

What is the difference between Container Lists and Multilevel Linking?

Version 4.0

The Container List and Multilevel Linking are both excellent tools that allow you to link and organize data within the PastPerfect Archives catalog.

Container Lists can be used when cataloging an archival record that contains multiple items, housed within a single container. The Container List can include a list of documents within a folder or a list of folders within a box. All of the items in the Container List are part of the larger archival record and therefore will not need individual Object ID numbers. Additionally, the amount of information you need to enter about each specific item is reduced since it is assumed that the fields used in the Container List are the only fields that deviate from the main archival record. Using the Container List may be the best option for large archival collections, where you do not wish to catalog every single item.

Multilevel Linking allows you to create a hierarchy for an archival collection based on the "Level of Description" field within the Archives catalog. Levels are generally divided into four or more tiers beginning with Fonds/Collection, which is the most general:

Fonds/Collection

Series

Folder

Item

In addition to these four standard levels, you may add levels consisting of Sub-Series and Sub-Folder. Within PastPerfect each level would be cataloged separately with a unique Object ID number. We recommend that you begin your data entry process with the most general level - Fonds/Collection - and then work towards the most specific level - Item.

PastPerfect does not require you to provide all levels of data. In some cases, you may need to enter a record only for the fonds and records for the associated items, linking the items directly to the fonds, without a series. You can also enter a single record for the fonds without series or items, or you can enter items without an associated fonds or series.

The record above each level is called a parent record. For example, the Fonds/Collection level record is the parent record to a Series level record, and so on. After two or more records are created, you can then link them together by following the instructions below.

1. Once you've added your records, in this example the Fonds/Collection level record, and a Series level record, navigate to the Series level record in the Archives catalog.
2. Click "Edit" in the Navigation Bar.
3. Click on the "Identity Statement" tab, and then click "View/Setup Links" under the Multilevel Linking Level of Description field.
4. Enter the Object ID of the parent record.
5. Click "Exit."
6. Click "Save" in the Navigation Bar.

Within the Archives catalog of PastPerfect, you are not limited to using only one of these tools; you can combine their use. For instance, you can create a Fonds/Collection level record, a few Series level records, and the subsequent Folder level records, but then use the Container List attached to the Folder level records to enumerate the items contained within the folder.

The possible combinations for Multilevel Linking and the Container List are diverse, but the objective for their use is clear: to make the data entry process easier and provide relations between items, so that there is an increased ability to see the connection between records when performing searches on the items contained within your collection.

If you have any questions, please contact our Support Office at 1-800-562-6080 or email support@museumsoftware.com. Thank you for using PastPerfect!