

Rail Data 1.0 Help Contents

Rail Data is a relational database system designed to assist you in keeping track of the great mass of information that most model railroaders, rail fans, rail historians, and other rail *nuts* seem to acquire. Regardless of whether you are a modeler (either freelance or prototype), a rail fan, an operator of a tourist railroad, a proprietor of a train store, an historian researching the impact that the Uintah Railway had on the state of Utah, or some combination of all of these, Rail Data can be a valuable aid to your activities.

The Contents lists Help topics available for Rail Data. Use the scroll bar to see entries not currently visible in the Help window.

To learn how to use Help, press F1 or choose How to Use Help from the Help menu.

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Motive Power

The Rail Data Motive Power database is used to store information about steam, diesel, and electric locomotives, as well as rail busses, Galloping Geese, etc.

To enter data into the Motive Power form, do the following:

1. Position the mouse on the Add button and click once. This moves the input cursor to the first field in the form, in this case the Road Name field.
2. Position the mouse cursor on the radio buttons and click once to make your selection. After making your selections, press the Tab key one or more times to move to the Road Name field (you will know you are in the field when it changes color).
2. Enter the data for the field and press the Tab key to move to the next field.
3. You will eventually come to the Date Acquired field. Data is entered into this field in a mm/dd/yy format (mm = month, dd = day, yy = year). In the case of a date like 1/1/93 the leading zeroes are required, so you would type 010193 (you do not enter the slashes).
4. When you come to the Manufacturer/Builder Name field, a new window will pop up showing you a list of either Model Manufacturers or Prototype Manufacturers (depending on whether you pressed the Model radio button or Prototype radio button). This list is built from the Manufacturers utility database.
5. To select a specific manufacturer, press the first letter of the manufacturers name (e.g., r for Rail Systems). Doing this will move the selection cursor to the first entry in the list that begins with the letter you pressed. Use the up and down arrow keys on your keyboard to move up/down in the list. When you find the manufacturer you want, press the Enter key on your keyboard. Doing so will place your selection in the Manufacturer/Builder Name field.
6. When you get to the Acquired From field, the process just described in step 5 will occur again, only this time the list will contain the 600+ train stores contained in the Rail Data Supplier database.
7. The final two fields should only be used if you have to replace items resulting from a casualty loss.
8. When you have completed entry of data into the form, you will notice that the **Edit** button now reads **Save** and the **Delete** button now reads **Cancel**. Clicking on the **Save** button stores your entries in the database. Clicking on **Cancel** throws your entries away.

Cars

The Rail Data Rolling Stock database is used to store information about freight cars, passenger cars, maintenance-of-way cars and other rolling stock.

To enter data into the Rolling Stock form, do the following:

1. Position the mouse on the Add button and click once. This moves the input cursor to the first field in the form, in this case the Road Name field.
2. Position the mouse cursor on the radio buttons and click once to make your selection. After making your selections, press the Tab key one or more times to move to the Road Name field (you will know you are in the field when it changes color).
2. Enter the data for the field and press the Tab key to move to the next field.
3. You will eventually come to the Date Acquired field. Data is entered into this field in a mm/dd/yy format (mm = month, dd = day, yy = year). In the case of a date like 1/1/93 the leading zeroes are required, so you would type 010193 (you do not enter the slashes).
4. When you come to the Manufacturer/Builder Name field, a new window will pop up showing you a list of either Model Manufacturers or Prototype Manufacturers (depending on whether you pressed the Model radio button or Prototype radio button). This list is built from the Manufacturers utility database.
5. To select a specific manufacturer, press the first letter of the manufacturer's name (e.g., r for Rail Systems). Doing this will move the selection cursor to the first entry in the list that begins with the letter you pressed. Use the up and down arrow keys on your keyboard to move up/down in the list. When you find the manufacturer you want, press the Enter key on your keyboard. Doing so will place your selection in the Manufacturer/Builder Name field.
6. When you get to the Acquired From field, the process just described in step 5 will occur again, only this time the list will contain the 600+ train stores contained in the Rail Data Supplier database.
7. The final two fields should only be used if you have to replace items resulting from a casualty loss.
8. When you have completed entry of data into the form, you will notice that the **Edit** button now reads **Save** and the **Delete** button now reads **Cancel**. Clicking on the **Save** button stores your entries in the database. Clicking on **Cancel** throws your entries away.

Buildings & Structures

The Rail Data Buildings & Structures database is used to store information about the man-made architectural features that are found along the railroad right-of-way. Use this database to catalog the structures that you have/want on your model railroad as well as the ones have particular significance to you.

To enter data into the Buildings & Structures form, do the following:

1. Position the mouse on the Add button and click once. This moves the input cursor to the first field in the form, in this case the Description field.
2. Position the mouse cursor on the radio buttons and click once to make your selection. After making your selections, press the Tab key one or more times to move to the Description field (you will know you are in the field when it changes color).
2. Enter the data for the field and press the Tab key to move to the next field.
3. You will eventually come to the Date Acquired field. Data is entered into this field in a mm/dd/yy format (mm = month, dd = day, yy = year). In the case of a date like 1/1/93 the leading zeroes are required, so you would type 010193 (you do not enter the slashes).
4. When you come to the Manufacturer/Builder Name field, a new window will pop up showing you a list of either Model Manufacturers or Prototype Manufacturers (depending on whether you pressed the Model radio button or Prototype radio button). This list is built from the Manufacturers utility database.
5. To select a specific manufacturer, press the first letter of the manufacturers name (e.g., r for Rail Systems). Doing this will move the selection cursor to the first entry in the list that begins with the letter you pressed. Use the up and down arrow keys on your keyboard to move up/down in the list. When you find the manufacturer you want, press the Enter key on your keyboard. Doing so will place your selection in the Manufacturer/Builder Name field.
6. When you get to the Acquired From field, the process just described in step 5 will occur again, only this time the list will contain the 600+ train stores contained in the Rail Data Supplier database.
7. The final two fields should only be used if you have to replace items resulting from a casualty loss.
8. When you have completed entry of data into the form, you will notice that the **Edit** button now reads **Save** and the **Delete** button now reads **Cancel**. Clicking on the **Save** button stores your entries in the database. Clicking on **Cancel** throws your entries away.

Parts & Supplies

The Rail Data Parts & Supplies database is used to store information about the materials that you keep on hand to construct and/or repair your locomotives, cars, buildings, etc.

To enter data into the Parts & Supplies form, do the following:

1. Position the mouse on the Add button and click once. This moves the input cursor to the first field in the form, in this case the Description field.
2. Position the mouse cursor on the radio buttons and click once to make your selection. After making your selections, press the Tab key one or more times to move to the Description field (you will know you are in the field when it changes color).
2. Enter the data for the field and press the Tab key to move to the next field.
3. You will eventually come to the Date Acquired field. Data is entered into this field in a mm/dd/yy format (mm = month, dd = day, yy = year). In the case of a date like 1/1/93 the leading zeroes are required, so you would type 010193 (you do not enter the slashes).
4. When you come to the Manufacturer/Builder Name field, a new window will pop up showing you a list of either Model Manufacturers or Prototype Manufacturers (depending on whether you pressed the Model radio button or Prototype radio button). This list is built from the Manufacturers utility database.
5. To select a specific manufacturer, press the first letter of the manufacturer's name (e.g., r for Rail Systems). Doing this will move the selection cursor to the first entry in the list that begins with the letter you pressed. Use the up and down arrow keys on your keyboard to move up/down in the list. When you find the manufacturer you want, press the Enter key on your keyboard. Doing so will place your selection in the Manufacturer/Builder Name field.
6. When you get to the Acquired From field, the process just described in step 5 will occur again, only this time the list will contain the 600+ train stores contained in the Rail Data Supplier database.
7. The final two fields should only be used if you have to replace items resulting from a casualty loss.
8. When you have completed entry of data into the form, you will notice that the **Edit** button now reads **Save** and the **Delete** button now reads **Cancel**. Clicking on the **Save** button stores your entries in the database. Clicking on **Cancel** throws your entries away.

Photographs & Slides

The Rail Data Photographs & Slides database is used to catalog the information about the slides and photographs that you take or acquire.

To enter data into the Photographs & Slides form, do the following:

1. Position the mouse on the Add button and click once. This moves the input cursor to the first field in the form, in this case the Photo Subject field.
2. Position the mouse cursor on the radio buttons and click once to make your selection. After making your selections, press the Tab key one or more times to move to the Photo Subject field (you will know you are in the field when it changes color).
2. Enter the data for the field and press the Tab key to move to the next field.
3. You will eventually come to the Date Acquired field. Data is entered into this field in a mm/dd/yy format (mm = month, dd = day, yy = year). In the case of a date like 1/1/93 the leading zeroes are required, so you would type 010193 (you do not enter the slashes).
4. The data fields shown on the lower half of the Photographs & Slides screen are provided so that you can catalog information about photographs contained in books and magazines. Entering information in this field will solve the age-old problem of I know that I have seen a picture of XYZ Railroads SD88 number 11897 in one of my magazines. I just dont remember which one.
5. The final two fields should only be used if you have to replace items resulting from a casualty loss.
6. When you have completed entry of data into the form, you will notice that the **Edit** button now reads **Save** and the **Delete** button now reads **Cancel**. Clicking on the **Save** button stores your entries in the database. Clicking on **Cancel** throws your entries away.

Books & Magazines

The Rail Data Books & Magazines database is used to store information about that overwhelming mass of published material that we all tend to acquire.

To enter data into the Books & Magazines form, do the following:

1. Position the mouse on the Add button and click once. This moves the input cursor to the first field in the form, in this case the Subject field.
2. Position the mouse cursor on the radio buttons and click once to make your selection. After making your selections, press the Tab key one or more times to move to the Subject field (you will know you are in the field when it changes color).
2. Enter the data for the field and press the Tab key to move to the next field.
3. You will eventually come to the Date Acquired field. Data is entered into this field in a mm/dd/yy format (mm = month, dd = day, yy = year). In the case of a date like 1/1/93 the leading zeroes are required, so you would type 010193 (you do not enter the slashes).
4. When you come to the Publisher field, a new window will pop up showing you a list of book and magazine publishers built from the data in the Publishers utility database.
5. To select a specific publisher, press the first letter of the manufacturers name (e.g., s for Sundance Publications, Ltd.). Doing this will move the selection cursor to the first entry in the list that begins with the letter you pressed. Use the up and down arrow keys on your keyboard to move up/down in the list. When you find the publisher you want, press the Enter key on your keyboard. Doing so will place your selection in the Publisher field.
6. When you get to the Acquired From field, the process just described in step 5 will occur again, only this time the list will contain the 600+ train stores contained in the Rail Data Supplier database.
7. The final two fields should only be used if you have to replace items resulting from a casualty loss.
8. When you have completed entry of data into the form, you will notice that the **Edit** button now reads **Save** and the **Delete** button now reads **Cancel**. Clicking on the **Save** button stores your entries in the database. Clicking on **Cancel** throws your entries away.

Other Collectibles

The Rail Data Other Collectibles database is used to store information on railroad related items that do not belong in any of the other databases. Things like golden spikes, silver track mauls, jars of diesel smoke, etc.

To enter data into the Other Collectibles form, do the following:

1. Position the mouse on the Add button and click once. This moves the input cursor to the first field in the form, in this case the Item field.
2. Position the mouse cursor on the radio buttons and click once to make your selection. After making your selections, press the Tab key one or more times to move to the Item field (you will know you are in the field when it changes color).
2. Enter the data for the field and press the Tab key to move to the next field.
3. You will eventually come to the Date Acquired field. Data is entered into this field in a mm/dd/yy format (mm = month, dd = day, yy = year). In the case of a date like 1/1/93 the leading zeroes are required, so you would type 010193 (you do not enter the slashes).
4. When you come to the Background Information field, feel free to enter as little or as much information as you wish. Although the field appears to contain only 7 lines, it is actually a scrollable field. If you were so inclined, you could type the entire text of War and Peace in the field and Rail Data would accept it.
5. The final two fields should only be used if you have to replace items resulting from a casualty loss.
6. When you have completed entry of data into the form, you will notice that the **Edit** button now reads **Save** and the **Delete** button now reads **Cancel**. Clicking on the **Save** button stores your entries in the database. Clicking on **Cancel** throws your entries away.

Video & Movies

The Rail Data Video & Movie database is used to store information on railroad films and videos. Whether its a video that you made yourself or a film that you purchased, all the information necessary to document it can be entered.

To enter data into the Video & Movies form, do the following:

1. Position the mouse on the Add button and click once. This moves the input cursor to the first field in the form, in this case the Title field.
2. Position the mouse cursor on the radio buttons and click once to make your selection. After making your selections, click in the Title field and press the Home key. Enter the data for the field and press the Tab key to move to the next field.
3. You will eventually come to the Date Acquired field. Data is entered into this field in a mm/dd/yy format (mm = month, dd = day, yy = year). In the case of a date like 1/1/93 the leading zeroes are required, so you would type 010193 (you do not enter the slashes).
4. When you come to the Description of Content field, feel free to enter as little or as much information as you wish. Although the field appears to contain only 7 lines, it is actually a scrollable field. If you were so inclined, you could type the entire text of War and Peace in the field and Rail Data would accept it.
5. The final two fields should only be used if you have to replace items resulting from a casualty loss.
6. When you have completed entry of data into the form, you will notice that the **Edit** button now reads **Save** and the **Delete** button now reads **Cancel**. Clicking on the **Save** button stores your entries in the database. Clicking on **Cancel** throws your entries away.

Utility Databases

Rail Data uses five utility databases to reduce the amount of typing that you must do to enter information into the system. Take a moment to look at the utility databases and you will discover that each database contains a wealth of information. The utility databases are:

Car Categories - Passenger, Box, Flat, Gondola, Tank, etc.

Car Types - Coach, Pullman, Sleeper, Observation, etc.

Manufacturers - Names, addresses, phone numbers, etc. of manufacturers

Suppliers - Names, addresses, phone numbers, etc., of all of the train stores in the back of your favorite RR magazines

Publishers - Names, addresses, phone numbers, etc., of RR-related publishers.

As with the main Rail Data database, you can add, change, delete, search and report on the information contained in the utility databases.

IMPORTANT

When you acquire an item that you want to record in the Rail Data database, check the Suppliers database to ensure that the source from which you obtained the item is in the Supplier database. If not, enter their information before you enter the item into the main database. Similarly, check the Manufacturer and/or Publisher database to be sure that the manufacturer of the item is in the database (or the publisher in the case of a book or magazine).

ID Numbers

The ID number field, which appears in each of the seven information category screens gives you the power to really make Rail Data hum. With the ID number, you can establish explicit relationships between any group of records stored in the database. To illustrate the power and flexibility of the ID number, examples of its potential use are shown below.

Kitbashing

When you get ready to start your next locomotive kitbashing project, keep track of the costs involved using Rail Data. Create a record in the Motive Power database and assign it an ID number. Base the ID number on the kind of locomotive that you are planning to build. For example, you decide to build a model of D&RGW SD-40T2 #5348. You assign it an ID number of **DRGW-SD-40T2-5348**. Now, go to your electronic parts cabinet (i.e., the Parts & Supplies database of Rail Data), locate the specific parts you need and insert **DRGW-SD-40T2-5348** in the ID number field for each part. If there are parts that you need but do not have, enter them into the Parts & Supplies database and mark them as **Wanted** items (Then print your want list and head for the train store.) and assign the same ID number to them. Once you complete the kitbash, generate an ID # Report for **DRGW-SD-40T2-5348**, and you will then have a permanent record of exactly what you did to the engine and what it cost.

Historical Research

Rail Data actually had its genesis in this type of project. The author of Rail Data gets particularly weak in the knees (his friends say weak in the head) when he is in the presence of Denver & Rio Grande Western steam locomotives, especially Class C16 narrow gauge locomotives. He combined his passion for D&RGW steam with his background in the computer industry to create a massive database that tracked the life history of each steam locomotive that the D&RGW owned. When a locomotive first appeared on the Rio Grande roster, it was assigned an ID number based on the initials of the owning company, the year the engine was acquired, and the engine's original road number. For example, in 1881, locomotive number 401 was purchased from Baldwin by the D&RG. This engine was entered into the database with the following ID number: D&RG-1881-401. Another record was entered into the database commemorating the locomotive's 1889 conversion to standard gauge and number change to 803. Yet another record was entered into the database to mark the engine's conversion back to narrow gauge (& another number change) in 1900. A final record was entered into the database to represent 1924, when the engine was re-classified (C19) and re-numbered (345) as a result of the D&RG's reincarnation as the D&RGW. This process was repeated for each steam locomotive that the D&RGW ever owned.

All of the above was done in Rail Data's Motive Power database. Photographs, books, magazines, etc. that featured information about one of the engines was entered into the appropriate Rail Data database and the locomotive's ID number was assigned to the related entries.

System Menu Commands

Calculator - Displays a 4-function calculator on the screen for your use

Calendar/Diary - Displays a combination Calendar and Diary that you can use to plan for train shows, rail fan trips, etc.

Puzzle - Just a little entertainment

Environment - Displays/hides the status bar at the bottom of the screen. When the status bar is on, the Clock option inserts/removes a clock from the status bar.

Quit - Exits from Rail Data and returns to the Program Manager

Edit Menu Commands

Undo - Un-does your last entry in a data entry screen

Redo - Re-does what you last un-did.

Cut - Cuts selected text and places it on the Windows clipboard

Copy - Copies the selected text to the Windows clipboard

Paste - Inserts the contents of the Windows clipboard into the currently selected field

Clear - Clears the currently selected field

Database Menu Commands

Motive Power - Selects the Rail Data Motive Power (i.e., engines) database and functions

Rolling Stock - Selects the Rail Data Rolling Stock (i.e., cars) database and functions

Buildings & Structures - Selects the Rail Data Buildings and Structures database and functions

Parts & Supplies - Selects the Rail Data Parts and Supplies database and functions

Photographs & Slides - Selects the Rail Data Photographs and Slides database and functions

Books & Magazines - Selects the Rail Data Books and Magazines database and functions

Other Collectibles - Selects the Rail Data Other Collectibles database and functions

Utility Databases - Activates a drop-down menu from which you can select one of the Utility Databases (Car Categories, Car Types, Manufacturers, Suppliers, and Publishers)

Pack Database - Releases the space used by records that have been deleted from the database

Fix Databases - Re-creates the indexes used by Rail Data to access records in the databases.

Order Menu Commands

Options on this menu depend on the specific database with which you are working. These options allow you to determine the order in which database records will appear on the screen.

Reports Menu Commands

ID # Report - Generates and prints an ID # report for one or more ID numbers.

Insurance Report - Generates and prints an Insurance report that documents costs incurred resulting from what the insurance industry calls a casualty loss.

Additional reports will appear on this menu depending on the specific database you are using.

Control Buttons

A row of rectangular buttons are arrayed across the bottom of the data form. These buttons control the actions that you can perform. These actions are:

Top - Move to the first record in the database,

Prev - Move to the record that immediately precedes the one on the screen,

Next - Move to the record that immediately follows the one on the screen,

End - Move to the last record in the database,

Locate - Find a particular record,

Add - Clear the form of all data and move to the first field so that you can enter new information,

Edit - Do not clear the form of all data and move to the first field so that you can change the existing information,

Delete - Delete this record from the database,

Print - Print this record,

Close - Close this screen and return to the opening display.

Located somewhere on the screen are several small circles with words (e.g., Have, Want, Prototype, etc.) next to them, surrounded by boxes. These circles are called radio buttons because that is the way that they function (i.e., you can select the Have button or the Want button, but not both).

