

Frequently asked questions about Crimebase

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1. I don't know the person's exact date of birth but CrimeBase won't let me input just the parts I know.

CrimeBase requires that the Date of Birth be entered in the DOB field in the format DD/MM/YY - the first two digits of the year are automatically input for 1930 to 2029. If you cannot input the whole date or wish to query elements, it should be entered in the Other field.

2. I get confused using the Get Image From Local Folder screen.

When you click on Insert File, before you start moving through your folders there are three things you should do. First, check you are looking on the correct drive – shown in the drop down list at the top left. Second, make sure you have selected the sort of image you want to look for – still picture, movie or document – using the radio buttons. Third, select the specific file type to search for - .JPG, .MPG, .RTF and so on. Only now should you start using the folder structure.

The Folder display is the field under the File Type. It shows all sub-folders of the directory that you are in. Your current file path is shown next to the drive letter; if it becomes too long, /../ replaces part of the path. Double-click on a folder name to move down a level. All files of the selected type are listed in the centre of the display. To move up a level, double-click on the two dots at the top of the Folder field. If these two dots do not appear, you are at the top level of the drive. The on-board CrimeBase Help File (press F1 for access) has a detailed guide to this field under the heading Adding Images From Local Drives.

3. I can't see any image in the box on the right of the record.

This box contains the Primary Image, a picture selected by you to be the key image for that record. To set it, go to the Media tab sheet, use the navigation icons to find the image and click on Set As Primary Image. To replace it with another, simply scroll to another image and repeat the process.

The Primary Image is used to identify the record in many areas of CrimeBase, including Associations, searches and prints so it is very important that each record has a Primary Image set.

4. I'm double-clicking on an image to see it at full size but it won't open.

When you are in Add Record mode, i.e. you have just created this record and the Navigation Icons are hidden, doubleclicking is not available. To open an image at full size go to the Media tab sheet, view the image thumbnail and click on Full.

5. I've imported a high-quality image but when I view it it's badly deteriorated.

CrimeBase can import images at nine different compression settings. This enables you to save room on your hard drive if you are importing a lot of large images. Lower quality settings reduce byte size by removing or blending some colours; this inevitably leads some image degradation at the lowest settings. To view your current compression setting select Utilities / Compression from the Menu Bar. A description of each setting is given when it is selected.

6. I saved an image with some annotations but they've disappeared.

Annotations are drawn on a transparent overlay and do not become part of an image until they are Rendered to it. You must click on Render before exiting the Annotations toolpad and Saving the image.

7. I've exported a file to Word but the pictures aren't showing up.

I've exported a file to Word but the pictures aren't showing up. CrimeBase uses a proprietary file format for its images. Unfortunately these are not recognised by Word therefore images cannot automatically be seen. To add images, view them at full size, click on Copy To Clipboard and then Paste them into the document. The clipboard can only hold one image at a time.

8. When I do Operation Search, CrimeBase isn't listing people who I know are linked to that Operation.

Images that have no Primary Image do not appear in Operation Search, neither the version accessed from the Main Menu or from the Ops tab sheet. These records do appear in the print-outs as an empty image field with the name underneath.

9. When I search a list of names (in Search Screen / Create Associations), I can't get back to the global list.

To return to the entire list from viewing the results of a search, in both places simply delete all text in the Search field and press Enter.

10. I'm doing a Search on a drop-down list field from Main Details and I know it's not finding some records.

Drop-down lists must be used with care as it is very easy to input entries with a slightly different description, abbreviation or spelling error. Searches can only look for one entry per drop-down list therefore if there are a number of different variations of an entry, searching on each separately can be very laborious. It is recommended that standardised forms of entry are set. For example 'United Kingdom' could be used to describe a person's country of residence instead of UK, U.K., Britain, Great Britain, England, Scotland or one of many other variations. If a standard is not adhered to, dozens of searches could be needed instead of one.

11. How can I put a CrimeBase image in Photophone to send to someone else?

Although CrimeBase images in .IBT format cannot be opened directly into Photophone, by using the computer's clipboard any picture can be transferred between the two. Open a CrimeBase image at full size and click on the Copy To Clipboard icon. Go to Photophone and select File / New / Copy From Clipboard to see it pasted to the Photophone Whiteboard.

12. I can't tell who sent me a file.

When a CrimeBase URC (Unique Reference Code) is set up, the user should also input their details – the name of the organisation that purchased it, and a contact telephone number and name. These details are shown when a transmitted CrimeBase file is opened and should be kept up to date in case of enquiries from the recipients of any files.

13. I sent a record but when the receiver opened the file up the preview screen was empty.

There are two causes of this, depending on whether the record was a duplicate or an update. Duplication occurs when the ID of the imported record matches that of a record already in the database. Record IDs are found next to the Record Name and consist of the record number (in order of creation), the URC and the year of creation. Before CrimeBase imports each record it checks the ID. Where the same ID already exists in the receiving database, the record is not imported. ID duplication can occur deliberately when one user sends another an updated record. As well as an overall ID, every attached file, Association, Intelligence report and Previous Conviction

in a record has their own unique code, though this is hidden for all except the first case. When a duplicate Record ID is found, that is not a case for immediate rejection. CrimeBase checks all subsidiary IDs and where new ones are found – for example new images or a link to a new operation – those elements are added to the existing record. Images imported in this way can be previewed on the Data Received screen by pressing Show All Sent Images. New links or text additions do not appear on this screen at present.

The URC is the crucial element that prevents duplication. Even where a Record ID is the same, the fact that images and other elements of the record have different IDs could result in them being added to an unrelated record. For this reason it is vital that all CrimeBase units within a network set and maintain a distinct URC.

14. I altered a record and sent it to another user but not all of the changes appeared on their record.

CrimeBase will updates changes to a record by adding new elements; new images, associations, previous convictions and so on. Because it uses the unique ID of each element (see Problem 13 above) it cannot change the content of individual texts, for example an altered description of an attached movie file. This also means that data in the Main Details or Remarks tab sheet cannot be updated simply by altering the text and sending the revised record. To make alterations to existing text in any part of CrimeBase, the sender should create a Message in the Intel tab sheet detailing changes that need to be made; these must then be actioned by the receiver.

15. I sent a record with Associations but the receiver hasn't got them.

Associations are physical links between two records. If a file links person A to person B, that Association will appear on any CrimeBase that contains records for A and B. If record A is sent to a CrimeBase that does not currently have record B, the link will be imported but as there is nothing to link to, the Association will be hidden. Should record B subsequently be sent, the Association will immediately appear on both records. Similarly if ten targets are linked to an Operation but only half are sent to a new CrimeBase, clicking on the Operation name on that second computer can only show the records it has, not all other targets associated with the Operation.

16. Can I put a picture into Photophone to send to someone?

Yes. When you open an image at full size – by double-clicking on it or viewing the thumbnail in the Media tab and pressing Full – it can be copied to the computer's clipboard using the Clipboard icon. Open Photophone and select File / New / Copy From Clipboard to paste the image to the Photophone Whiteboard.

17. How can I select a number of old records to send to someone?

When a record is created it is automatically made available to be part of the next Send file you create. To create a send file containing records other than those newly-created, browse through them or use Find Fast and click on Re-Send on each that is to be packaged. Another way to select en masse is to click on Send Data and then on Review Targets. This screen lists all records in your database in alphabetical (surname) order. A tick in the box next to each name shows that record will be part of the next send file. Check and uncheck all relevant boxes to create the send file.

18. How can I quickly jump to another record?

It is possible to move between records one at a time, or to the first (newest) or last (oldest) record using the Navigation Icons at the bottom left of the View Records screen. To locate a specific name quickly you can use Fast Find or Search. Double-click on the Surname field or, in V3.1.3, click on the Fast Find button. In the Fast Find box enter the name to look for and press OK. In version 3.1.3 CrimeBase will find show all occurrences of that search term in Main Details and Remarks throughout your records, one at a time. Press F4 to find each occurrence after the first. In earlier versions this search is the same except it is limited to the field in which you have double-clicked. You can also use the Search button in the Main Details screen to find all records with a particular search term. CrimeBase will filter out all records that do not contains all requested search terms in the relevant fields. If more than one is found, use the Navigation Icons to browse them. Click on Show All to return to viewing all records.

19. What is the difference between Intel and Message in the Intel Tab Sheet?

The Intel setting is the default and should be used for all intelligence reports relating to the record. The Messages option should be used when you are sending an updated record to another user. CrimeBase cannot automatically update text within a message, only add new elements such as Intel Reports and Messages. See Problem 14 above for further details.

20. What is the Sort Prints button for on the Media Tab Sheet?

This function is only available in CrimeBase 3.0.2 and later. If you have imported high-resolution fingerprint scans to your record, Sort Prints is the function needed to print them at the correct size. To create a Fingerprint Report, scroll through the images on the Media tab. When you find an image you wish to use, click on an Insert button on the Report form. The image will appear in the box above the button. You can take images from any record within your CrimeBase; the Fingerprint Report form stays open and constant as you scroll through records and images. When you have all the images you require, press Print Sheet. Only images imported using the high-resolution options can be printed in this format; due to the high degree of compression used, normal images will become tiny blocks on the paper. For more information on this process please consult your CrimeBase manual.

21. What are .IBT / .IBV files and can I use them in other programs?

The .IBT and .IBV file types are proprietary formats used by ImageBase for our CrimeBase, PhotoBank and other database programs. All imported still images are converted into .IBT files and all imported video files are saved in .IBV format. These files can only be read in CrimeBase; however all still images can be copied and pasted into any other Windows application by opening them at full size and clicking the Copy To Clipboard icon.

22. Why is the Primary Image such poor quality?

As you navigate through your database it is the Primary Image that takes the most time to display on each new record. ImageBase have reduced the amount of time each page takes to load by compressing the Primary Image. This has an effect on the quality of the display but does not affect the quality of the actual image.

23. How do I get rid of just one item of image annotation?

The large Undo button on the Annotation toolpad in the PhotoEdit page removes all annotations that have not been saved to the image. The Undo All Changes icon on the Editing toolpad has the same function. To remove just one specific annotation, right-click on it and select Delete.

24. Can I import part of a video that I'm playing from the Live Capture feature?

No. The Live Capture facility in the Insert File screen only allows you to take still images from a live camera or prerecorded video playback.

25. How do Existing Operations and Available Operations differ?

As a default, the Ops tab sheet in View Records only shows those operations that have been created on your CrimeBase. Imported files are often linked to other operations and these – along with Operations created within your CrimeBase – are listed when you press the View Existing Ops button. There is no difference in the way they are linked to or delinked from records.