

- Home
- Documentation
- Downloads
- Demo
- Tracker
- Development
- Translation
- Moodle.net
- Search

You are here

Using Database

Main page ► Managing a Moodle course ► Activities ► Database activity ► **Using Database**
Database activity

- Database activity settings
- Building Database
- Database templates
- **Using Database**
- Database activity FAQ

Contents

- 1 Views
 - 1.1 View list
 - 1.2 View single
 - 1.3 Add comment
 - 1.4 Rate entries
- 2 Adding an entry
 - 2.1 Deleting multiple entries
- 3 Automatically linking database entries
- 4 Approving and undoing approval of entries
- 5 Importing many entries
- 6 Exporting entries
- 7 Enabling an RSS feed of recently added entries
- 8 Exporting to an external portfolio
- 9 Example databases
- 10 Creative uses
- 11 See also


Views

View list

The list view shows multiple entries, possibly in a more abbreviated form to ensure all the information fits. You may use the controls at the bottom of the screen to search and sort the contents.

- *View single*: one item at a time
- *View list*: several items at a time (number is user defined)
- *Add entry*: add an item to the database
- *Search*: search the entries

[View list](#) [View single](#) [Search](#) [Add entry](#)

Page: [\(Previous\)](#) [1](#) [2](#) [3](#) [4](#)
weblink: [Lake District site](#)
picture: 

Page: [\(Previous\)](#) [1](#) [2](#) [3](#) [4](#)

View single

Alternatively, you may view only one entry at a time. This might allow you to view more detailed information than the list view.

Add comment

If comments have been enabled, you may add a comment.

Rate entries

If ratings have been enabled, and made viewable, by the database editor, you may grade other database entries, and view these ratings.

Adding an entry

Go to the "Add entry" tab and fill in the form.

Deleting multiple entries

In List view, a checkbox will appear next to each entry. Select the entries you wish to delete and click the 'Delete selected' button. Alternatively, click the 'Select all' and the 'Delete all' buttons to delete all entries. A warning message will appear asking you to verify what you wish to delete.

Automatically linking database entries

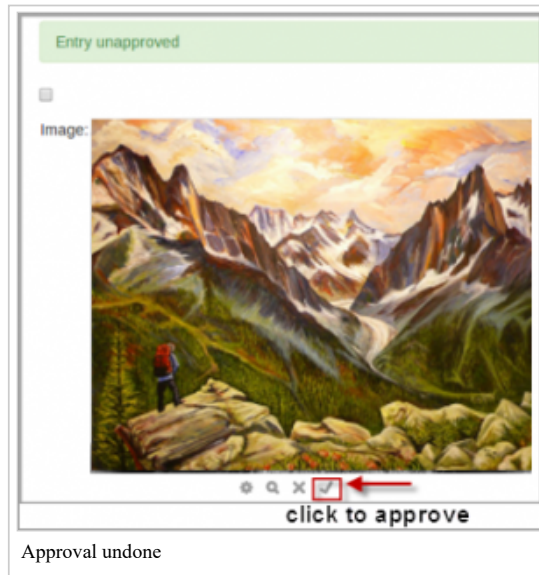
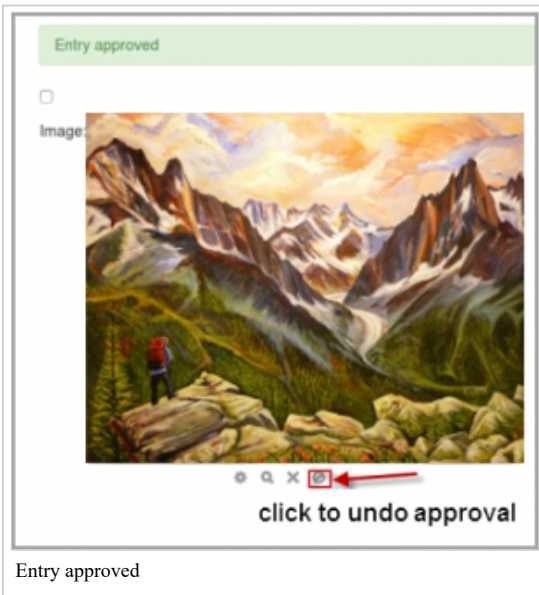
If the Database auto-linking filter is enabled, any entries in a database will be automatically linked to where the concept words and/or phrases appear within the same course. This includes forum postings, internal resources, week summaries etc.

Note: If you do not want particular text to be linked (in a forum posting, say) then you should add `<nolink>` and `</nolink>` tags around the text. Alternatively the filter can be disabled for a particular activity.

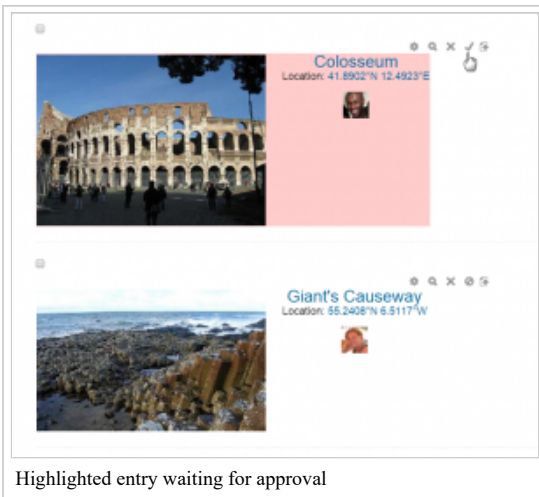
Approving and undoing approval of entries

If, during database set up, 'Approval required' was set to 'Yes' then a teacher can approve an entry by clicking on the tick/checkmark icon.

Once an entry has been approved, it is possible to undo the approval by clicking the circle with a line through it icon.

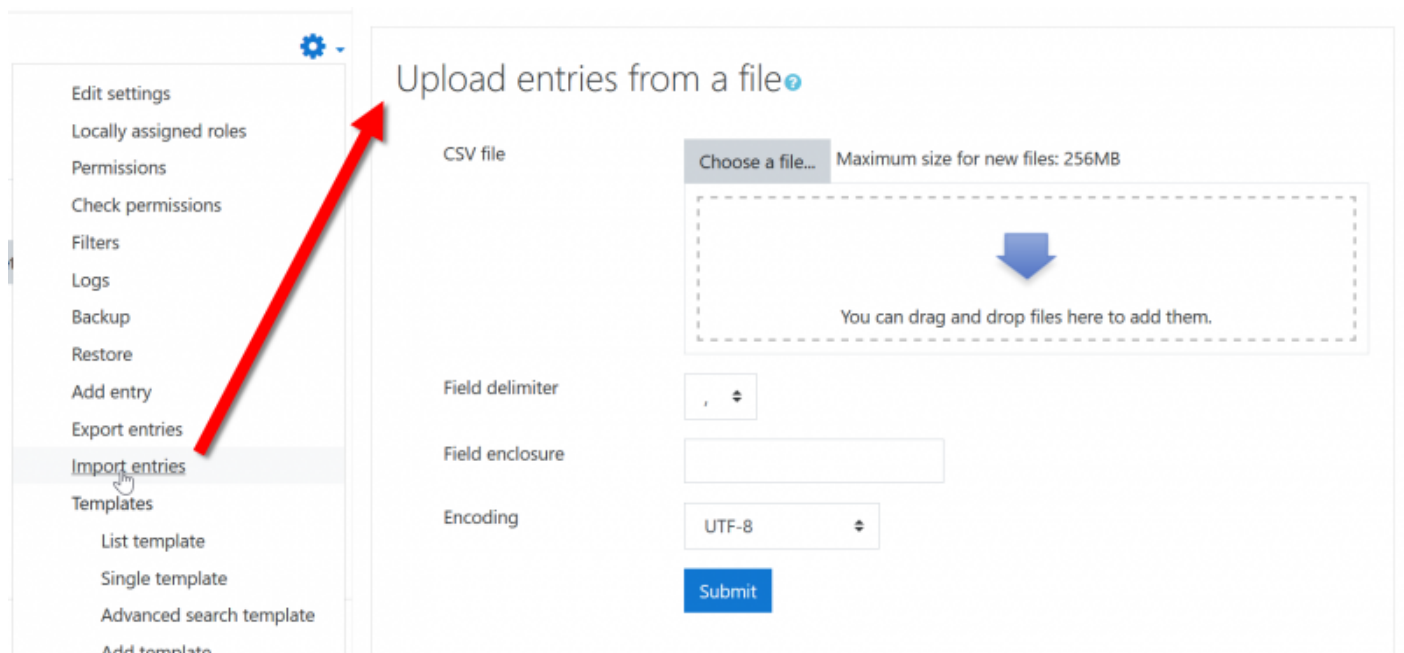


Entries waiting for approval may be highlighted for the teacher and the user who added the entry.



Importing many entries

You can import entries via a CSV file if you click the "Import entries" link under 'Database activity administration' in the Administration block of your course. CSV means Comma-Separated-Values and is a common format for text interchange.



The easiest way to determine the format of the text file is to manually add an entry to the database and then export it. The resulting export text file may then be edited and used for importing entries. Here's a sample of what a very simple file will look like.

```
testtest - Notepad
File Edit Format View Help
error_text,error_correction
green,john
```

The expected file format is a plain text file with a list of field names as the first record. The data then follows, one record per line.

The field delimiter defaults to a comma character and the field enclosure is not set by default (field enclosures are characters that surround each field in each record).

Records should be delimited by new lines (usually generated by pressing RETURN or ENTER in your text editor). Tabs can be specified using \t and newlines by \n.

Sample file:

```
name,height,weight
Kai,180cm,80kg
Kim,170cm,60kg
Koo,190cm,20kg
```

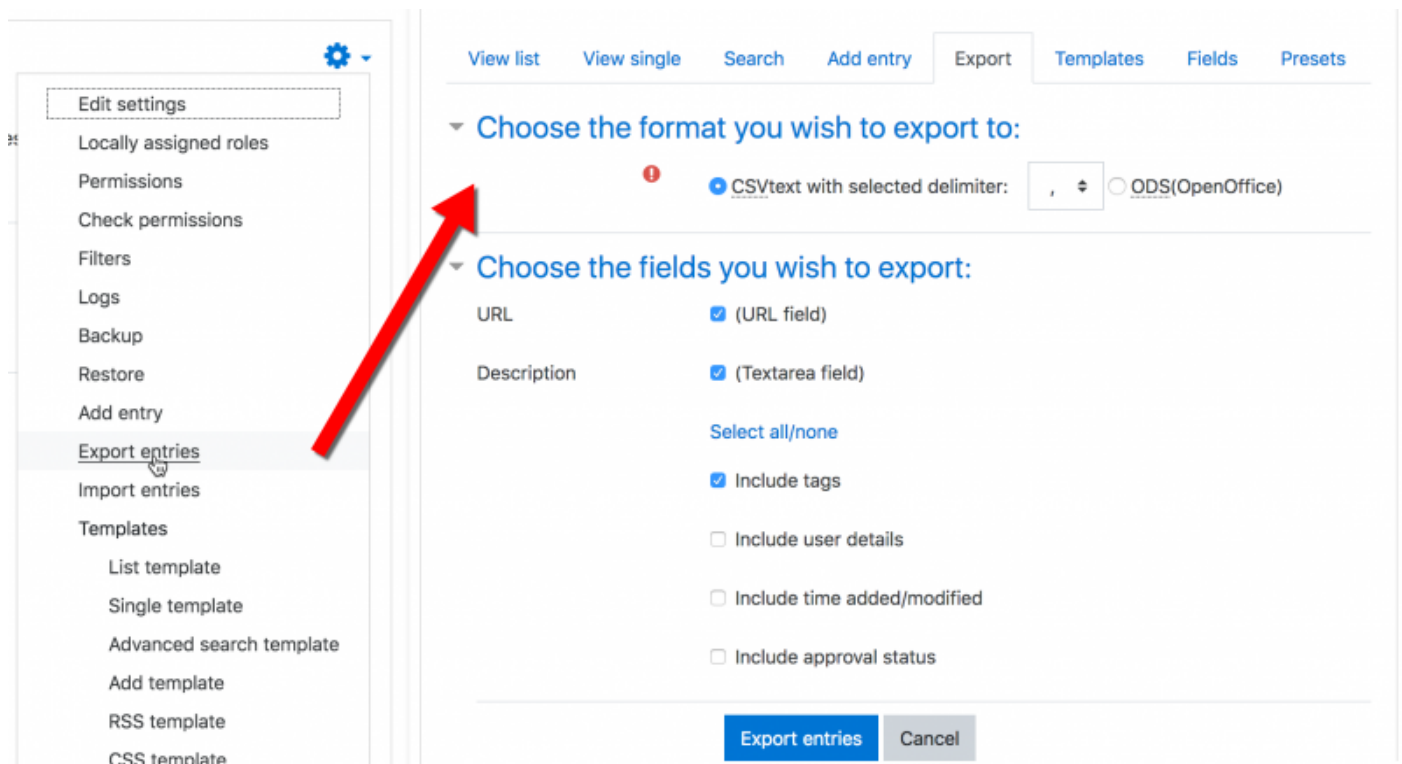
Note: Certain field types may not be supported.

Do not put spaces after your commas or upload will fail!

After upload page import.php comes back blank if it failed. If successful you'll read a message like, "1 entries saved".

Exporting entries

You can export entries either in CSV (comma separated values) or ODS (OpenOffice Calc) formats by clicking the tab at the top or by clicking the "Export entries" link under 'Database activity administration' in the Administration block in your course. (Both CSV and ODS formats can be opened with MS Excel.)



When using the CSV format, the user can select either the comma, semicolon, or tab to separate the fields. The selection of the proper character is important. If users select to use a comma to separate the fields and some of the fields contain data with commas then the number of columns is going to be misaligned and likely cause confusion.

Users can select which fields from the database they wish to have exported. By default, all fields are checked to be included. Choose the fields that you wish to have included in the export.

Once the export type and the fields to be exported have been selected, clicking on the Export entries pushbutton will generate the file. The user will usually have the option of either opening or saving the file.

For information on converting the date export (and import) format, see the discussion Standard Database Module - Dates.

Enabling an RSS feed of recently added entries

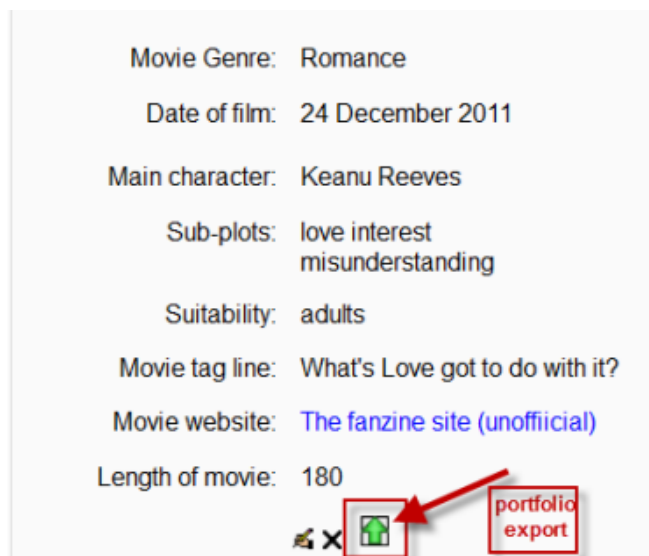
To enable an RSS feed from a database activity, an administrator must first enable RSS feeds for database activities across the whole site as described in RSS feeds settings. A section called 'RSS' will then appear on the edit settings page of the database activity.

1. Edit the database activity settings and set the number of entries in the RSS feed e.g. 5.
2. Check that the RSS template includes the required fields.
3. Log out and then access the database activity as a guest.
4. Copy the 'RSS feed for this activity' link in the administration block.

The RSS feed may then be displayed in an Remote RSS feeds block or elsewhere.

Exporting to an external portfolio

If an external portfolio such as Mahara has been enabled by the administrator then users have the option to export individual entries to that portfolio if the `##export##` tag is added to list and/or single templates. They will see at the bottom of a database entry an "export" icon to click on and select the portfolio to export to:



Example databases

Moodle.org has two good examples of the database module in action:

- Moodle Buzz, a database of the titles, authors and web links to news articles mentioning Moodle
- Themes, a database with screenshots, download links and user comments about Moodle themes

Creative uses

You could use the database module to:

- allow collaboration on building a collection of web links/books/journal references related to a particular subject
- display student created photos/posters/websites/poems for peer comment and review
- gather comments and votes on a shortlist of potential logos/mascot names/project ideas
- provide a student file storage area
- maintain a log of what was done in a face-to-face class each day, so that absent students can get caught up themselves. Example

See also

- Examples of databases in the School demo site (available for download)
- Dataform module, which is a major enhancement of the Database module with improved browsing, editing, searching and other features.
- Glossary module, which performs a similar though more specialised, text-based role
- Using Moodle book Chapter 12: Databases
- Moodle in English Database activity module forum

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