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Top 5 Desktop Databases

By [Mike Chapple](#), About.com Guide

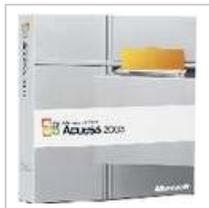
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Desktop databases offer simple, flexible solutions for data storage and retrieval. They're often quite sufficient to meet uncomplicated database requirements for both small and large organizations. If you're not sure if a desktop database is right for you, try reading the [Choosing a Database](#) series of articles which cover both desktop and server databases in depth

1. [Microsoft Access 2007](#)



Access is the "Old Faithful" of desktop databases. You'll find the familiar Microsoft interface and a thorough online help system. The greatest strength of Access is its tight integration with the remainder of the Office suite. It also serves as a great front-end for any ODBC-compliant server database. Access 2007 is available as a stand-alone product or in the Office Professional suite. You can typically purchase the stand-alone version for around \$199.

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2. [Filemaker Pro](#)

FileMaker Pro is extremely popular among Macintosh users, but it's rapidly gaining market share among the PC crowd as well. It offers an intuitive interface and hides many of the complexities inherent in database management. It's also ODBC compliant and offers some integration capability with Microsoft Office. The most recent version is FileMaker Pro 8.5 which retails for around \$299.

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3. [Alpha Five](#)

Alpha Five offers an alternative to the mainstream Access and FileMaker solutions. It's targeted at the database beginner and makes use of intuitive wizards to facilitate getting up and running quickly. Pricing starts at \$199 for the Desktop Edition (which lacks support for web applications) and the product is only available directly from the manufacturer's website.

[Manufacturer's Site](#)

4. [Paradox](#)

Paradox comes bundled with Corel's Word Perfect Office X3 Professional suite. It's a fully functional database system and offers JDBC/ODBC integration with other databases. However, it's not as user-friendly as some of the more mainstream DBMSs.

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5. [Lotus Approach](#)

Lotus offers the Approach DBMS as part of their SmartSuite office productivity package. Designed to compete with Microsoft Office, SmartSuite contains a word processor, spreadsheet (the old standby Lotus 1-2-3), presentation package and more.

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