

Symbol Text Attributes Using Databases

You can create symbol attributes based on a tab-delimited database. A *database* is a collection of data arranged for ease and speed of search and retrieval. A telephone book is an example of a database.

There are many ways to create a database. You could use a spreadsheet program (such as MS Excel) to arrange information in columns (for example, column A contains “First Name” entries and B has “Last Name” data). In a spreadsheet, each column represents a *field* in the database and each row is called a *record*. When you are finished creating your database, make sure you save it as a tab-delimited text (*.txt) file. Currently, DataCAD supports only databases that you saved as tab-delimited text files.

When you create a symbol text attribute, you can indicate which tab-delimited database text file contains the information you want to use. The Lookup Field displays the columns available in that database.

➔ To use a database linkage when you create a symbol attribute:

1. Select Lookup Field from the Database Linkage section of the Create Symbol Attribute dialog box. This activates the Database Name input box.
2. Click on the file folder to display the Select database file dialog box. Highlight the file you want to use and click on Open. Notice that the fields contained in the database you selected appear in the Lookup Field pull-down box.

The database you select must be a tab-delimited text file (*.txt).

3. Click on the pull-down arrow and select a field from the Lookup Field box.

Create Symbol Attribute

Attribute Name
Part Number

Prompt
What is the part number?

Value

Value Properties
☐ Invisible ☒ Variable ☐ Preset ☐ Locked

Database Linkage
☐ No Link ☒ Lookup Field ☐ Field Filled By Lookup

Database Name:
 C:\Program Files\DataCAD\Databases\Products.txt

Lookup Field: 1. TECH-04N

☒ Create multiple attributes

Ok Cancel

Figure 1: You can use a database to supply values for symbol attributes

4. Make sure you check the Create multiple attributes box if you want to create more than one attribute for a symbol. If you do not want to create multiple attributes, skip to step 6.
5. Create more attributes by following steps 1 to 3. DataCAD allows you to create an unlimited number of text attributes for each symbol.
6. Click Ok when you are finished creating all the symbol text attributes for a particular symbol. Then click Cancel to close the Create Symbol Attribute dialog box. The information you supplied in the Attribute Name field appears in your drawing. Save the symbol so that you can use it where needed in your drawing.

You can select Field Filled by Lookup to automatically supply the values of other symbol text attributes. This can save you a lot of time.

➔ To automatically use values from a database for additional symbol text attributes:

1. Select Field Filled By Lookup from the Database Linkage section of the Create Symbol Attribute dialog box. This activates the Database Name input box.
2. Select a tab-delimited database text (*.txt) file.
3. Choose a Lookup Field from the pull-down options available.
4. Check the Create multiple attributes box.
5. Click on Ok when you are finished. Then click Cancel.
6. Save the symbol.

7. Place the symbol you saved into your drawing as often as necessary. The Edit/Customize Symbol Attribute dialog box appears.
8. Select the option you want to use from the drop-down box in the Value column. This automatically fills in the values for the other prompts for this symbol.

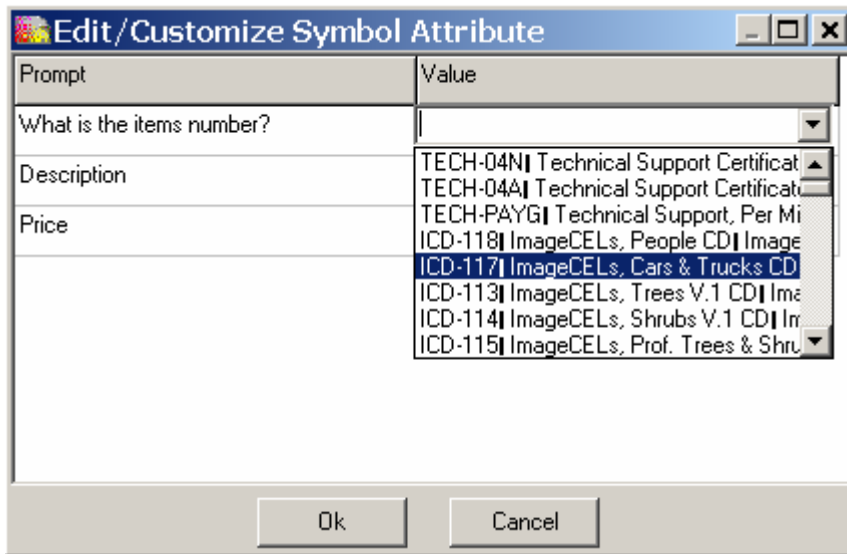


Figure 2: Select the answer to the prompt based on the options in the drop-down box in the Value column

9. Click on Ok. The symbol with the attributes you indicated appears in your drawing. You can continue placing this symbol into your drawing by using different values each time.

What if you update the information in your database? DataCAD makes it easy for you to replace the old information in your drawing with the new data.

➔ To automatically use updated database information for symbols already in your drawing:

1. Update your database and save it as a tab-delimited text (*.txt) file.
2. Select Refresh Fields From Database(s) from the Symbol Browser's Options menu.

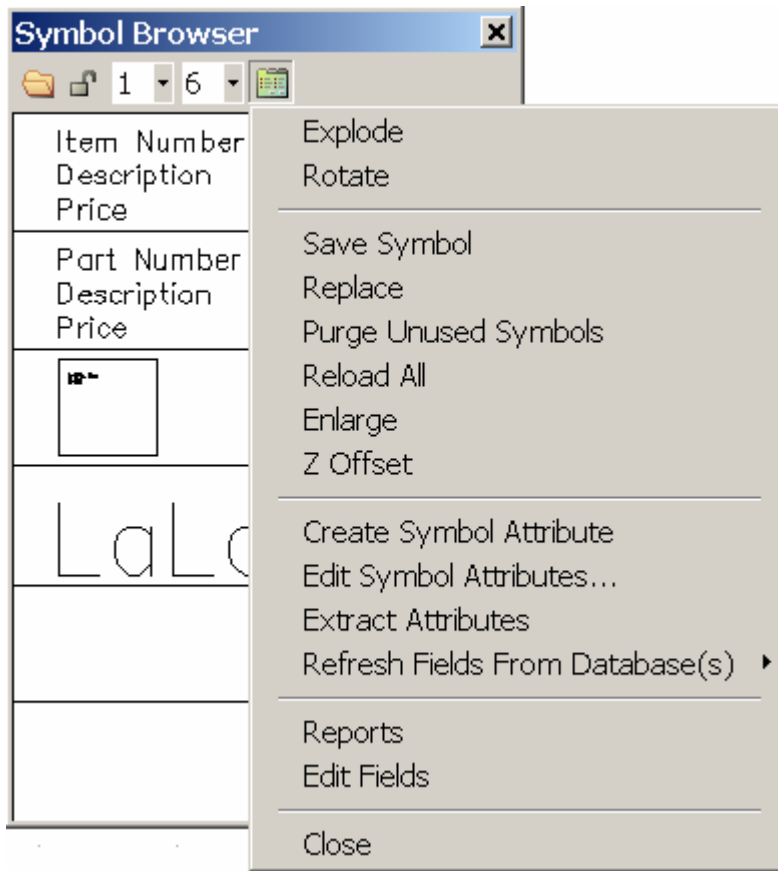


Figure 3: Databases can be updated

3. Select one of the options from the submenu:
 - All Layers
 - On Layers
 - Active Layer
4. Notice that an Information box appears, describing how many symbols were found in your drawing and how many were updated based on your revised database. Click on Ok to return to your drawing and see the updated text attributes.

For reports, you can use the information in the text attributes for the symbols you inserted in your drawing.

➔ To automatically use updated database information for symbols already in your drawing:

1. Select Extract Attributes from the Options menu in the Symbol Browser. The Symbol Attribute Report dialog box appears.

Layer Search

☐ Active
 ☒ On
 ☐ All

☒ Quantities
 ☒ Layers

Item Number	Description	Price	Layer	Qty
CTW3-0100	Cheap Tricks W...	\$98.00	Layer001	1
ICD-103	ImageCELS, CD...	\$150.00	Layer001	1
ICD-113	ImageCELS, Tre...	\$75.00	Layer001	1
ICD-114	ImageCELS, Shr...	\$75.00	Layer001	2
ICD-115	ImageCELS, Prof...	\$225.00	Layer001	1
ICD-116	ImageCELS, Tro...	\$187.00	Layer001	1
ICD-117	ImageCELS, Car...	\$75.00	Layer001	1
ICD-118	ImageCELS, Peo...	\$75.00	Layer001	1
ICD-120	ImageCELS, The...	\$550.00	Layer001	1
MTCB-0100	Macro Tabouret...	\$98.00	Layer001	1
TECH-04A	2004 Technical ...	\$49.95	Layer001	1

Copy Close

Figure 4: Symbol Attribute Report

2. Indicate which layers DataCAD should use: Active, On, or All.
3. Add columns for quantities and layers by checking the appropriate boxes in the Symbol Attribute Report dialog box. If you do not want the report to include layer and quantity information, do not check those boxes.
4. Click on Copy to save the report to the Windows clipboard.
5. Click on Close.
6. Select Paste from the Edit pull-down menu to insert the report into your drawing.