

## LEARNING ABOUT MAIL MERGE: PART I

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Mail Merge is a time saving device, but the title is a bit confusing. It sounds like it can only be used for mail purposes. In fact, you can use Mail Merge to create many different kinds of documents. A typical scenario might be as follows: You have a list of names and you would write a letter to each person on the list, mentioning his or her name in the letter. If you have 20 names you will have to type the letter 20 times, putting the proper name in each letter. Or, at very least, use one letter and have to type the names into each letter separately. By using Mail Merge, you type the letter once and enter a piece of code where the names will appear. Run the Mail Merge in the program, and the program will pick each name in sequence when it types the letter, entering it automatically. Sounds pretty neat. So let's learn how to Mail Merge.

Your instructor will have gone over some examples of mail merge by now, so we will concentrate on creating a data source and a simple experiment with it. Pretend we have a class of three students (what a dream). From this list of students we can create name tags for each student, a letter to send home for each student, and mailing labels for each student – all using Mail Merge. The program we will use to do all of this is Microsoft Word 7. You will see how easy this is, so let's get going.

First we will have to decide what information we want for each student. Here's what we will need to set up our little database of information:

- Last Name
- First Name
- Nickname
- Street Address
- City
- State
- Zip Code
- Hobby
- Grade (A, B, C, D, E)

We'll do the name tag document first, but before we can do this we will have to set up our little database from which the program will draw the information.

- Step 1      Start Windows 95 and from the Program option on the Start menu, select the Microsoft Word to start the program.
- Step 2      Click on Tools, on the Menu bar and then click on *Mail Merge* on the drop-down menu that appears.
- Step 3      On the *Mail Merge Helper* dialog box that appears, click on the *Create* button, under the *Main Document*

option.

- Step 4 On the little drop-down menu that appears, click on *Mailing Labels*.
- Step 5 Click on the *Active Window* button on the box that appears. Now you are back to the Mail Merge Helper window and the type of document is listed on this window.

Now we will create our Data Source, actually the database of heading information. We will use the same Mail Merge Helper dialog, so don't close it down.

- Step 6 Click on the *Get Data* button that appears under the *Data Source* option.
- Step 7 Click on the *Create Data Source* option, on the drop-down menu.
- Step 8 In the *Create Data Source* dialog box that appears, you can delete or add any titles you don't want or do want in your mail merge source.
- Step 9 Click on the word *title* to highlight it, if it is not already highlighted.
- Step 10 Click on the *Remove Field* button, to delete the *title* field. We are not going to need this heading.
- Step 11 Now delete the following fields from the remaining list, using the same method just described:

*JobTitle*  
*Company*  
*Address1*  
*Address2*  
*Country*  
*HomePhone*  
*WorkPhone*

The only fields left in the windows should be: *FirstName*, *LastName*, *City*, *State*. Notice that these are entered as a single word. Our next task will be to add some new *Field Names* or headings to this list, making a complete list we can use in our mail merge. We will do this in the next part of this lesson.

Do not shut off your computer. You will have to pick up at this point in the next part of this lesson.