



Managing Choice Lists

Pop-up Lists, Drop-down Lists, Pick Lists, Choice Lists ... call them what you like ... they are those little menus from which you pick an item to go into a field in your database.

For example, here's a dropdown list of Countries:



You click on the little arrow and choose an option from the list that pops up.

Why use Choice Lists?

1. Choice Lists are useful when there is a limited number of options from which to choose to populate a field - the list of countries is a perfect example. You need to make sure that only valid data is entered into the field, and that the spelling is consistent; you don't want people entering random mis-spellings such as "Australia".
2. Choice Lists provide an easy way to enter data: just pick an item from the list rather than typing it in.
3. In CatBase, you can also assign help tips and a description to publish for each list item.

Managing Choice Lists

There are two ways to manage your Choice Lists.

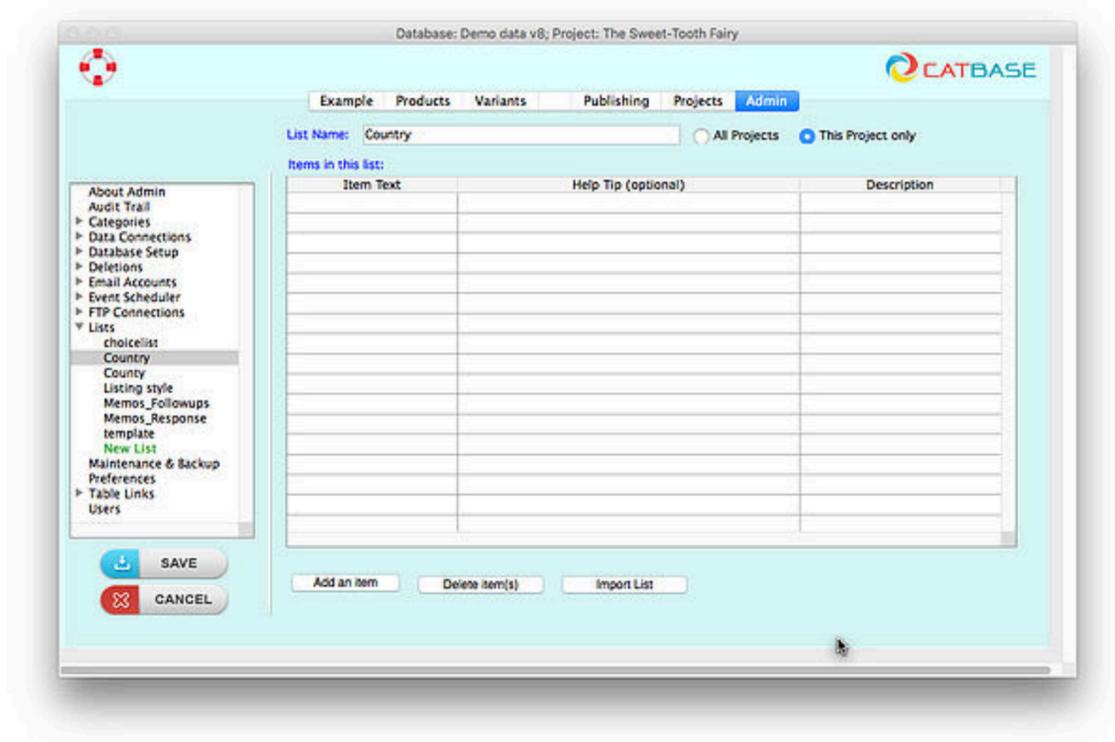
1. In the List Manager
2. Dynamically whilst entering data

The List Manager

To access the List Manager:

1. Go to the **Admin** main tab.
2. Expand the **Lists** topic on the left.
3. Select the list you want to manage, or click **New List** to create a new one.

An empty list looks like this:



All Projects/This Project Only

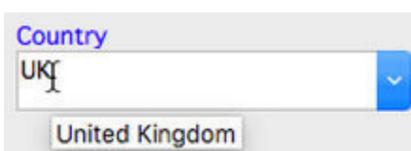
If you have more than one Database Project, you can choose whether your List will be available to ALL projects (as you probably would with something like a list of countries), or only the current Project.

Item Text

This is the text that will appear in the Choice List.

Help Tip

You can optionally add a brief help text to each item. This will be displayed when you hover your mouse pointer over the text after it has been selected in a record. For example:



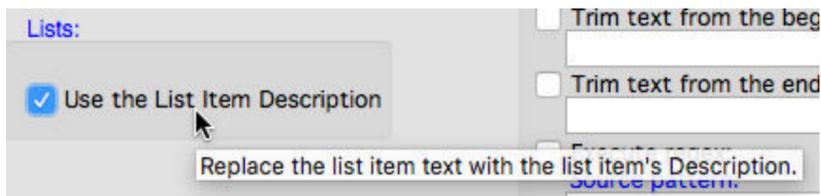
To edit the Help Tip, triple-click in that cell.

Description

This is a very useful feature that you can use to publish information relating to a list item. As an example, suppose that when we publish the country names, we also want to include info about their population. We could set up a list item like this:

Items in this list:		
Item Text	Help Tip (optional)	Description
UK	United Kingdom	UK: Population 65 million

When you are setting up your [Publishing Stylesheet](#), you'll add an Element for the Country field. In that Element, go to the **Preferences** tab. There you will see a checkbox labelled **Use the List Item Description**:



Select the checkbox. Then, when the data is published, CatBase will replace the contents of that field with its matching Description - eg:

UK: Population 63 million

To edit a Description, triple-click in that cell.

Adding a New List Item

Click the **Add an Item** button.

Deleting a List Item

To delete a list item, first select its row in the list, and click the Delete Item(s) button.

Importing List Items

To import a list of list items (eg from a spreadsheet or csv file), click the **Import List** button. (See the [Importing Data](#) tutorial for more information on importing data).

Sorting the List Items

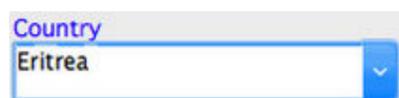
The list items will always be sorted alphabetically when the list is used. So it doesn't matter which order they appear in the List Editor.

Manage Lists dynamically whilst entering Data

List Items can be added dynamically as long as you have Administrator privileges, or you have been granted the authority to add list items by your Administrator (see the [Managing User Access](#) reference for more info about managing user access).

To add a list item:

- Click in the appropriate list area. Note that the lists are displayed as "combo lists", meaning that you can either enter data directly or choose an item from the dropdown by clicking on the arrow. For example, let's say we want to add Eritrea as an option for Country:
- Delete any text that is currently showing the field.
- Enter the new list item text:



- Press the Tab key on your keyboard.
- CatBase will ask if you want to add it as a new item for the list: click **Yes** to add it, or **No** to delete it.
- When the record is saved, the new item will be added to the list.