# Using Database


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Database activity

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This page explores ways the Database activity may be used in your Moodle course.


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# Views | ]

# View list | ]

The list view shows multiple entries, possibly in a more abbreviated form to ensure all the information fits. You may use the controls at the bottom of the screen to search and sort the contents.

- *View single*: one item at a time
- *View list* : several items at a time (number is user defined)
- *Add entry* : add an item to the database
- *Search* : search the entries

26databaseview.png

# Deleting multiple entries | ]

In List view, a checkbox will appear next to each entry. Select the entries you wish to delete and click the 'Delete selected' button. Alternatively, click the 'Select all' and the 'Delete all' buttons to delete all entries. A warning message will appear asking you to verify what you wish to delete.

# Automatically linking database entries | ]

If the Database auto-linking filter is enabled, any entries in a database will be automatically linked to where the concept words and/or phrases appear within the same course. This includes forum postings, internal resources, week summaries etc.

Note: If you do not want particular text to be linked (in a forum posting, say) then you should add <nolink> and </nolink> tags around the text. Alternatively the filter can be disabled for a particular activity.

# Approving and undoing approval of entries | ]

If, during database set up, 'Approval required' was set to 'Yes' then a teacher can view entries pending approval and click the three dots to the right in order to approve them.

600px-docsentryapproval.png

# Importing many entries | ]

You can import entries via a CSV file if you click the "Import entries" link from the Actions menu when clicking on a Database activity.

DatabaseExportImport.png

The easiest way to determine the format of the text file is to manually add an entry to the database and then export it. The resulting export text file may then be edited and used for importing entries.

The expected file format is a plain text file with a list of field names as the first record. The data then follows, one record per line.

The field delimiter defaults to a comma character and the field enclosure is not set by default (field enclosures are characters that surround each field in each record).

Records should be delimited by new lines (usually generated by pressing RETURN or ENTER in your text editor). Tabs can be specified using \t and newlines by \n.

Sample file:

```
name,height,weight
Kai,180cm,80kg
Kim,170cm,60kg
Koo,190cm,20kg
```

Note: Certain field types may not be supported.

Do not put spaces after your commas or upload will fail!

After upload page import.php comes back blank if it failed. If successful you'll read a message like, "1 entries saved".

# Exporting entries | ]

You can export entries either in CSV (comma separated values) or ODS (OpenOffice Calc) formats by clicking the "Export entries" link from the Actions menu when clicking on the 'Database activity.

DatabaseExportImport.png

When exporting entries, it is possible to include files.

When using the CSV format, the user can select either the comma, semicolon, or tab to separate the fields. The selection of the proper character is important. If users select to use a comma to separate the fields and some of the fields contain data with commas then the number of columns is going to be misaligned and likely cause confusion.

Users can select which fields from the database they wish to have exported. By default, all fields are checked to be included. Choose the fields that you wish to have included in the export.

Once the export type and the fields to be exported have been selected, clicking on the Export entries pushbutton will generate the file. The user will usually have the option of either opening or saving the file.

For information on converting the date export (and import) format, see the discussion Standard Database Module - Dates.

# Enabling an RSS feed of recently added entries | ]

To enable an RSS feed from a database activity, an administrator must first enable RSS feeds for database activities across the whole site as described in RSS feeds settings. A section called 'RSS' will then appear on the edit settings page of the database activity.

1. Edit the database activity settings and set the number of entries in the RSS feed e.g. 5.
2. Check that the RSS template includes the required fields.
3. Log out and then access the database activity as a guest.
4. Copy the 'RSS feed for this activity' link in the administration block.

The RSS feed may then be displayed in an RSS feeds block or elsewhere.

# Exporting to an external portfolio | ]

If an external portfolio such as Mahara has been enabled by the administrator then users have the option to export individual entries to that portfolio if the ##export## tag is added to list and/or single templates. From the three dots to the right of their entry in single view, they will see the option Export to portfolio. Clicking there will present them with whichever portfolio export options are available.

database portfolio export

# Creative uses | ]

You could use the database module to:

- allow collaboration on building a collection of web links/books/journal references related to a particular subject
- display student created photos/posters/websites/poems for peer comment and review
- gather comments and votes on a shortlist of potential logos/mascot names/project ideas
- provide a student file storage area

- maintain a log of what was done in a face-to-face class each day, so that absent students can get caught up themselves, as described in the forum discussion Idea: Warm-ups and Make-up work.
- add, track, and award points for CPD (or other external activity), as described in the forum discussion Database fo CPD and/or RPL.

# See also | ]

- Examples of databases in the Mount Orange demo site (available for download)
- Glossary activity, which performs a similar though more specialised, text-based role
- Moodle in English Database activity forum
- Moodle.org jobs database - example of a database activity on Moodle.org.

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