Form Wizard might not display the entire field name for the prompt. Also, some data might not align properly because the data value's width might be longer than the form's field. In addition, if your table does not contain many fields, the form does not take up the full screen and might look too small. You can maximize the form onscreen or resize the form to a smaller window.

Figure 18.9 displays its form in the Form view. The Form view displays records in the form-like format. Access also contains a form's Design view (not unlike the table's Design view), in which you can edit the form and change its appearance.

FIGURE 18.9
The Form Wizard generates forms for you.

Slight format problem in field name



When using forms, you must understand how all the data types appear. If your table contains Yes/No data-type fields, those fields appear with an x to indicate the Yes value. If you name a rental property's tenant field `Pet Deposit?`, for example, and assign the Yes/No data type to the field, those owners who pay a pet deposit have an x for this field value.

Memo fields can hold a lot of data, so if you use a memo field, keep typing when the insertion point reaches the right side of the field. Access scrolls the field to enable you to continue. Form views display memo fields with scrollbars so you can look at all the data in the fields.

Navigating Forms

Forms typically show only single records. Unlike the Datasheet view, the form is a much better tool for working with single records. In the Datasheet view, you can often see many records, but not all the fields in those records, because the fields rarely fit on the Datasheet view screen. The form shows only a single record but often manages to include all fields from the records because of the form layout.

Access offers several ways to move through records in the Form view. Press the up arrow, down arrow, Tab, and Shift+Tab to move from one field to another. Press PageUp and PageDown to move to the previous and next table record, respectively. The record number appears at the bottom of the form window's record selection control. As in the Datasheet view, you can click the record selection control to move from record to record.



To jump to a record quickly, press F5, type a record number, and press Enter.

Editing Form Data

As you move through the form records, feel free to change data in the record. The record selector arrow changes to an editing pencil to show that you are editing the record. If you use Tab or Shift+Tab to move from field to field, press F2 when the highlight appears over the field you want to edit. When you change data within the Form view, Access changes the data in the underlying tables.

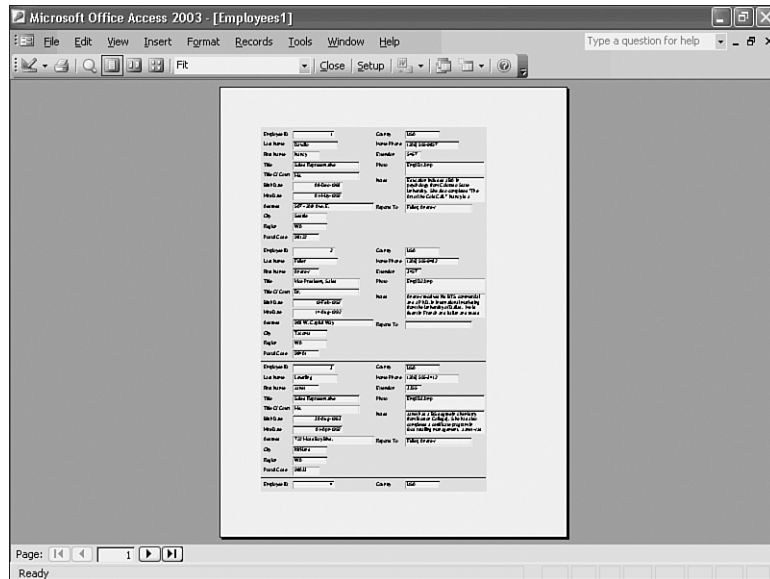


To add records from the Form view, click the New Record button to display a new one that you can fill out.

Printing Forms

If you select File, Print from the Form view, Access prints the forms. Unlike the onscreen Form view, Access prints as many forms on the page as will fit. (Select the File, Print Preview to see what will print, such as the preview shown in Figure 18.10.)

FIGURE 18.10
Access prints multiple records per form.



Summary

This hour extended your Access knowledge by showing you how to use the Datasheet view to enter and print data. You also learned how to create and use forms. Access replaces the paper forms you are used to and provides a form-like approach to data entry and editing.

The Form Wizard quickly generates nice forms for you from your table data. The Form Wizard is a great place to start designing your forms because it analyzes your table and generates a form based on your table's fields.

The next hour, "Retrieving Your Data," teaches you how to filter data and use queries so that you can work with subsets of table data.

Q&A

Q When I open a table's Datasheet view, why does the data appear in a different order from the order in which I entered it?

A Access sorts data, in ascending order, according to the table's selected key field. Your Datasheet views always appear in the order sorted by the key field unless you change the sort order by right-clicking the field that you want to sort by and then

choosing Sort Ascending or Sort Descending. Access uses the key field to locate records quickly when you search for data.

Q Why should I use the Form Wizard but not the Table Wizard when I begin learning Access?

A You must understand tables, records, and fields before you use the Table Wizard to generate tables because you almost always have to modify the Table Wizard's generated table to suit your exact needs. Therefore, it helps, when starting out, to create tables from scratch and learn how tables work. After you learn how to use the table's Datasheet and Design views, you are better equipped to edit tables generated with the Table Wizard.

The Form Wizard looks at tables that you generated and creates simple data-entry forms with the format and layout that you request. Forms require less editing when you generate them from the Form Wizard than tables do. You will be pleased with the Form Wizard from the moment you create your first form.

Q Can I edit the AutoNumber field?

A If you let Access create and enter your table's key field, you should also let Access maintain the AutoNumber that it enters for you. When you create reports, you can hide the AutoNumber field so that the field does not appear with the data that others see. The AutoNumber field is Access's bookkeeping field when you fail to designate a key. Access keeps the table sorted in the key order, and you should not bother with this field. If you want, rearrange the table to move the AutoNumber field to the far-right side of the Datasheet view. Then, you rarely see the field when you work with the data.