

# MusicFile Help

[Introduction](#)

[Getting Started](#)

[Entering Recordings Into MusicFile](#)

[Browsing Through Your Recordings](#)

[Searching for an Item/Song](#)

[Printing Reports](#)

[Maintenance](#)

[Registering MusicFile](#)

[How to Contact the Author](#)

[Terms & Conditions of Use](#)

If there is anything you need help with that you cannot find within this help file, please feel free to contact me at the E-Mail address: [gmarkl@ixl.net](mailto:gmarkl@ixl.net) - I will be happy to help in any way I can.

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## Introduction to MusicFile

Welcome to MusicFile, the powerful, easy to use tool for organizing your music collection. MusicFile was created as a result of frustration with existing music collection database programs. I could not find one that was easy to understand and had all the features I was looking for. Thus, I took heed of the old saying, "If you don't like the way someone else does something, do it yourself" - and as a result, you are presented with MusicFile.

MusicFile is a database program that helps you keep track of all your listening material. Once you enter all of your recordings, your collection will be at your fingertips. You can easily browse through your collection; use powerful search utilities to quickly locate items and songs; print several reports about your collection; and effortlessly create tape sides or playlists with the TapeMaker feature. MusicFile is designed to store your recordings in a simple and logical fashion. Entering recordings, usually a most unpleasant task, is made hassle-free with MusicFile. For each recording or song, you can store as little or as much information as you choose. With MusicFile, you will always be in control of your recordings.

MusicFile is ShareWare. The demo version is limited to 20 records. I have kept some of my own items in the demo to give you a glimpse of what MusicFile can do for you right away. Try adding some of your own recordings and play around with MusicFile - I think you'll find it will meet all of your cataloguing needs. If you like it, please consider ordering a registered copy.

If you are a registered user of MusicFile, I sincerely appreciate your support of my work.

I hope you enjoy MusicFile!

## **Getting Started with MusicFile**

MusicFile has been designed to be as easy to use as possible. However, there are a few features and options you should be aware of before you begin using MusicFile.

### **Navigating in MusicFile**

Everything in MusicFile is controlled by pointing and clicking with the mouse. Any action you might perform is done simply by the click of a command button.

When using MusicFile, you select an item by using the "record selector." This appears as a grey square with an arrow pointing right in it. To select an item where record selectors are utilized, simply click in the square for that desired item.

### **Auto-Capitalization**

MusicFile will automatically capitalize the first letter of each word for the following fields you enter into MusicFile: Title (Item & Song), Artist (Item & Song), Music Type (Item & Song), Format, Label, and Rating.

You can turn off this feature for the Title and/or Artist fields through the Default Settings area (see below).

### **Auto-Song Numbering**

MusicFile will automatically number any songs you enter for an item. You must, however, indicate the side you are entering songs for at the top of the Song Information entry area.

### **Type-Ahead Recall**

For fields that utilize a combo box, MusicFile implements a feature known as type ahead recall. If you start to type the first few letters of an item in the list, MusicFile will bring up anything that matches what you have entered. For example, if you have Reggae and Rock in your Music Type list, when you type "r" reggae would come up. If you type "ro", rock would come up. Whether or not this will be faster than selecting with the combo box depends on the list. Play around with it and you'll figure out what works best for you. This feature is only activated on data-entry areas; it is not activated on the search criteria and default settings areas.

### **Default Settings**

With MusicFile, you have the ability to set defaults for several of the fields on the Main Entry Form. To set these defaults, you should go to the "Default Settings" area from the Maintenance Menu. You can also choose whether or not you want MusicFile to auto-capitalize the first letter of each word for the Title and Artist field entries.

## **Terms & Conditions of Use**

**If you do not agree to the following, discontinue use of MusicFile at once:**

This software and any accompanying files are sold "as is" and without warranties as to performance of merchantability or any other warranties whether expressed or implied. No warranty of fitness for a particular purpose is offered. The entire risk as to the result and performance of the program is assumed by you. Any liability of the seller will be limited exclusively to product replacement or refund of the purchase price.

You may not use, copy, modify, or transfer the program or documentation except as expressly permitted by the author.

You acknowledge that you have read this agreement, understand it, and agree to be bound by its terms and conditions. You also agree that this is the complete and exclusive statement of agreement between the author and yourself.

With that said, I sincerely hope you enjoy using MusicFile.

**Microsoft, Microsoft Access, and Microsoft Windows are trademarks of Microsoft Corporation**

## **Registering MusicFile**

MusicFile is ShareWare. To purchase a registered copy of MusicFile, you can fill out the On-Line registration form and send it along with payment to the address listed below. Currently, payment must be in the form of a check or money order (made out to George Markell) in US \$ only. If you wish to pay by some other means, please contact the author, as I am currently looking into accepting other forms of payment (ie, credit cards).

MusicFile is priced as follows:

**MusicFile add-on for use with Microsoft Access version 2.0 = \$27**

**MusicFile stand-alone for use with Microsoft Windows = \$34**

**\*\* For orders outside the USA, please add an additional \$5 \*\***

*Prices are subject to change without notice*

All orders will be shipped via first-class mail. If you desire other means (FedEx, UPS, etc.), contact the author for pricing. If you want to receive the registered version via-email, please contact the author for further details.

**Payment address:**

**George Markell, 38 Davelin Road, Wayland, MA 01778, USA**

## Entering Recordings into MusicFile

To enter items into MusicFile, you must go to the MusicFile Entry Form. Press the "Entry Form" button from the Main Menu. This will bring you to a blank record on the Entry Form.

All of the fields used in MusicFile are fairly self-explanatory. The following information provides the most pertinent information about entering your data.

### Combo Boxes

Several of the data entry fields utilize combo boxes to facilitate entry of your collection. The lists used by these combo boxes can be updated in two ways. You can enter new choices "on the fly" by typing the new choice directly into the box. Upon confirmation, the new choice will be added to the list, and automatically be selected for that item. The other way is to update the list through the Maintenance areas. Note: the Rating and Condition fields cannot be updated "on the fly," you must go to their maintenance areas to update these fields.

### General Field Information

There are two fields on the entry form which are absolutely required: the Title and Artist fields. These should be the first two fields you complete when entering a new item. You will not be able to access the Songs, Comments, or Appraisal areas if you have not entered both a Title and Artist for the item.

The following is a list of all fields and the maximum number of characters available for each field:

Title (75), Artist (75), Artist Sort Name (10), Keywords (55), Label (30), Catalog # (15), Music Type (15), Format (15), Rating (13), Condition (15), Acquired From (40), ID (10), Musicians (64,000), Comments (64,000), Song Name (50), Song Comments (255).

### Song Field Information

Once you finish the Main Information area for an item, you can enter song information for that item. Song sides and numbers will be automatically added after you enter each song title. You do not have to enter the song number manually. If you choose to enter more than one side, you do have to change the Side you are entering songs for at the top of the Song Information form.

The Song Artist, Song Type, and Studio/Live fields will all default to whatever is indicated in the Main Information section for that item. The only exception to this is if an item contains both Studio and Live songs. In this case, there will be no default, and you must enter an S or an L, whichever is appropriate.

If you plan on entering Song Comments, you may find it easier to do this through the Song Search Results area. Do not enter any criteria, and all songs will be brought up. You can edit the Song Comments field here.

## **Browsing MusicFile**

To browse your collection, press the "Browse" button on the Main Menu. This will bring up the Browse Options Menu. To activate the option you desire, you can either highlight the option and press the "View Selected Option" button, or simply double click the desired option. The following is a description of each option and important features of each.

### **Artist Catalog**

The Artist Catalog is a listing of all Artists and the number of Items and Songs entered in MusicFile by each.

To perform a quick search for an artist, press the "Search For An Artist" button. You will be prompted to enter all or part of the artist's name that you are looking for. MusicFile will list all artists that match your criteria. To restore the entire list of artists, just select one of the sort options. Note: the search results cannot be sorted.

To bring up a list of all items or songs by an individual artist, use the record selector to choose the artist - then press either the "View all Items by Artist" or "View all Songs by Artist" button. The desired list will then be brought up by MusicFile.

The "Refresh Catalog" button is used if you add or update any items without leaving the Artist Catalog area. For example: if you were browsing all items by a given artist, and updated the songs for one of those items, the catalog would not automatically reflect those songs. You must use this button to "refresh" the information.

### **Item Catalog**

The Item Catalog is a complete listing of all Items you have entered into MusicFile.

To view more information about an item than is shown, select it with the record selector and press the "View Item Details" button. This will bring up a full screen of specific information about that item. You can print full item details by pressing the "Print Item" button. It will print the Individual Item Report for that specific item. You can also add Comments or Musicians through the details area.

If you want to update an item while browsing, you can open the MusicFile Entry Form to that item by pressing the "Update Item" button.

The "Refresh Catalog" button is used if you update any items. The Item Catalog will not reflect those changes unless you "refresh" it with the button.

### **Song Catalog**

The Song Catalog is a complete listing of all Songs you have entered into MusicFile.

To view more information about a song that is shown, select it with the record selector and press the "View Song Details" button. This will bring up a window with more information about that song, including any comments you entered, and details about the item the song is located on. You can update the Song Comments field here as well.

To perform a quick search for a song, press the "Search For A Song" button. You will be prompted to enter all or part of the song you are looking for. MusicFile will list all songs that match your criteria. To restore the entire list of songs, just select one of the sort options. Note: the search results cannot be sorted.

### **TapeMaker**

The TapeMaker feature of MusicFile will help make creating tapes a breeze. It allows you to create a list of songs and keep track of the tape time necessary for those songs. When finished, you can print a report that shows the song, artist, what item the song is located on, the song length, and the total tape time.

You can use the TapeMaker from three areas: the Catalog of Songs, the Songs By a Selected Artist area, and the Song Search Results area. From any of these areas, you can copy songs to the TapeMaker by selecting the desired song with the record selector and pressing the "Copy Song to TapeMaker" button. To view the TapeMaker form, press the "Go To TapeMaker" button.

Once you have all the songs you want, you can print the list by pressing the "Print Tape Button." Just before printing, you will be prompted for a Tape Title that will appear on the TapeMaker printout.

You can delete a song by selecting it with the record selector and pressing the "Remove Song" button. To erase the entire list and start over, press the "Clear All Songs" button.

### **Miscellaneous Information**

This form is a summary form with various totals and counts of fields regarding your collection.



## **Printing Reports**

There are several reports about your collection that you can print. They are fairly self-explanatory and can be previewed from the Reports menu. Rather than go into detailed explanations of each, I would direct you to preview them for yourself. However, there are a few quick things to make note of.

- The ID Listing and ID Listing by Artist will only print Items for which you have entered an ID. It will not print any Items where the ID is left blank.

- Perhaps the best reporting tool in MusicFile is the Item and Song Search forms. With these utilities, you can create practically any list you might want.

## **Maintenance**

To perform any maintenance in MusicFile, press the "Maintenance" button on the Main Menu. This will bring up the Maintenance Options menu. To select an option, highlight the desired option and press the "Perform Selected Maintenance" button or simply double click the desired option.

MusicFile Maintenance is used for the following purposes:

- 1) to add or update items to the combo box lists used by MusicFile
- 2) to change the any default settings/options
- 3) to change either the Title Sort or Song Sort for any Item/Song.

Also, if you need to correct any mistakes you made, you can do that through the maintenance area. Any changes you make through the maintenance area will globally update any item that is involved. For example, if you noticed after entering 10 Eric Clapton items that you had typed Eric Klapton, when you change the K to a C in the Artist Maintenance area, MusicFile will automatically change all 10 items to the correct spelling.

You can also delete unwanted items through the maintenance areas.

The following is a brief description of each maintenance area.

### **Artist**

Artist Maintenance allows you to add new artists or make changes to existing artists and their respective sort name. The Artist field can be no more than 75 characters, and the Artist Sort Name can be no more than 10 characters.

### **Condition**

Condition Maintenance allows you to add new conditions or make changes to existing conditions and/or their relative rank.

### **Default Settings**

With MusicFile, you have the ability to set defaults for several of the fields on the Main Entry Form. To set these defaults, you should go to the "Default Settings" area from the Maintenance Menu. You can also choose whether or not you want MusicFile to auto-capitalise the first letter of each word for the Title and Artist field entries.

### **Label**

Label Maintenance allows you to add new labels or make changes to existing labels. The Label field can be no longer than 30 characters.

### **Music Type**

Music Type Maintenance allows you to add new music types or make changes to existing music types. The Music Type field can be no longer than 15 characters.

### **Rating**

Rating Maintenance allows you to add new ratings or make changes to existing ratings and/or their relative rank. Most importantly, do not change or delete the rating "0 - Not Yet Rated." This is critical - do not ignore this.

### **Recording Format**

Recording Format Maintenance allows you to add new recording formats or make changes to existing formats. The Format field can be no longer than 15 characters.

**Title Sort - Items**

Title Sort - Items Maintenance allows you to set the sort definition for each item you enter. This is particularly helpful for items that begin with a number, punctuation mark, parenthesis, etc. For example, if you had the item ...Nothing Like the Sun by Sting, it would sort on the "...". - you can change the Title Sort to "Nothing" to ensure it sorts properly.

**Title Sort - Songs**

Title Sort - Songs Maintenance allows you to set the sort definition for each song you enter. This is particularly helpful for songs that begin with a number, punctuation mark, parenthesis, etc. For example, if you had the song "(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction, it would sort on the "(" - you can change the Song Sort to "I Can't Get No...." to ensure it sorts properly.

## **How to Contact the Author**

If you have any suggestions, comments, questions, problems, or need to contact me, I can be reached at the following E-Mail address:

**[gmarkl@ixl.net](mailto:gmarkl@ixl.net)**

If you have a chance, please visit the MusicFile Home Page at:

**<http://www.ixl.net/~gmarkl/>**

## **Searching for an Item/Song**

### **Item Search**

To search for an Item, you must go to the Item Search form. You can access this from either the Main Menu or the Browse Menu.

When you first open the Item Search Form, a smaller Item Search Criteria form should open as well. This is where you specify what you are searching for. You can fill in as much information as you like, and MusicFile will return any matches it finds that meet the criteria you specified. You can also choose how you want the search results to be sorted. All searches are full-text searches.

You can print search results by pressing the "Print Results" button. You will be prompted for a Title where you might want to indicate what the search was. For example: "All live CD's by Eric Clapton" - this will be printed at the top of the search results report.

### **Song Search**

To search for a Song, you must go to the Song Search form. You can access this from either the Main Menu or the Browse Menu.

When you first open the Song Search Form, a smaller Song Search Criteria form should open as well. This is where you specify what you are searching for. You can fill in as much information as you like, and MusicFile will return any matches it finds that meet the criteria you specified. You can also choose how you want the search results to be sorted. All searches are full-text searches.

You can print search results by pressing the "Print Results" button. You will be prompted for a Title where you might want to indicate what the search was. For example: "All live Songs by Eric Clapton" - this will be printed at the top of the search results report.



