

How do I create a data map to provide to PastPerfect conversion services?

Version 4 and Version 5

The first step in converting data from one program to another is to create a data map. A data map is typically a five column list that matches each of your current data fields to the appropriate PastPerfect field. The columns should be as follows: Your database fields, PastPerfect's fields, PastPerfect's field types, Modify, and Notes. The data map is just a text document and can be produced using any word processor or program such as Word, Excel, or WordPerfect. Before creating this map, you need to know what data is contained in each of your current data fields and also what should be in the PastPerfect data fields.

For a complete description of all PastPerfect data fields, please print the Field Descriptions reports from the Reports menu of PastPerfect. If you do not currently have the PastPerfect program or demo on your computer, you can download these Field Description reports for your version of PastPerfect from our website at www.museumsoftware.com/downloads.shtml.

PastPerfect uses separate databases for objects, photos, archives, library, contacts, dues, donations, accessions, exhibits, and loans. There is a separate report for each database. Each report lists the field names, a detailed description of the data to be stored in the field, and the type and size of the field. The field name is the term at the end of the description in brackets, for example, Accession# - [ACCESSNO : character (15)], "ACCESSNO" is the field name. The type and size is listed after the field name, for example: [c(15)] indicates a character field maximum length 15 characters, while [n(10,2)] indicates a numeric field length 10 with 2 decimal places format such as #####.##; [date] indicates a date field; [datetime] indicates a field containing both date and time, and [memo] indicates an unlimited character field.

In creating your map, it is unlikely that all the fields will match up perfectly. For instance, your field may contain entries that exceed the character length of the PastPerfect field you want to use. To accommodate this problem, you should take a close look at your data to see just how many entries are too long. If it is only a few, you may be able to shorten them. If not, you will need to map the data to a longer PastPerfect field. For fields that you have in your data that don't exist in PastPerfect, you can use the custom fields (listed as "Custom Field 01" or "Field 01" on the reports). Or, you could transfer the data into the PastPerfect unlimited Description or Notes fields. Remember these unlimited fields are searchable in PastPerfect.

When transferring your data to PastPerfect, you may want to modify it slightly. For example, you may have a field for Color, which PastPerfect does not. If you decide to put this data in the Description field in PastPerfect, it would make more sense if the entry was 'Color is green' rather than just 'green'. Or, if your Object IDs are of the form 98.1.21 and you want to change them to 1998.001.0021, we can make that modification. We can also combine 2 or more of your data fields into one PastPerfect field. This type of global modification can be accomplished during the transfer and should be noted in the Notes column of the data map.

Structure:

On your data map, the first column should list your database field names. The second column should list the PastPerfect field names. The third column should list the type and size of this field in PastPerfect, as explained above. We ask you to include this type information so you recognize the type of field into which you are bringing your data. The fourth column of “Modify” should indicate if you would like us to make any changes to that field during the conversion. The fifth column is for any notes, including an explanation of any modifications.

*** Please note that you must include the PastPerfect fields “Object ID” and “Object Name” on the data map. These are required fields in PastPerfect, so you must map one of your fields to these two fields in PastPerfect.

Example:

Here is an example of a data map for converting data to the PastPerfect Version 5 Objects catalog. Please note that you may have more fields to map in your data than appear in this example:

| Your database | PastPerfect | Type | Modify | Notes |
|---------------|-------------|------|--------|---|
| Catalogno | ObjectID | c25 | Yes | Add leading 0's and century to create format 1998.001.0001 |
| Donorno | Accessno | c15 | No | |
| Name | Objname | c40 | No | |
| Location | Homeloc | c60 | No | |
| Cataloged | Catdate | date | No | |
| Madeof | Material | c75 | No | |
| Date | Date | c50 | Yes | Change from character (January 1, 1950) to date type field (01/01/1950) |
| Condition | Condition | c35 | No | |
| Description | Descrip | memo | No | |
| Color | Descrip | memo | Yes | Add 'Color is' |

Please create separate data maps for the each type of data you will be converting, such as Photos, Archives, Library, Accessions, and Contacts. If you create the data maps it will save us the time and trouble, insuring you the best possible price and results.

If you have any questions, please contact Betsy Witt, Conversions Coordinator, at our Support Office at 1-800-562-6080x104 or conversions@museumsoftware.com. Thank you for using PastPerfect!