GRC Database Information
graham@grcdi.nl
https://www.grcdi.nl

Address Formats

NB: Tables are provided as is. The publisher is not responsible or liable for errors or damage resulting from the use of these tables. However, we strive to correct any errors in a timely fashion and value any feedback and requests you have for this file: graham@grcdi.nl

Highlighted text indicates additions/alterations since the last document version.

A great deal of information about this file is also to be found at http://www.grcdi.nl/grcformat.htm . Please refer also to that webpage if you have not already seen it.

This table contains information about the relative position of elements within address blocks. The data has many uses. It can be used to correctly output address blocks and to position input fields on forms, for example.

Each element's relative position is shown by a co-ordinate. The first number indicates the line of the address block, the second the position on that line. Thus, if an element's relative location is given as 2,1, this indicates that it is the first element on the second line of an address block.

The file contains the relative positions of over 30 elements, which is more than exists in the address block of any country. This allows for mis-fielded data to be correctly positioned and for elements to be substituted for nearby elements. When you use fewer fields to store data, you can simply substitute one of the fields to match your field. For example, this file allows personal names to be stored in four fields. If you store your personal names in just one field, you can choose any one of the four fields in the field to represent the position of the personal name in your file.

The data's use is best demonstrated using an example. Let's assume that you wish to output address data and that you have data for Germany in this form:

Company	GRC Database Information	Widgets GmbH	Backerei Braun

Name	Graham Rhind	Herr Schmidt	
Street address	Schlossstr.	Bahnhofstr. 28	Nordhornweg
House number	14		7
Street address2		Gildehaus	48455
Postal code	48455	48455	
Place name	BAD BENTHEIM	BAD BENTHEIM	BAD BENTHEIM
Country	GERMANY	Germany	GERMANY

In the table, “NAME” (containing a full personal name) is not given, but any part of a name, for example the position of the surname, can be used instead as a substitution to show the position. This is also the case with the full address fields, which we can substitute for elements THOROUGHFARE and ZONE. Elements that are not normally written in addresses usually still have a position assigned so that mis-fielded data is not lost.

For Germany, these seven pieces of information are output in the places in an address shown in red:

(1,1)
(2,1)
(3,1) (3,2) (3,3) (3,4) (3,5) (3,6) (3,7)
(4,1)
(5,1)
(6,1)
(7,1) (7,2)
(8,1) (8,2) (8,3) (8,4)
(9,1) (9,2) (9,3) (9,4)
(10,1)
(11,1)
(12,1) (12,2)
(13,1)

GRC Database Information
(2,1)
(3,1) (3,2) (3,3) (3,4) Graham Rhind (3,6) (3,7)
(4,1)
(5,1)
(6,1)
(7,1) (7,2)
(8,1) (8,2) (8,3) (8,4)
Schlossstr. (9,2) 14 (9,4)

(11,1)

48455 BAD BENTHEIM
GERMANY

When using the table, all empty elements and double spaces (except where specified in the table as required) should be ignored and their places filled by shifting data to the left and upwards:

GRC Database Information
zu Händen Graham Rhind
Schlossstr. 14
48455 BAD BENTHEIM
GERMANY

Widgets GmbH
zu Händen Herr Schmidt
Bahnhofstr. 28
Gildehaus
48455 BAD BENTHEIM
Germany

Backerei Braun
Nordhornweg 7
48455 BAD BENTHEIM
GERMANY

Note: The "for attention of" string added here, and some other pertinent output information, is included in the file.

Another example: you want to use the file to correctly position fields on an input form, and you wanted to collect this data: given name, surname, address line 1, address line 2, postal code and populated place. If your customer is in France, these elements are in relative positions:

2,2 2,5
8,1
9,1
11,1 11,2

Moving data left and up to fill the gaps and this gives the correct input form layout:

Given name [ ] Surname [ ]

Address 1 [ ]

[ ]

Address 2

Postal code | | Place | |

Table structure

Note: where addresses should be printed with either a mailing address or a street address but not both, co-ordinates may be re-used. E.g., the same co-ordinate may be given for the street address postal code and for the post office box postal code, as they would normally not be found together in the same address block for these countries.

Field name	*Field type*	*Field length*	*Contents*
LANGUAGE	Character	3	In certain countries the address format differs by language area. This field contains the three-character **ISO-639-2 (alpha-3, terminological) language code** indicating the language region to which this format. Codes currently applied: • afr (Afrikaans) • ara (Arabic) • bel (Belarusian) • bul (Bulgarian) • cat (Catalan) • deu (German) • eng (English; or for countries with a language not written in Latin-script: data in Latin-script) • eus (Basque) • fas (Persian) • fin (Finnish) • fra (French) • glg (Galician) • ita (Italian) • kaz (Kazakh, in Cyrillic script) • kor (Korean) • nld (Dutch) • spa (Spanish) • swe (Swedish) • urd (Urdu) • zho (Chinese) For each country with different formats per language region, a record also exists without a language code for that country containing a default address layout. **ALT** (in capital letters) is used in this field where a country has more than one valid address display format – the row without ALT is the default but

			you can choose an alternative format as required. Note that the ALT is for the language in the row immediately preceding it. Thus, if the previous row contains *eng* then the *ALT* indicates an alternative format for data in English or in the Latin script.
COUNTRY	Character	45	The **country name** in full.
COUN_CODE	Character	3	A unique **country code** used by GRC Database Information. See http://www.grcdi.nl/countrycodes.htm for more information
ISO3166	Character	3	The **ISO 3166 2-digit code** for this country.
COMPANY	Character	4	The relative position of the **COMPANY NAME** within an address block.
DEPT	Character	4	The relative position of the **DEPARTMENT NAME** within an address block.
PRE_CONT	Character		A localized string which may be added before a personal name or job title to indicate "For the attention of". When this is not known or not used in the country concerned, this field is empty.
SALUT_LINE	Logical	1	When an address block contains a form of address and a personal name, but no company information, a .T. in this field indicates that the forms of address is written on a line on its own above the line containing the personal name, in this way: **Herr** **P. Schmidt** Where a company name exists, this setting is no longer valid: **Widgets GmbH** **Herr P. Schmidt**
SALUT	Character	4	The relative position of the **FORM OF ADDRESS** (Mr, Mrs,. Dr etc.) within an address block. Note that this setting may be altered by the contents of the field SALUT_LINE
FIRST	Character	4	The relative position of the **GIVEN NAME** within an address block.
INITIALS	Character	4	The relative position of the **PERSON NAME INITIALS** within an address block.
PREPOSIT	Character	4	The relative position of the **PERSON NAME PREPOSITION** (van de, du, von etc.) within an address block.
LAST	Character	4	The relative position of the **SURNAME/FAMILY NAME** within an address block.
SENIORITY	Character	4	The relative position of the **SENIORITY INDICATOR** (Jr, Sr, III etc.) within an address block.

NAME_SUFF	Character	4	The relative position of any **PERSONAL NAME SUFFIX** (such as academic qualification indicators) which follow the name within an address block.
JOB	Character	4	The relative position of the **JOB TITLE** within an address block.
HOUSE	Character	4	The relative position of **BUILDING NAME** (**Station House**, **The Old School** etc.) within an address block
HOUSE_NPR	Character	4	The relative position of any **PREFIX to a SUB-BUILDING NUMBER** (**Flat** 17, **Apartment** 10, **Stairwell** B etc.) within an address block.
HOUSE_NR	Character	4	The relative position of any **SUB-BUILDING NUMBER** (Flat **17**, Apartment **10**, Stairwell **B** etc.) within an address block.
HOUSE_NSU	Character	4	The relative position of any **SUFFIX to a SUB-BUILDING NUMBER** (Flat 17**A**, Apartment 10 **Left** etc.) within an address block.
NUMB_PRE	Character	4	The relative position of any **PREFIX to a** B**UILDING NUMBER** within an address block.
NR	Character	4	The relative position of any B**UILDING NUMBER** within an address block.
NUMB_SUFF	Character	4	The relative position of any **Suffix to a** B**UILDING NUMBER** within an address block.
ADDRESS	Character	4	The relative position of any **STREET ADDRESS** within an address block.
ZONE	Character	4	The relative position of any **ZONE or SECONDARY STREET ADDRESS** (e.g. Industrial Area) within an address block.
LOCALITY	Character	4	The relative position of any **LOCALITY (secondary place name)** within an address block.
PC1	Character	4	The relative position of any **POSTAL CODE** within an address block. Where a country does not have a postal code, this field is left empty.
PC2	Character	4	The relative position of any **SECOND POSTAL CODE** within an address block. Where a country does not have a second postal code, this field is left empty.
CITY	Character	4	The relative position of any **POSTAL TOWN (primary place name)** within an address block.
SC	Character	4	The relative position of any **SORTING CODE** within an address block. A sorting code is sorting information which usually follows the postal code, such as the word CEDEX in France or a province code in Italy.
PROVINCE	Character	4	The relative position of any **ADMINISTRATIVE DISTRICT** within an address block.
EMPT_LINE	Logical	1	.T. when an address block has an empty line above the line containing the postal code

POBOX	Character	4	The relative position of **MAILING ADDRESS INFORMATION** (e.g. post office box) within an address block.
PBPC	Character	4	The relative position of **MAILING ADDRESS POSTAL CODE** within an address block. Where a country does not have a postal code, this field is left empty.
CITYPB	Character	4	The relative position of **MAILING ADDRESS POSTAL TOWN (primary place name)** within an address block.
PBSC	Character	4	The relative position of any **MAILING ADDRESS SORTING CODE** within an address block. A sorting code is sorting information which usually follows the postal code, such as the word CEDEX in France or a province code in Italy. Where a country does not have a sorting code, this field is left empty.
PB_PROV	Character	4	The relative position of any **MAILING ADDRESS ADMINISTRATIVE DISTRICT** within an address block. Where a country does not use an administrative district in an address block, this field is left empty.
CPC	Character	3	The relative position of **COUNTRY NAME** within an address block.
BEFORE_PC*	Character	3	Character(s) which should be printed between the preceding string and the POSTAL CODE. A $ sign indicates a space. For example: $-$ would indicate data output like this: TOWN - 12345
AFTER_PC*	Character	3	Character(s) which should be printed between the POSTAL CODE and the next string. A $ sign indicates a space. For example: $$ would indicate data output like this: 12345 TOWN
BEFORE_STR*	Character	3	Character(s) which should be printed between the preceding string and the STREET ADDRESS STRING. A $ sign indicates a space. For example: ,$ would indicate an output like this: 12, STREET NAME
BEFORE_NUM*	Character	3	Character(s) which should be printed between the preceding string and the BUILDING NUMBER. A $ sign indicates a space. For example: ,$ would indicate an output like this: STREET NAME, 12
BEFORE_REG*	Character	3	Character(s) which should be printed between the preceding string and the ADMINISTRATIVE DISTRICT. A $ sign indicates a space. For example: $-$ would indicate an output like this: TOWN - STATE
BEFORE_TOW*	Character	3	Character(s) which should be printed between the preceding string and the POSTAL TOWN (primary place). A $ sign indicates a space. For example: $-$ would indicate an output like this: 12345 - TOWN

BEFORE_SC*	Character	3	Character(s) which should be printed between the preceding string and the SORTING CODE. A $ sign indicates a space. For example: $-$ would indicate an output like this: TOWN – SORTING CODE
MAIL_AND_S	Logical	1	By default, when printing an address for mailing, if data contains BOTH a street address AND a mailing address, only the mailing address information should be printed. In some countries BOTH addresses maybe printed in the address block. These countries contain .T. in this field.
POBOX_STR	Character	25	A local language (or acceptable equivalent) of the string "P.O. BOX". This field may be empty.
GROUP	Numeric	3,0	A number shared by countries which have largely similar (but not necessarily identical) address formats.
UPPER	Character	200	A list of columns containing elements where upper casing can be forced for display, assuming the data is correctly fielded, with columns delineated with a bar in this way: pc1|pc2|city|sc|province Thus, if your pc1 field for The Netherlands contains "1015 vv", and the city contains "Amsterdam", you can force these to become "1015 VV" and "AMSTERDAM". We strongly advise caution in using this field – there are always exceptions. It is better to collect and store data correctly rather than attempting to transform it on output.

*** NOTE:** When a string STARTS an address line, the contents of the BEFORE_* field should be ignored. When a string ENDS an address line, the contents of the AFTER_* field should be ignored. The contents of these fields are not cumulative. Thus, when a POSTAL CODE is followed by TOWN, use *EITHER* AFTER_PC *OR* BEFORE_TOW to write the characters between these two pieces of data, but NOT both.

Frequently asked questions

Can you include information to tell me whether an address element should be displayed in letter case, title case, proper case or upper case?

For lower-case, title case, proper case and similar, the answer has to be no. These cases as often defined are not usually found in personal names and addressing. The correct casing of most languages is very complex and the simplistic outputting of all words with a capital first letter and the rest in lower-case just doesn't cut it – it is immediately and

obviously wrong to people with a knowledge of that language. Equally, you cannot always correctly assign diacritical marks when changing case. Context can also change case: it's Paul **van** Vliet but Dhr **Van** Vliet for Dutch names, for example. See some further examples here. You should make sure that your data is correct – we can help you with that – and use this table primarily as a positioning tool for that data.

For upper-case the pitfalls are less dramatic, and we have provided a field containing a list of elements that can usually be forced to upper case for display, such as many postal codes containing letters and state or province codes. This does, however, assume that your data is correctly fielded. We also strongly advise caution in using this field – there are always exceptions. It is better to collect and store data correctly rather than attempting to transform it on output.

Can you include a flag to show which data is mandatory and which optional

Again, alas, the answer can only be no. Firstly, whether an address contains all the elements that make it fit for purpose depends on your purpose – we can't predict what that might be. Furthermore, even in countries with regimented address systems, there are a whole range of dependencies to define this. A postal code might be considered "mandatory", for example, but an address can still be deliverable without one if a postal town name is included. The postal town name is "mandatory" – but not so if the postal code is there. The postal code might be required if there are multiple streets with the same name within a city, or if there are multiple populated places with the same name elsewhere in the same country. In one territory you could theoretically address mail using just a given name and it would still be deliverable – but this is hardly ideal. Basically, the whole situation is too complex to be indicated just with a set of flags. We can help you to check your data and define whether it is fit for your purpose, and which elements you would need to utilise.

End