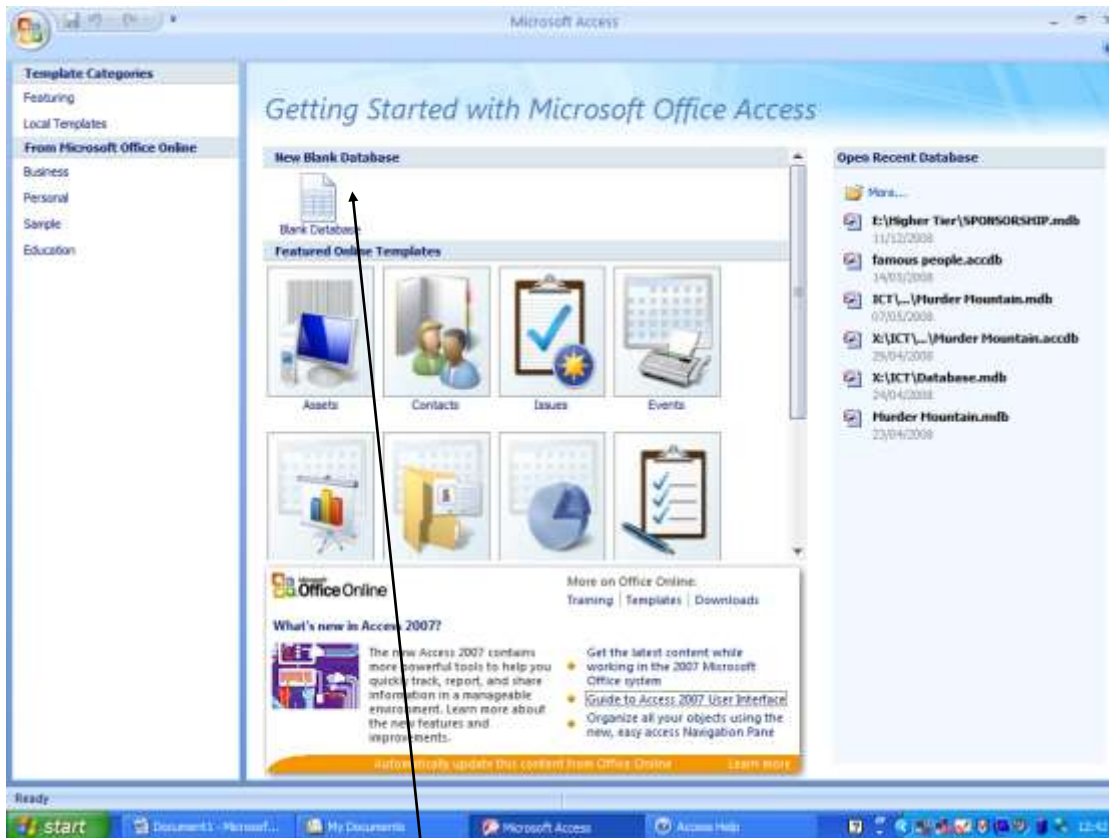
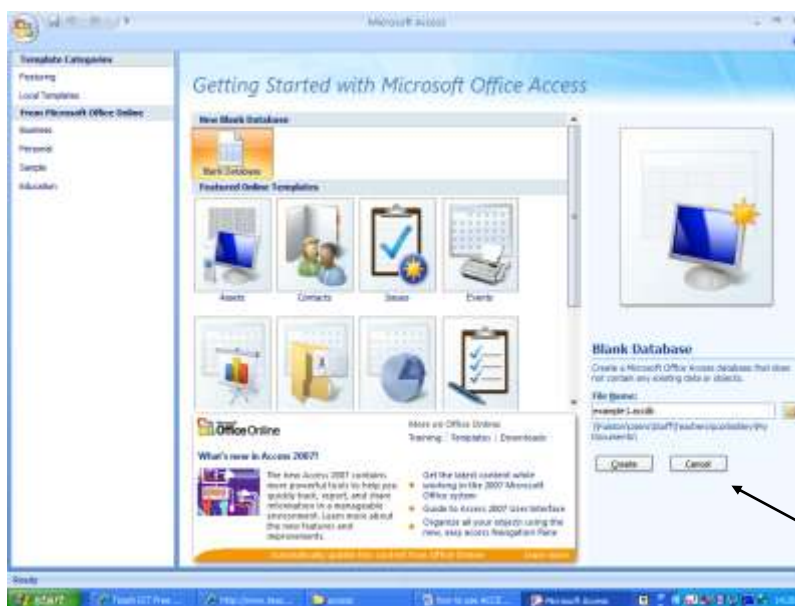


ACCESS – the basics

Task 1 – create a new folder called 'ACCESS tasks' and save it in your area.

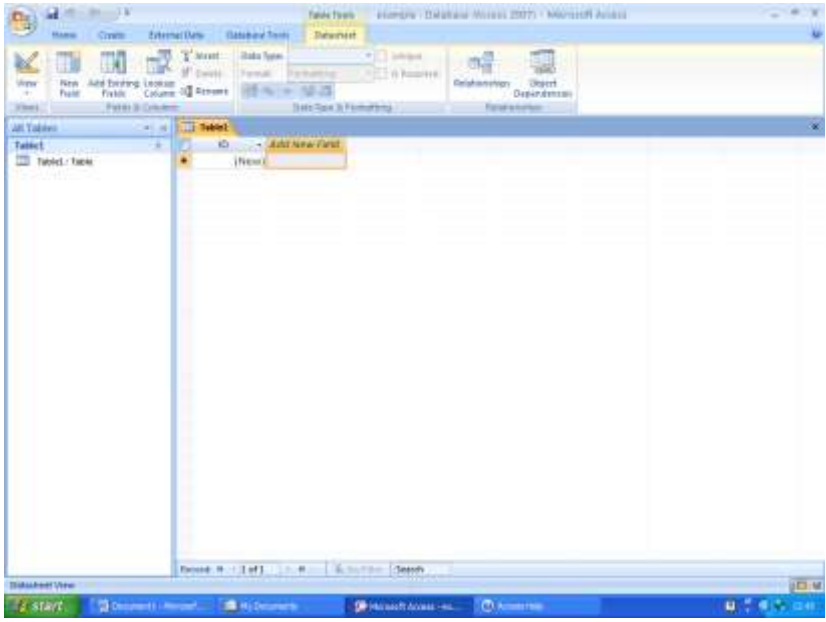


When you open Access from the start menu you will see this page. You should select New Blank Database.



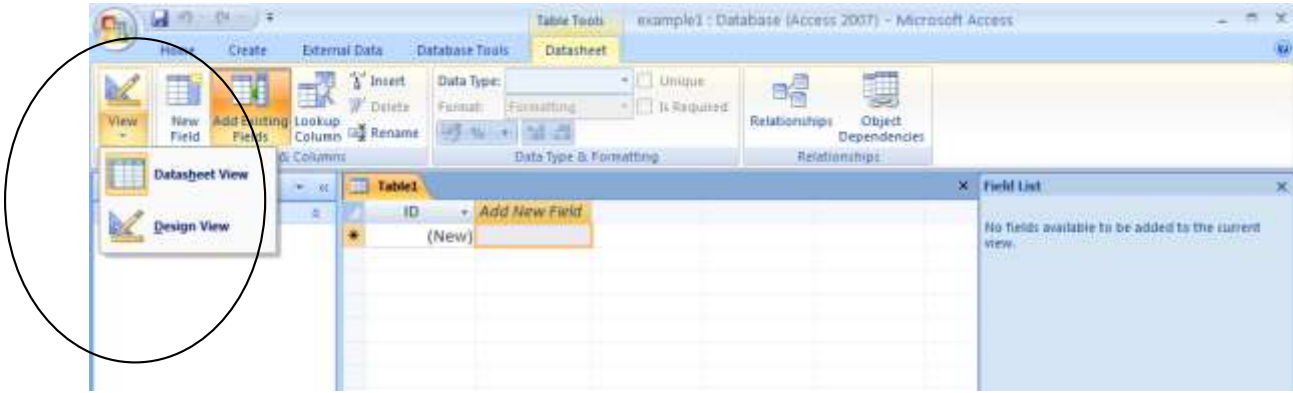
You will need to give your database a name – choose 'example' for this task and click on the folder icon so that you can select the folder you created earlier to store it in.

then select 'create'



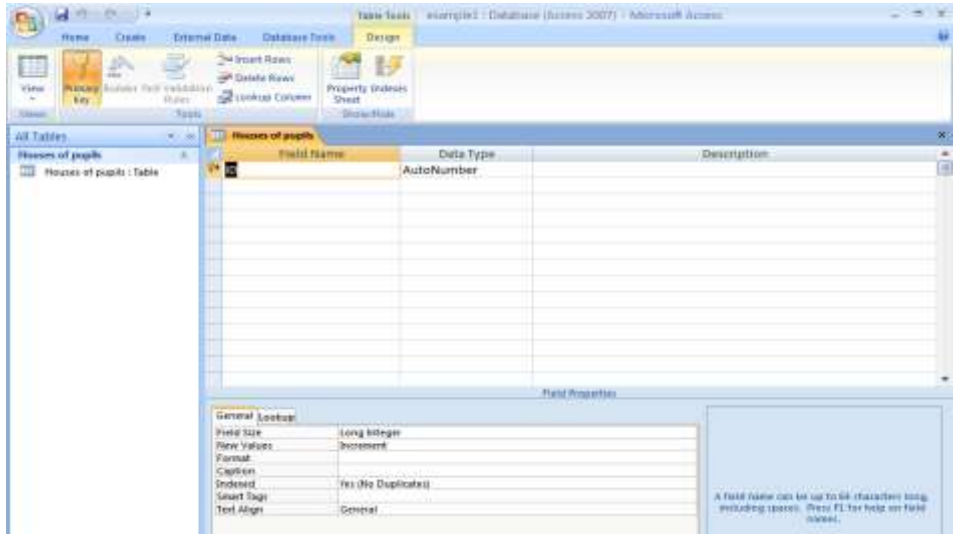
This page should appear. It is a table, a table should contain a collection of data about specific topic. It is the foundation to the database.

Next we need to change to a design view:



It will ask you to name the table, consider the data it will hold and give it an appropriate name. In this case it will be 'Houses of pupils'.

The following screen should appear:



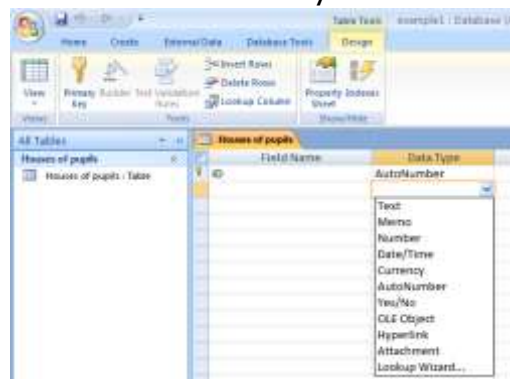
Tables organise data into columns (called fields) and rows (called records). In the field name column type the following, moving down as you add each heading. Do not alter the first field which is called ID and has been assigned as the primary key (more about this later).

- Forename
- Surname
- Gender
- Age
- House

DATA TYPES

Once the fields have been set up, we must set up the data type for each field. The data type determines what type of data each field can hold, for example text or number. You now need to choose the data type for each of the fields you have set up.

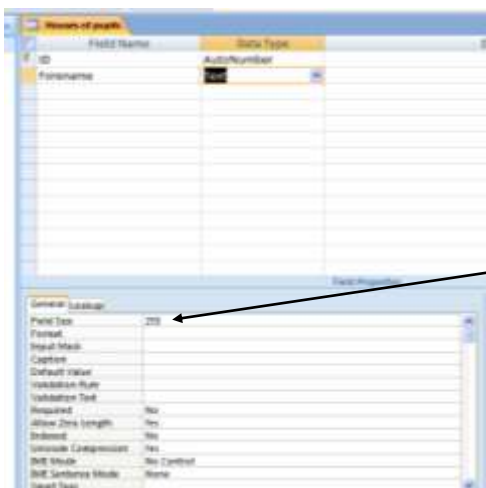
Use the drop down list to make your selection.



If text is chosen, this includes numbers and letters e.g. an address would contain both so text is the most appropriate option. Telephone numbers are more complicated! They need to be text because otherwise if they are set to number the 0 at the beginning is taken away.

FIELD SIZES

These are used to set the maximum number of characters that can be entered into a field. This helps reduce the amount of storage space required to save the database.



Work out the maximum amount of characters for the fields, remember that spaces count as characters. The default size is 255 characters.

Alter this to suit your data.

The values you have chosen do not need to match my suggestions shown below exactly but should be similar:

Field Name	Field size
• Forename	15
• Surname	25
• Gender	1
• Age	2
• House	10

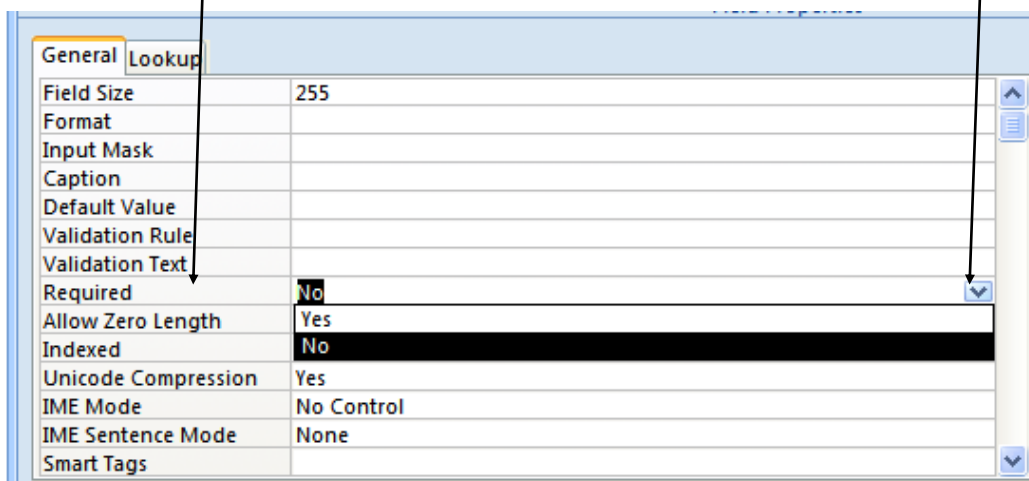
PRIMARY KEY

In a database it is very important to set a primary key. A primary key is just simply a field that will uniquely identify a record. Example: if we are thinking about a school database, each pupil in the school will be a record. To identify a pupil it is not possible to use any of the fields we have set in our database already, as there is no single field that will identify a pupil. We cannot use forename or surname, as often more than one pupil has the same. An office number is used to identify each pupil, it is unique to each pupil.

This is all a primary key is.

VALIDATION

We can ensure that a field is not left blank when entering data by making it a required field. Select the drop down box by clicking on the arrow in the required field and choose 'yes'. This will mean that data has to be entered.

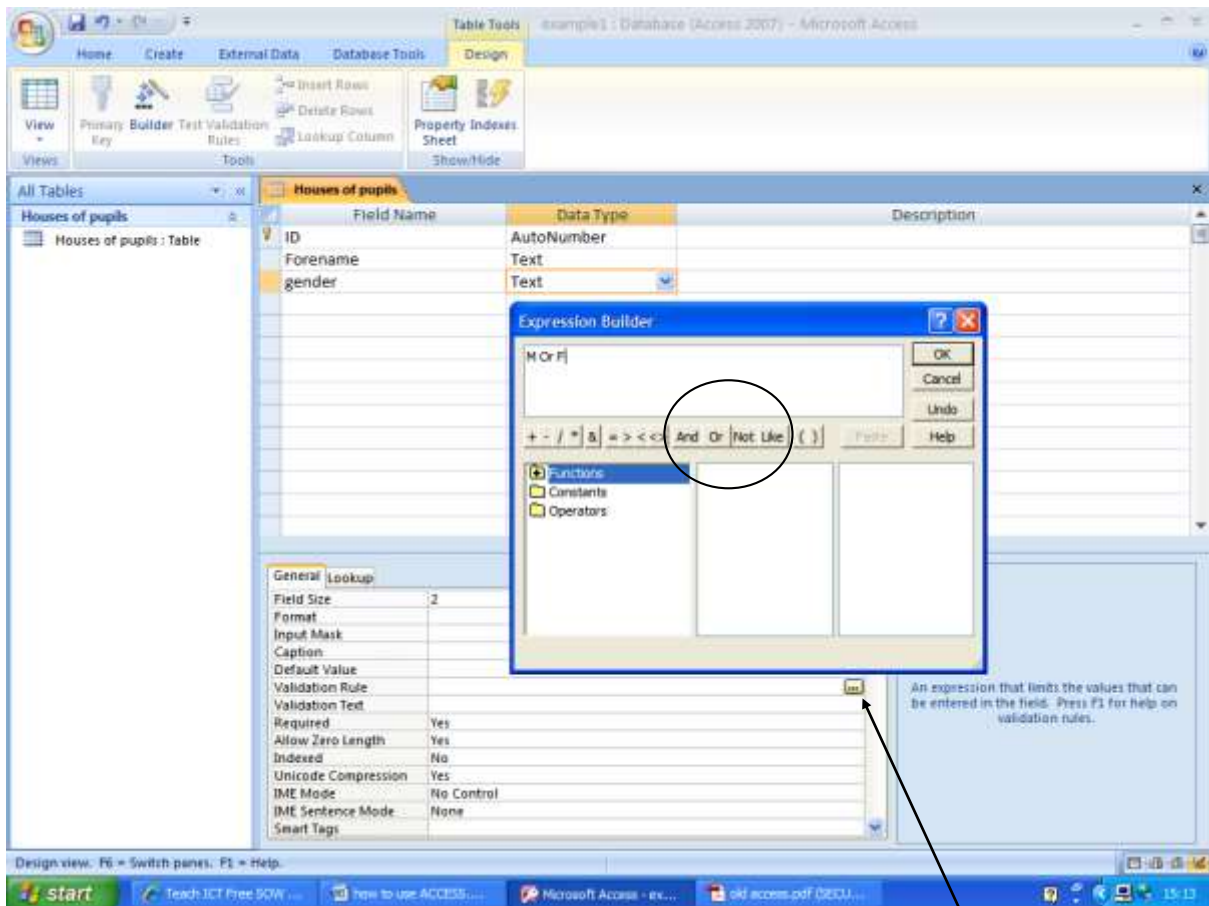


The screenshot shows a dialog box with two tabs: 'General' and 'Lookup'. The 'General' tab is active. The 'Required' property is currently set to 'No'. A dropdown arrow is visible next to the 'No' value. A black arrow points from the text 'Select the drop down box by clicking on the arrow in the required field' to this dropdown arrow. Another black arrow points from the text 'and choose 'yes'' to the 'Yes' option in the dropdown menu. The 'Required' dropdown menu is open, showing 'No' (selected), 'Yes', and 'No' (highlighted). Other properties include Field Size (255), Allow Zero Length (Yes), Indexed (No), and Unicode Compression (Yes).

Property	Value
Field Size	255
Format	
Input Mask	
Caption	
Default Value	
Validation Rule	
Validation Text	
Required	No
Allow Zero Length	Yes
Indexed	No
Unicode Compression	Yes
IME Mode	No Control
IME Sentence Mode	None
Smart Tags	

More validation:

In order to prevent mistakes in entering data, we can enter some more validation. You have a field called gender which you have set a field size of either 1 or 6, so that you can enter M or F or Male or Female, either way is fine.



You must select validation rule and click on the box with 3 dots in it. This will pop up the expression builder box, here you must enter the choices you will accept, either M or F, or Male or Female, but you must use the buttons in the box to add the word OR. Once you are done click OK. Access will now only let you enter the choices that you have stated. You may wish to add validation text to give an appropriate error message to the person entering data. For example – Only enter M or F, thank you.

Now create a database showing all your classmates and their houses. You need to do this in Datasheet view.