



# How to Produce / Publish / Create / Build a Parts Catalogue with Adobe InDesign

Got lots of products and parts that you need to turn into a catalogue or price list? With CatBase and Adobe InDesign, you can quickly produce all kinds of publications. Create a complete catalogue of products and parts, or a selection of products (maybe a Special Offer mini-catalog, or a seasonal catalogue, etc.)

Watch this short video to see just how easy it is when you use CatBase!



## Managing your Parts data with CatBase

In the Demo Database that comes with the CatBase free trial, we've set up a Parts Catalogue project. Your requirements might be different to our example; you can customise it any way you need to for your own project.

### The Parts Catalog Database

When you first open the Demo Database, it opens with the Sweet Tooth Fairy project. There are a number of projects in this database - the one we want to look at is the Parts Catalog project. To switch to that:

- Choose **Switch Project** from the **File** menu.
- Double-click on **Parts Catalog** in the list that appears.

Our Parts Catalog is comprised of two related tables: **Products** and **Parts**. (If you are not familiar with the concept of related tables, please see the [Database 101 Tutorial](#)).

You can have any number of Products, and each Product can have any number of Parts. Also, a Part can be related (linked) to any number of Products - this is called a many-to-many relation.

### Managing the Parts Catalog

We've created a separate Tutorial to explain how you can use CatBase to [manage your Parts Catalog](#). In this one we are concentrating on publishing the catalog using Adobe InDesign.

## Getting ready to publish a Parts Catalog ...

We've set up some example Publishing Stylesheets and Publishing Projects to demonstrate how easy it is to produce your catalog.

### Publishing Stylesheets

[Publishing Stylesheets](#) are what tell CatBase how you want to publish your data: which records to include; how to sort them; what data to publish for each record; whether to include images; whether to index an item, and so on. You can have any number of Publishing Stylesheets so that your data can be published in endless ways.

### Publishing Projects

[Publishing Projects](#) define how to produce a particular publication. Each Publishing Project consists of one or more Project Steps. For example, if you have a lot of products, and they are organised into categories, you might want to publish each main category separately to make the whole project more manageable. Once a Publishing Project has been set up, it's a simple one-click operation

to produce the entire catalog.

# Publishing a Parts Catalogue

We'll look at the example **Parts Catalog Style 1** in the Demo database. It creates a publication like this:


## AnyPart

**Main Category A**  
**Subcategory A-1**

### PRODUCT EIGHT

Insert special characters such as ™, © and ®.

- Safe to use.
- Looks great.
- Many colour options.
- Add your own bullet points here - as many as needed.



Part Number	Description	Length	Weight	Option 1	Price
P1-001-BLU	This part has one option	5.00	2.00	Blue	€1.63
P1-001-RED	This part has one option	5.00	2.00	Red	€1.63
P1-001-YEL	This part has one option	5.00	2.00	Yellow	€1.63
P1-001-GRE	This part has one option	5.00	2.00	Green	€1.63
P1-001-PUR	This part has one option	5.00	2.00	Purple	€1.63
P1-001-ORA	This part has one option	5.00	2.00	Orange	€1.63
P1-001-MUL	This part has one option	5.00	2.00	Multi	€1.63
P1-001-BLA	This part has one option	5.00	2.00	Black	€1.63
P1-001-WHI	This part has one option	5.00	2.00	White	€1.63
P1-001-GRA	This part has one option	5.00	2.00	Gray	€1.63

### PRODUCT FIFTEEN

This product has many advantages for the customer. You can add as much text as you like for each product here. You can add styles to words or phrases: choose **Open Special Characters Palette** from the File menu, then select some text and click on the appropriate button in the palette. This can also be used to insert special characters such as ™, © and ®.

- Safe to use.
- Looks great.
- Many colour options.
- Add your own bullet points here - as many as needed.

1 [www.anypart.com](http://www.anypart.com) +44 (0)123 1111

The catalog includes a Table of Contents and an Index of part numbers.

If you have already installed the CatBase Trial, you'll find the InDesign template we've used here in the Sample documents folder - it's called *Parts Catalog.idml*.

Let's take a look at some of the features ...

## Category Headings

Our Categories are organised into a two-level hierarchy - **Main Category A** is a top-level category, and **Subcategory A-1** is a subcategory. (To see how this is set up in the database, go to the **Admin** main tab and expand the **Categories** topic on the left). Categories can be organised into any number of levels.

## Products

The Products are sorted alphabetically by product name under each subcategory. The following data is published for each product:

- Product name.
- Contents of the Description field, if populated.
- Contents of the Bullet points field, if populated.
- The main product image.
- A table listing the Parts belonging to that product.

## Parts

The Parts table is interesting! Each table is dynamically created by CatBase, and contains just the relevant details for each type of part, depending up which options have been specified. In the example shown above, the parts belonging to Product Eight have one option (a colour, in this case), so the Parts table has six columns.

But if we scroll down to the next page, there's a product whose parts have two options specified:



Part Number	Description	Length	Weight	Option 1	Option 2	Price
P1-001- GRA-S	This part has two options	5.00	2.00	Gray	Small	<b>€1.63</b>
P1-001- GRA-M	This part has two options	5.00	2.00	Gray	Medium	<b>€1.63</b>
P1-001- GRA-L	This part has two options	5.00	2.00	Gray	Large	<b>€1.63</b>
P1-001- GRA-XL	This part has two options	5.00	2.00	Gray	Extra Large	<b>€1.63</b>
P1-001- RED-S	This part has two options	5.00	2.00	Gray	Small	<b>€1.63</b>
P1-001- RED-M	This part has two options	5.00	2.00	Gray	Medium	<b>€1.63</b>
P1-001- RED-L	This part has two options	5.00	2.00	Gray	Large	<b>€1.63</b>
P1-001- RED-XL	This part has two options	5.00	2.00	Gray	Extra Large	<b>€1.63</b>
P1-001- BLU-S	This part has two options	5.00	2.00	Gray	Small	<b>€1.63</b>
P1-001- BLU-S	This part has two options	5.00	2.00	Gray	Medium	<b>€1.63</b>

And further down on the same page, a table of parts with no options specified:



Part Number	Description	Length	Weight	Price
A-1234	This part has no options	5.00	2.00	<b>€2.09</b>
A-1235	This part has no options	6.00	22.10	<b>€2.63</b>
A-1236	This part has no options	5.00	2.00	<b>€2.09</b>
A-1237	This part has no options	5.00	2.00	<b>€3.26</b>
A-1238	This part has no options	5.00	2.00	<b>€2.63</b>
A-1239	This part has no options	5.00	2.00	<b>€3.68</b>
A-12310	This part has no options	5.00	2.00	<b>€3.94</b>
A-12311	This part has no options	5.00	2.00	<b>€4.31</b>
A-12312	This part has no options	5.00	2.00	<b>€4.73</b>
A-12313	This part has no options	5.00	2.00	<b>€4.99</b>

In each case, CatBase has figured out which columns are required, and calculated the column widths so that all the tables are the same overall width. The width calculation is an option; you can also specify a width for each column, or use a combination of specified widths and calculated widths. In our examples, the **Part Number** and **Price** columns are always the same width, and all the other columns are calculated widths.

Note also that the formatting of the data in the columns is varied. Most of the columns are left-aligned, but the Price column is right-aligned and is set in bold red.

The style of the table is managed by an InDesign Table Style named *partstable*. So you can change the appearance of the tables globally by modifying that Table Style in InDesign - for example, you might want to change the row or column dividers, or the row background colours.

Once the data has been placed into the InDesign document, you may want to check through it and make a few tweaks here and there: maybe you feel that a particular image should be a different size, or you don't like where a page breaks. You're then ready to finalise the publication by creating a Table of Contents and Index.

## Table of Contents

To build the Table of contents:

1. Go to the first page in the document.
2. There may already be a Table of Contents there. Just ignore it.
3. Click anywhere within the large text area on the Table of Contents page.
4. Choose **Update Table of Contents** from the **Layout** menu.
5. The Table of contents, listing the main and subcategories, is created!

## Index

To build the index of part numbers:

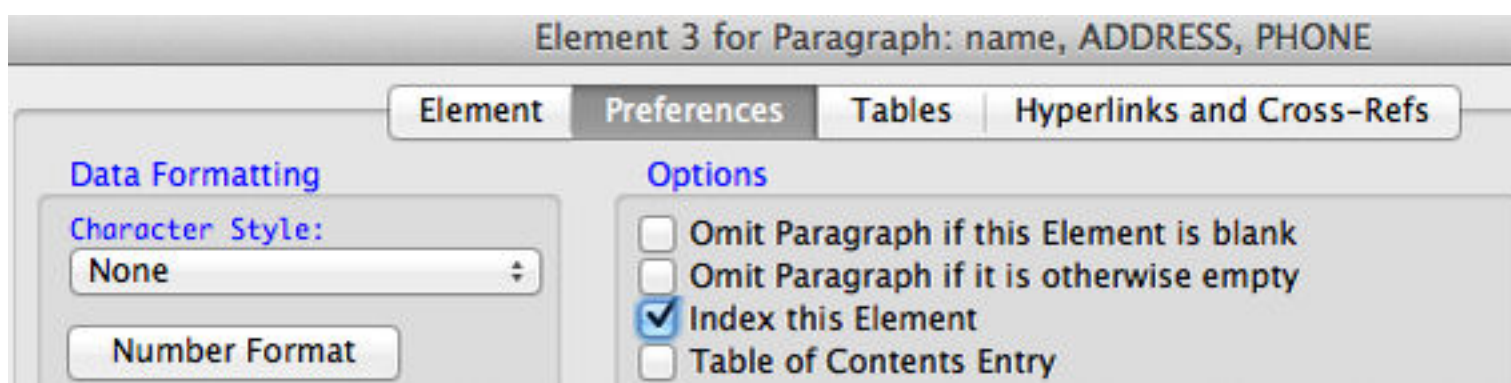
- Go to the very last page and click in the text box on that page.
- If the **Index** palette is not visible, go to the **Window** menu and choose **Type & Tables->Index**.
- In the Index palette, click the **Generate Index** button:



- Make changes to the format of the index, if you wish.
- Click **OK**.
- Your index is created!

## How was the index defined?

To create the Part Number index, we simply selected the **Index this Element** checkbox in the Part Number element of the Publishing Stylesheet:



## Customising the Database for your own Project

Our example Products and Parts project is quite basic and generic. You can easily customise it to suit your project.

### Customising the Fields

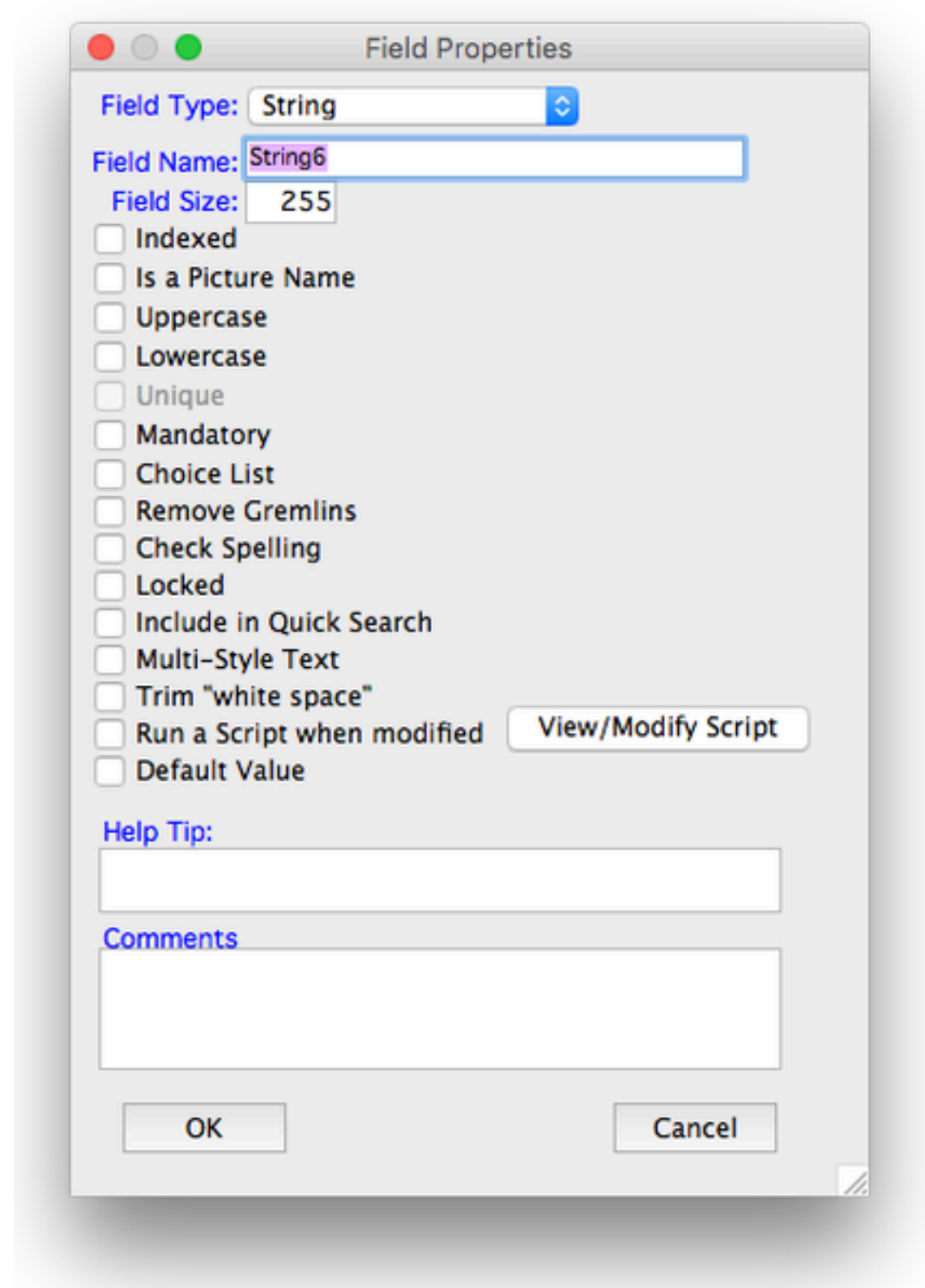
You can add, edit, delete, and reorganise the fields in any way you need. The example database has just four basic information fields:

- Product name
- Description
- Bullet points
- Picture

### Add a new field

Let's say you need to add another field to keep track of each product's introduction date.

- Go to the **Admin** main tab.
- Expand the **Database Setup** topic on the left.
- Select the **Products** sub-tab, so that the list of fields for the Products table is displayed.
- Click the **New Field** button. The **Field Properties** window opens:



- From the **Field Type:** dropdown, select **Date**.
- Enter a suitable name into the **Field Name:** area (eg: Intro Date).
- (Optionally) Select the **Index** checkbox if you will be using this field for searching and/or sorting the data.
- (Optionally) Enter a brief description of the purpose of this field into the **Help Tip** area. This will be a popup tip that will appear when a user moves the mouse over the field.
- Click **OK**.

The new field is added to the list of fields.

Learn more about [Field Properties](#).

### Modifying the Existing Fields

You'll certainly want to modify the Options fields that we have set up in the Parts table.

We've created two Options fields:

Table: Parts; Record: P1-001-BLU-S

**CATBASE**

**Details**

Part Number: P1-001-BLU-S      Price: 1.62

Part description: This part has two options

Length: 5.00      Weight: 2.00

Option 1: Gray

Option 2 CHOICES: Small

- To change the names of these fields, go to the main **Admin** tab, select the **Database Setup** topic on the left, and double-click the field whose name you want to change.
- To delete a field, go to **Database Setup**, select the field you want to delete, and click the **Delete Field(s)** button. Note: You won't be able to delete a field that is used in an Import Style or Publishing Stylesheet. You'll need to first delete it from the Import or Publishing Stylesheet.
- To add a new field, go to **Table and Field Setup** and click the **New Field** button.
- To modify the data entry form, go to **Database Setup** and select **Form Design Wizard**.

## Modifying the Data Entry form

The Data Entry form is the window that opens when you double-click a record in the list view. It's where you go to add new records or edit existing ones. The data entry form, as it's configured in an unadulterated Demo Database, is shown near the top of this page. To modify it:

- Go to the **Admin** main tab.
- Expand the **Database Setup** topic on the left.
- Select **Form Design Wizard** under the **Database Setup** topic.
- A mini-drawing application opens. Here you can add fields, resize them and move them around, and delete ones that you don't want.
- To add a new field, expand the **Fields** topic on the right.
- Select the field you want to add to the form.
- Drag and drop it onto the form.
- Now you can move and resize it.

Learn more about the Form Design Wizard.

## What's next?

If you haven't already done so, download and install a Trial Version of CatBase. It's free, fully functional, and time-unlimited!

Learn more about Publishing Stylesheets and Publishing Projects.

Find out how to import data into the database.

Order your copy of CatBase!

Got a question? Contact us!

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