



What is a database?

A database stores information about specific items. That information is stored in the form of RECORDS and fields. A RECORD identifies an item in the database. The FIELDS in each record describe that item.

What do the phone book, TV Guide, and the library catalog all have in common? They are all types of databases. What is a database? A database is a

large organized collection of information.

TV Guide

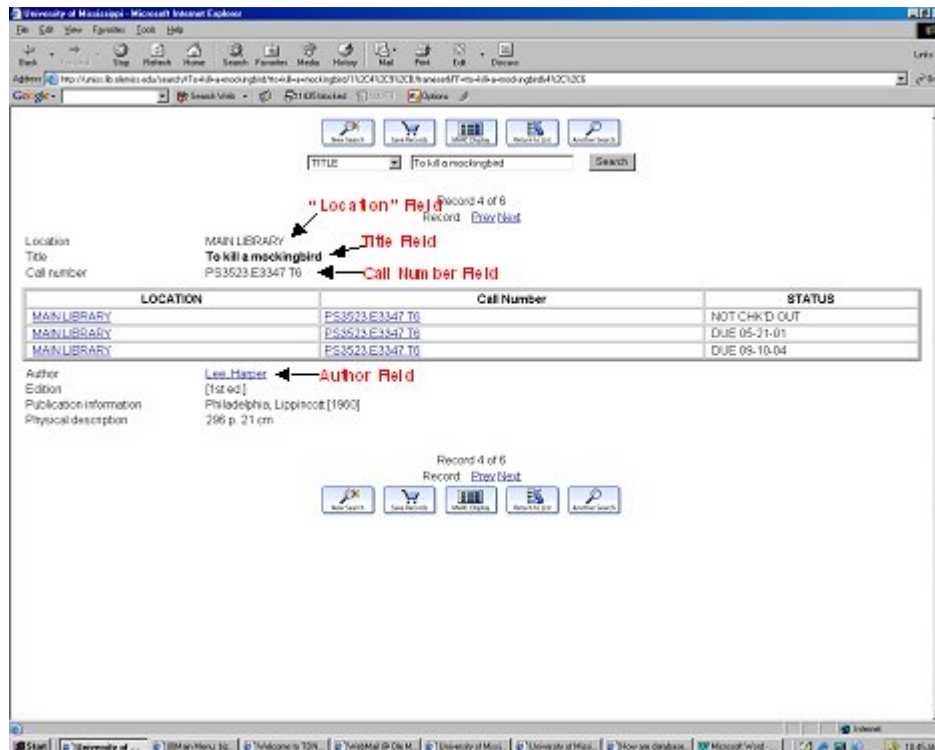
A printed “database,” like TV guide or the phone book displays records in fields, you just may not realize it. These are records from TV Guide.

9:05 **YBS** **M33** Swamp Thing—Science Fiction 2:00 6872232 **52**
9:30 **2P** **4S** **6S** **Q2** Ellen **(CC)** 41:48 **52**
Ellen and the group attend “Rock and Roll Dream Camp.” Bonnie Raitt, Amon Neville and David Crosby appear as themselves. Host: Andy Kindler. (Repeat)
CNN Showbiz Today—Magazine 6:00 **52**
MAX **M33** The Arrival **(CC)**—Science Fiction 1:55 5220705 Charlie Sheen, Ron Silver.
NIK Bewitched—Comedy **(R)** 11:00 **52**
9:35 **TR** **M33** The Breakfast Club—Comedy-Drama 2:00 9267955 **52**
(1985) John Hughes paints a portrait of teen angst with five high-school students spending a day-long detention together. Emilio Estevez.
10 PM **6S** **6P** **7S** **6P** **6P** 48 Hours **(CC)** 1:00
Schouered: An update of a 1992 report on the

“Title” Field
“Channels” Field
“Description” Field

Library Catalog

The library catalog is a database of records about all of the materials in the library—books, magazines, DVDs, CDs, etc. Like TV Guide, the library catalog has numerous fields containing information about each item. Shown in this record are the Location (Main Library) Title (To kill a Mockingbird), Call Number (PS3523.E3347 T6), and Author (Harper Lee). You can search the various fields in order to retrieve the record you want.



Article Database

The library catalog is not the only database available through the library. There are also article databases like EbscoHost, Lexis-Nexis, JSTOR, and BioOne, to name a few. Couldn't you just browse through a magazine or two to find an interesting article? You could, but it would take hours to find a single article on your topic. Using a database to search will result in a list of articles about your topic. Databases provide access to a large number of articles in magazines, journals and newspapers. Like TV Guide and the library catalog, an article database is divided into records and fields. The information in this EbscoHost Record is more detailed than the library catalog. The title of the article is in the Article Title field, and the author of the article are listed in the Article field. The Source field lists the title of the journal, date, volume, issue, and page numbers. Some databases may call this Journal Title, Publication Title or Periodical Title, and some may list the volume, issue, date and page numbers separately. The ABSTRACT field is a summary of the article.