



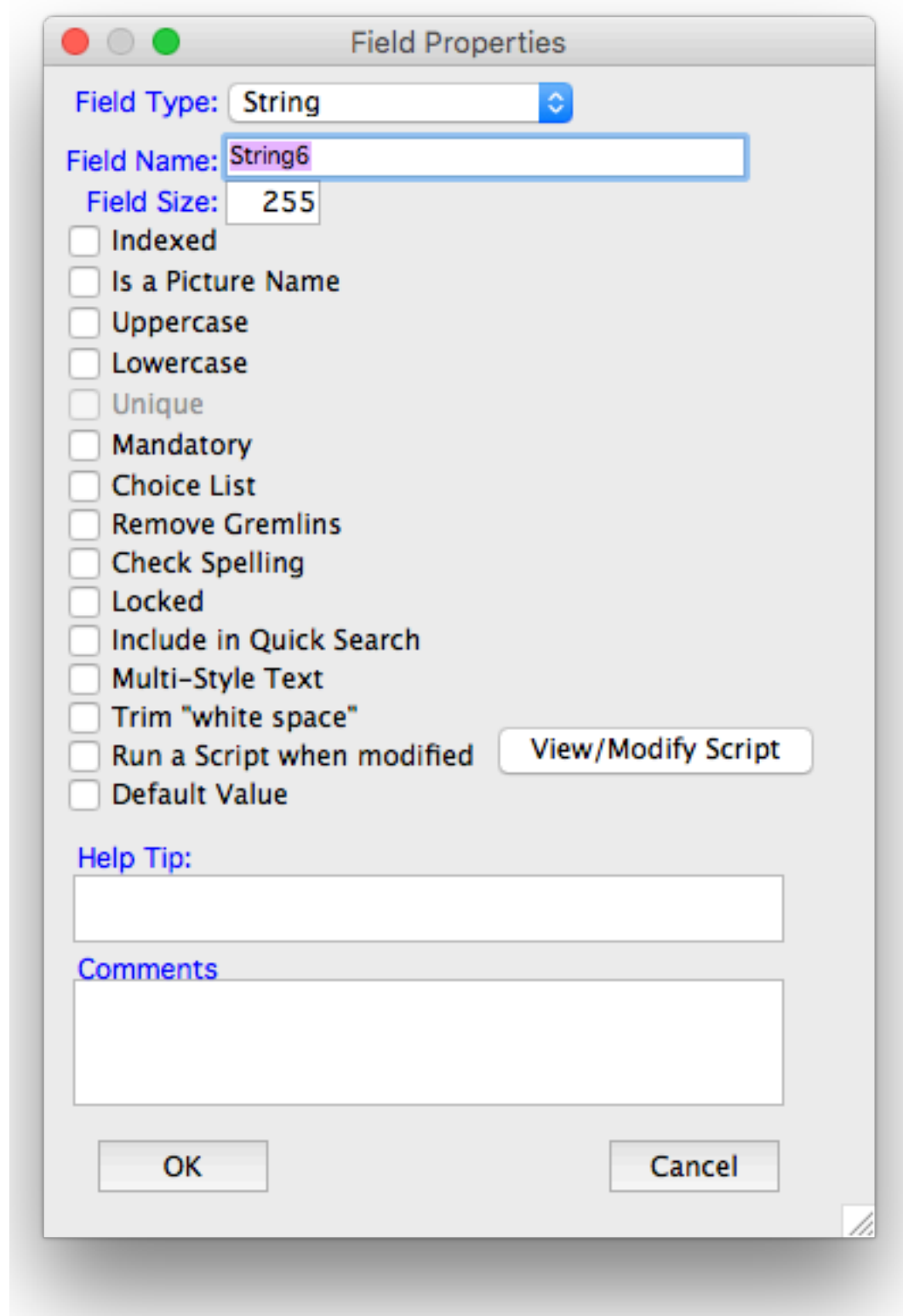
# Field Properties

When you add new fields to your database, you have a number of options from which you can choose for each field.

## Add or Modify a Field

To add or modify a field:

1. Click on the **Admin** menu
2. Expand the **Database Setup** topic in the lefthand menu
3. Select the **Table and Field Setup** option
4. Select the table that you want to modify
5. Click the **New Field** button to add a new field, or
6. Double-click on an existing field name to modify its properties
7. You'll then see the **Field Properties** dialogue:



## Field Type

It's very important to choose the correct Field Type for the type of data you'll be storing in this field. The choices are:

- **Boolean:** Use this for "Yes/No" or "True/False" data - it can only be one or the other. Boolean fields are shown as check boxes on the data entry window.
- **Date:** If you want to maintain information on dates such as birthdates, product release dates, etc., you should use a Date field rather than entering the dates into a text field. This way, you'll be able to search on (for example) dates after January 1st 2007, or dates before a certain date, and to sort records by date.
- **Integer:** A whole number (no decimals) between  $\pm 2,147,483,647$ . NOTE: If you are likely to enter numbers larger than  $\pm 2,147,483,647$ , use a Real field.
- **Real:** A number that contains decimal places in the range of  $\pm 1.7E\pm 308$ .
- **String:** A short text field. String fields are limited to 255 characters, and should be used for data that you want to sort or query on.
- **Text:** A large text field. Text fields can hold up to 2Gb of text and are therefore useful for such data as product descriptions (see the comparison chart for String and Text fields, below)
- **Time:** Like Date fields, Time fields are for storing a specific type of data so that you can search and sort on that type of data.

## Field Name

Enter a descriptive name for the field. Field names cannot contain certain characters, such as dashes and slashes. They can contain numbers and underscores.

Note that field names are not case-sensitive: you might have a field called "First Name", and this will still match up OK with a column headed "first name" in a file you're importing.

## Field Size

For String fields, change the size of the field (the number of characters it can contain) if you wish. This will restrict the number of characters that can be entered into the field, and when you import data, it will be truncated if it's too long for the specified field length.

## Indexed

Indexed fields are faster for searching and sorting. Not all field types can be indexed.

## Is a Picture Name

This option is available for String and Text fields. If you designate a field as a **Picture Name** field, it will be available as an option to publish data when you create a Picture Element in a Publishing Style Sheet. Also, it will have additional options available on data entry forms: you can right-click on a Picture field and choose a picture, and preview the specified picture.

## Uppercase

Always force the data in this field to uppercase (useful for such data as postal codes). Only available for String and Text fields.

## Lowercase

Always force the data in this field to all lowercase (useful for such data as email addresses).

Only available for String and Text fields.

## Unique

Only allow unique data in this field. A Unique field must be indexed. Not available for all field types. Note - the uniqueness applies within that table only.

## Mandatory

If this option is selected, a value **MUST** be entered into the field for every record, otherwise the record cannot be saved.

## Choice List

Also known as a Pick List, this option is available only for String fields. A Choice List is a list of options available for selection for the field - for example, country names, salutations ("Mr", "Mrs", "Ms" etc.) Their purpose is to ensure data entry consistency. When you select this option, the display changes a little:



Choose a Choice List from the popup menu, or create a new list by clicking on the **New List** button. When a new Choice List is created, it doesn't contain any options. There are two ways to add new options:

1. Whilst entering data, you can enter a new option into the field. CatBase will ask you if you want to add it as a choice to the Choice List. (Only available if you have Administrator privileges).
2. Go to the **Admin** menu, expand the **Lists** option on the left of the window, and select the list you want to edit. You can then add, edit, and delete options on the list.

## Remove Gremlins

"Gremlins" are bogus characters that can sneak into your data and cause all kinds of havoc. Most of them are non-printing characters that do not display at all on the screen, or appear as little boxes or bizarre characters. Their favourite ways of sneaking in are by accidentally typing an odd combination of keys, or by copying and pasting from emails or word processing documents. Select this option, and whenever the field is modified, the program will check for the presence of gremlins and delete any it finds. Available only for String and Text fields.

## Check Spelling

Select this option to automatically invoke the spelling checker whenever the field is modified. You can specify the spelling checker language in **Preferences** (under the **Admin** menu). The languages to choose from are English, French, German, Norwegian, and Spanish.

## Locked

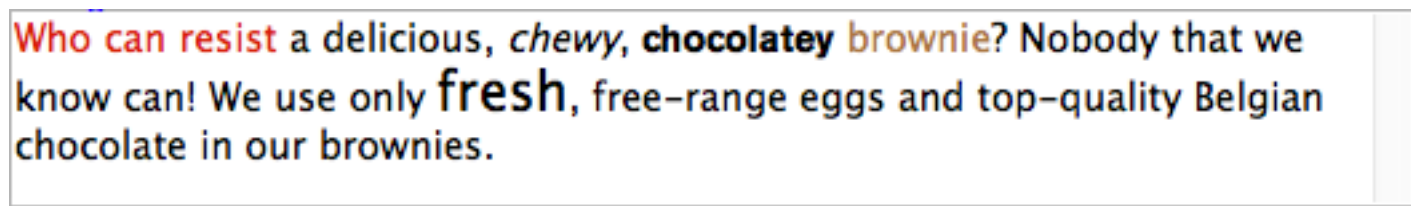
Designate a field as **Locked** and, once a new record has been saved, this field cannot be edited unless the user has Administrator access.

## Include in Quick Search

If this is a field that you'll want to search on quite frequently (such as a name or perhaps phone number or email address), select this option. The field will then be included in a search when you enter something into the **Quick Search** field when that table's data is displayed. (The Quick Search box appears to the right of the Button Bar on the data list view window.)

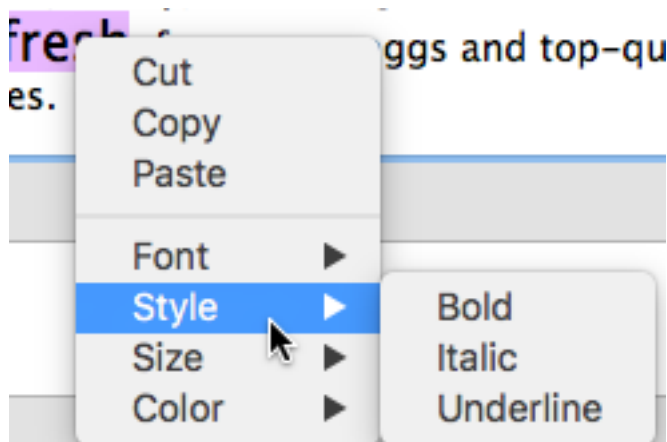
## Multi-Style Text

If this option is selected for a String or Text field, you'll be able to select text styling and it will be shown WYSIWYG-style. For example, here's a product description field in which various text styling has been selected:



To style the text:

1. Select the text you want to style
2. Right-click/Ctrl-click on the text
3. Choose the desired styles from the popup menu:



## Run a Script When Modified

Scripts can be written to perform all kinds of useful jobs from simple functions such as calculating tax, to complex features such as sending an email or a letter. [Contact us](#) for more information about scripts.

## Default Value

You can enter a value that will be applied to the field whenever a new record is created.

Suppose, for example, that you have a field for "Listing type" and this is a mandatory field. Each new listing will have a "Basic" listing type unless they choose to pay for an enhanced listing. So you might select the Default Value option and enter "Basic" into the text area. Now, every new record will have the Basic option selected unless it is changed.

## Help Tip

**Help Tips** are those little yellow text boxes that pop up when you move your mouse over certain areas on the screen. You can create custom Help Tips for your fields - simply enter the tip into this text area. (Note: if the Help Tips don't appear on your screen, modify your User record and select the **Show Tips** checkbox.)

## Field Info

Finally, there's a text box at the bottom of the window. For fields that are used by the system - such as the Enter and Modify dates - a comment will be shown, and this cannot be modified. For the user-defined fields, you can enter a comment here to remind yourself what the field is to be used for. This comment will not be used anywhere within the program - it's just for your reference.