



Alpha Five Made Easy

The Basics and More for Version 8

by Susan Hussey Bush

Chapter 7 - Buttons

Sample Chapter

About the book and Alpha Five...

Alpha Five Made Easy is a step-by-step manual for learning the Alpha Five database software and is intended to be used with the companion databases provided with purchase of the book. It contains almost 475 pages of step-by-step exercises with screen shots. This sample chapter will give you a peek at the material contained in the book.

Users of all levels will find this book is the quickest way to tap into the fabulous Alpha Five features.

**For more information and to purchase the book, go to
www.libertymanuals.com.**

Frances M. Peake, professional database designer and co-owner of Proctor & Peake, Inc., enthusiastically endorses *Alpha Five Made Easy* and answers a question about Alpha Five.

“The plain-English explanations of each Alpha Five feature in this book show Susan's experience applying the program in a real-world business environment. Readers will find every chapter full of valuable information, regardless of their experience level. On behalf of *Alpha Five* users and enthusiasts everywhere, *thank you Susan, for writing this book!*”

“With regards to Alpha Five, we are long time Q&A users and have been looking for a replacement that is easier than Access®, dBase®, etc., but has the power to write strong applications without a lot of coding. Is Alpha Five the product we are looking for? I would appreciate your opinion.” —RADeV, Jr.

“You indicate that you are looking for *“the power to write strong applications without a lot of coding.”* In that case, yes, Alpha Five is a better choice than Access. I develop applications in both and I tell you that you can go so much farther in Alpha Five without having to do programming. In fact, you may not have to do any coding at all. Alpha Five offers a lot of commands and properties that simply do not exist in Access, where you would have to write your own procedures and functions to do the same thing.

“Even when you need to automate a process, Alpha Five has a number of alternatives to writing code, such as “Action Scripting” that lets you perform the steps you want to automate and generates the code for you. There are, of course, some things that you might dream up that will require writing code in Alpha Five.”

—FMP

About the author



From her first computer experience in 1984 - a used Apple I presented by her father after he upgraded to an Apple II - Susan Hussey Bush has been hooked on this amazing (and sometimes frustrating) tool of the modern world. The 1985 purchase of the state of the art IBM XT with an astounding 10 mg hard drive opened the door to database development. That first flat database, *Nutshell*, showed her that one did not have to be a programmer to develop applications. Later, she began the search for a relational database that did not require programming skills. *Alpha Four*, a DOS product, met those requirements. When *Alpha Five* was released, she moved to the Windows version. After expending considerable effort learning the program and designing on her laptop, it was stolen. The only copy of the database was gone and a serious setback resulted. The good news is that by the time she started over,

Alpha Five version 3, with significant improvements over the earlier versions, had been released.

The development of a database for her government bidding company, Liberty Food Marketers Co., then began in earnest - this time with backups! Today, that application contains more than 60 tables and 75 sets. As a non-programmer, Susan has set up 100 saved operations to import, reformat and export data. She has since sold the business to her son, Dave, who continues to use *Alpha Five* to stay current with the demands of government bidding and to offer customers outstanding service.

Susan has a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Architectural Design. She brings that training to her database design, focusing on well organized, attractive forms and reports. *Alpha Five* allows her to create database applications reflecting her belief that software should be user-friendly. She is excited about adding Version 8 features to her databases.

Presently living in Flat Rock, North Carolina, she travels extensively with her husband, Richard Bush. There are seven children and eight grandchildren in their blended family, spread across the country. Mike, Liz and Walter Hussey live in the Florida Keys. JR Hussey and his wife, Carin Young, live in San Francisco. In Rumson, New Jersey, Susan's hometown, Dave Hussey keeps busy with Liberty Food Marketers Co. Rick Bush's daughters, Taylor, Jordan and Lindsey live in Pea Ridge, Arkansas. He and his oldest daughter, Hailey, live in Neosho, MO, where Richard grew up. Ross and Mariola Bush live in Rolla, Missouri where Mariola recently graduated as a Civil Engineer and Ross is studying the law. Residing in Fort Smith, Arkansas are Missy, her husband, Jeff Brown and son Jake. Kathleen and Sands Orris and their sons, William and Foster make their home in Cumming, Georgia.



With a special section on
the transition from
Alpha Four to Alpha Five
by Frances M. Peake



Alpha Five Made Easy

The Basics and More for Version 8

**Step-by-step instructions
and useful tips
for users of all levels**



Susan Hussey Bush

ALPHA FIVE MADE EASY

The Basics and More for Version 8

by Susan Hussey Bush

with a special section on

Alpha Four to Alpha Five: The Transition

**by
Frances M. Peake**

**Liberty Manuals Company
130 East River Road
Rumson, New Jersey
USA**

www.LibertyManuals.com

Alpha Five Made Easy, The Basics and More for Version 8

Published by

Liberty Manuals Co.

130 East River Road

Rumson, NJ 07760-0453

www.LibertyManuals.com

Copyright © 2007, Susan Hussey Bush. All rights reserved. No part of this book, including interior design and cover design, may be reproduced or transmitted in any form, by any means (electronic, photocopying, recording, or otherwise) without the prior written permission of the publisher.

ISBN: 0-9710748-8-7

Printed in the United States of America.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 First Printing.

Distributed by Liberty Manuals Company.

This manual has been designed for the use of authorized owners of Alpha Four and Alpha Five software. Alpha Four© and Alpha Five© are the registered trademarks of Alpha Software Inc. Liberty Manuals Company is a separate company and has no connection with Alpha Software Inc.

Every effort has been made by the publisher and the author in preparing this book. No warranty is made as to the accuracy or completeness of the contents of this book. Liberty Manuals Company assumes no responsibility or liability for any errors or inaccuracies that may appear in this documentation.

It is important to remember that artwork or images in this document may be protected by copyright law. Unauthorized use of such material could be a violation of the rights of the copyright owner. Permission to use any part of this document must be obtained from Liberty Manuals Company.

The Liberty Manuals logo is the property of Liberty Manuals Company. “Get Outta DOS” and “GET INTO ALPHA FIVE!” seminars are the property of Susan H. Bush and Frances M. Peake. Alpha Five© and Alpha Software are the property of Alpha Software, Inc. Microsoft©, Windows©, MsDos©, Excel©, Works© and Access© are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries. Adobe Acrobat©, Acrobat Reader© and Adobe Framemaker© are the property of Adobe Corporation. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.

Frances M. Peake may be contacted at:

Proctor & Peake, Inc., 9620 NE 2nd Ave, Suite 209, Miami Shores, FL 33138.

Tel: (305) 751-1181. (800) 943-6031. Fax: (305) 759-9504.

Email and Website: frances@proctorandpeake.com; www.proctorandpeake.com.

For information on purchasing the books in the Alpha Five series, contact:

Liberty Manuals Company, PO Box 453, Rumson, NJ 07760, USA.

Tel: (732) 842-3000. Fax: (732) 741-5820.

Email and Website: info@LibertyManuals.com; www.LibertyManuals.com.

Chapter 7: Buttons — Table of Contents

Note: This *Table of Contents* is intended as an indication of the contents of the chapter. The actual page numbers may be different in the book, as may the wording of the section titles.

Creating Buttons	241	Setting multiple actions for a button	248
Using Action Scripting	242	Editing the script	252
Testing a button	243	Completing the Import Operation	252
Enhancing the appearance of a button	244	Commenting	253
Adding Bubble Help	245	Temporarily stopping an action	253
Sizing and aligning buttons	245	Adding custom graphics for your buttons	254
Moving buttons	245	Password protecting a button	256
Customizing a Fly-Over Effect	246	Removing the button password	256
Understanding Button Events	247		

Important Notes

Permissions

- This book is copyrighted, therefore you are not permitted to make any changes to the document.
- You are permitted to print the pages.

Page numbers and content

- It is possible that further editing of the book may occur after this sample has been prepared, therefore its page numbers and/or content may not be identical to that in the actual book.

Products

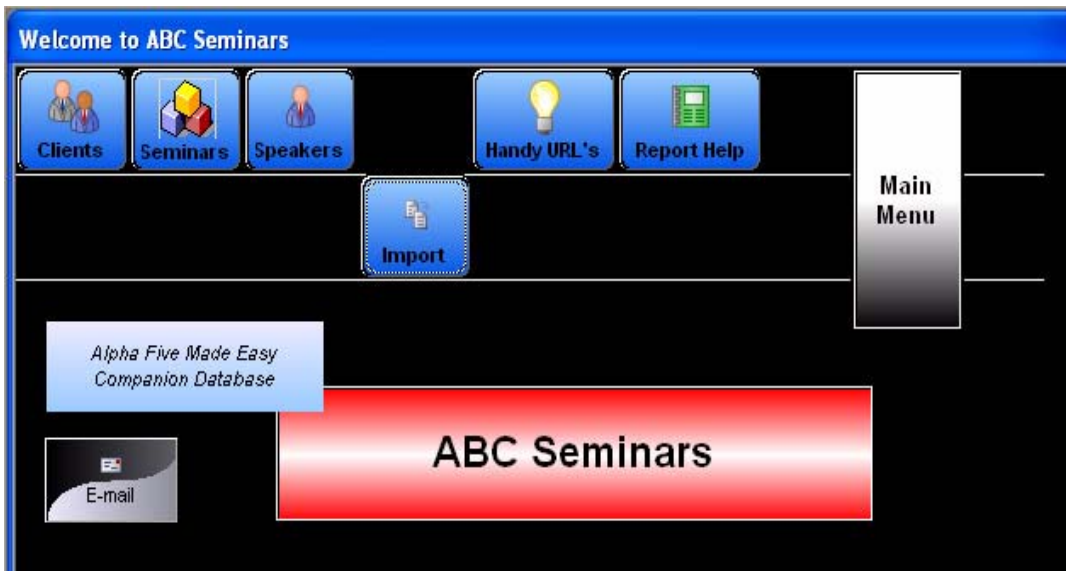
We offer several combinations of hard copy and electronic versions of our books. For more information and pricing, visit www.LibertyManuals.com.

- **Alpha Five Made Easy**
 - Electronic download version. Full color, may be printed. No index.
 - Hard copy of book. Full color, with index. Spiral bound.
 - Electronic Book on CD. Full color, with index.
 - V8 Combo Pack. Hard copy of Book and Book on CD.
 - V8 Combo with Alpha Five Functions Handbook.
- **Alpha Five Functions Handbook**
 - Hard copy of Book. Spiral bound.
 - Book on CD.
 - Combo Pack: Book and Book on CD.

Money Back Policy

- **Satisfaction 100% guaranteed. Notify us within 30 days for a full refund on all products except the download version of the book.**

Buttons



Buttons are a snap with Alpha Five.

Just a few simple steps and you will be creating all types of buttons.


Buttons can open forms and browses. They can print reports and letters. They can run complex operations. Alpha Five lets you dress them up with built-in graphics or keep them plain and simple. The choice is yours.

Notes:

Preparation for the Lesson.

Open Alpha Five and navigate to the following file:

- c:\A5_Ver8Book\ABC_V8_Lessons\ABC Seminars.adb*

-  Click on the Control Panel tab in the Window Bar at the bottom of the screen to bring the Control Panel to the front.



LOOKING AHEAD!†

Examples of buttons are on the following forms:

- ABC Seminars opening menu.
- ClientInfo.
- NewClientImport.

There are two buttons that execute the scripts developed in this section. They may both be seen on the NewClientImport form.

To run the finished scripts, go to the ABC Seminars opening menu.

- Click Import (the submenu, NewClientImport opens).
- Click Import List to run the first part of the script.
- Then, to complete the script, click Delete Marked Records and answer yes to delete the records.



CAUTION!

If you have located the files in a different directory than the default, c:\A5_Ver8Book\ABC_V8_Lessons, the import will not run properly. In that case, go to the Control Panel Operations tab and proceed as follows:

- Open the NewClientImport operation in Design Mode and make the following changes:
 - *Import file:* Click the Smart Button and navigate to sample.txt, located in the ABC_V8_Lessons database.
- When you enter a new file name, Alpha Five changes the Result Table name. It will need to be reset.
 - *Result table:* Click the Smart Button and select the Client_Import table.

You will also need to enter your paths in the following exercises.

Creating Buttons



PLEASE TAKE A MOMENT TO
READ THIS

The button is one of the most popular features of today's computing environment. Requiring little understanding by the user, a button is like turning the key in the car ignition. Few people fully understand what happens, they just know the car starts.

In a series of simple steps, you can create buttons that initiate a single action as in previewing a report or multiple actions like appending records, posting from one table to another and seeing your changes in a browse.


*. Depending on how Alpha Five is opened, the file extension .adb may not appear. (For instructions on opening an existing database, see "Opening an existing database" on page xxxvi.)

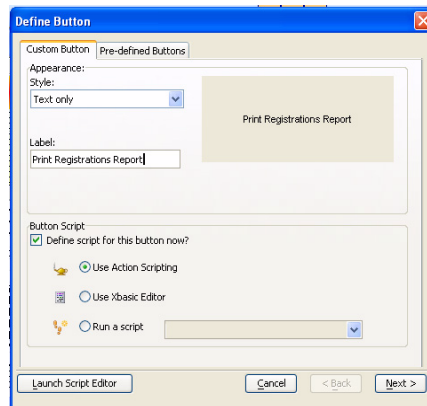
†. For experienced or returning users. May be helpful to beginners who want to see the results of the exercise.

This chapter serves a dual purpose. In addition to the main focus of creating buttons, it will also introduce *Action Scripting*. While you follow a series of prompts, Action Scripting writes the Xbasic code in the background.

- The first exercise will create a button for printing the Registrations Report that we created earlier.



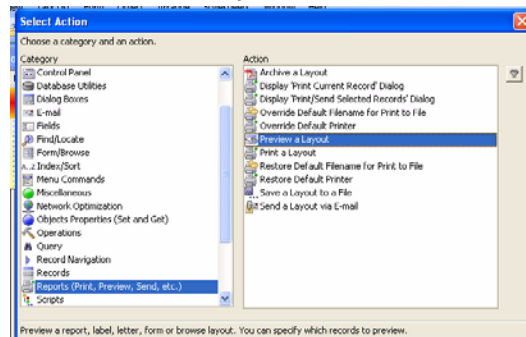
1.  Open the **MyClientInfo** form in Design Mode.
 - Alpha Five Control Panel Tab > Forms.
 - MyClient Info: Right click > Design.
2. *Toolbox*: Click the **Button** control.
 - The cursor changes to an OK.
3. **Draw a box** on the blank area to the right of the Tabbed object.
 - The Button Genie opens.



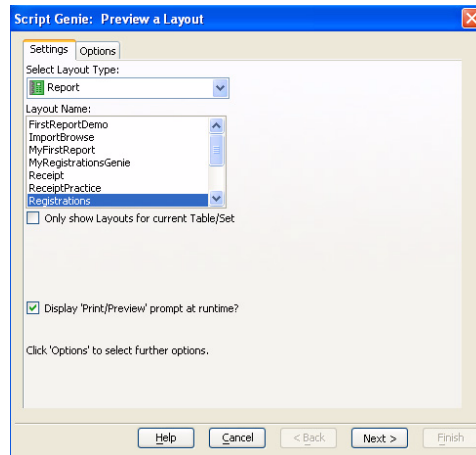
4. *Label*: Overwrite *Script* with **Print Registrations Report**.
 - This shows how the button will look. It is possible to further change the looks of the button at this screen, but we will be making many changes to the appearance of the button, so we will leave this for the moment.

USING ACTION SCRIPTING

5. *Button Script*: Choose **Use Action Scripting**. (Click Next)
6. Click **Add New Action** and use the following settings:
 - Category*: Choose **Reports (Print, Preview, Send, etc.)**
 - Action*: Choose **Preview a Layout**. (Click OK)



7. *Layout Name: Choose Registrations.*



HINT!

8. *Display 'Print/Preview' at runtime? Click Checkbox.* (Yes)

We almost always use this option. We instruct our users to first print preview the layout on the screen because the print command does not give an error message if something is wrong with the report. Example: The user has selected a report for a customer that does not exist. In Print Preview, the error message reports “There are no pages in the layout.” The user can then investigate the problem. When sending direct to the printer, the user does not become aware of the problem until he/she realizes no report has come out. Print/Preview takes a moment longer, but the results are immediate. On the other hand, there are times when going straight to the printer saves time. The choice is yours!

9. *Select Records to Print: No additional selection criteria.* (Click Finish)

10. Click FINISH twice.

- The button is created!

11. CTRL + S to Save the form changes.



12. Go to Form View.

13. Click the button to test it out.

- You are given the option to print or preview.
- Even though you started out to design a button to preview, you were given the option to add a print choice at Step 8, with Preview as the default.

14. Choose **Preview**.


- The report appears.
- As a designer, it is a good idea to use Preview in the early stages of testing reports. It will save reams of paper!

15. Click **Exit Preview** to close the report.

TESTING A BUTTON



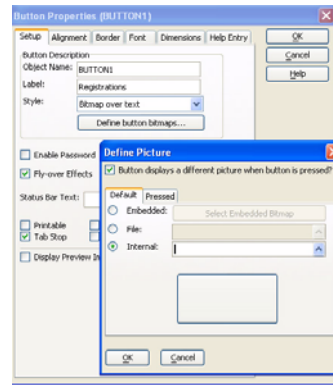
HINT!

16.  Return to Design Mode.

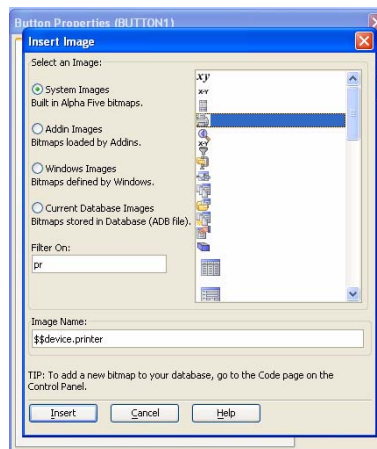
Enhancing the appearance of a button

Next we will add a graphic and change the background and font color of the button. We will then add Bubble Help to give the user additional information.

17. Open the **Button Properties** for the new button.
- Press F12 or Right click > Properties.
18. *Tab:* **Setup**.
19. *Label:* Change to **Registrations**.
20. *Style:* **Bitmap over text**.
21. Click **Define button bitmaps**.



22. *Define Picture:* Choose **Internal** and click the **Smart Button**.
- The Insert Picture window opens.
 - There are several libraries. You may wish to select the radio buttons and page through the selections.



23. *Select an image:* Choose **System Images**.
- We want a printer icon. We can find one quickly by applying a filter.

24. *Filter On:* Type **pr**.
25. Choose the 4th image down.
 - *Image name:* \$\$device.printer

CREATING CUSTOM GRAPHICS

Note the Tip at the bottom of the window regarding adding bitmaps to your database. You may wish to develop your own gallery of bitmaps for your buttons. (See “Adding custom graphics for your buttons” on page 254.)

26. Click **Insert**. (Click OK)
27. *Tab: Border.* Settings:
 - *Fill Style:* **Gradient Horizontal**.
 - *Color:* **Teal**; *Accent Color:* **Sky Blue**.
28. *Tab: Font: Attributes > Color:* **White**.

ADDING BUBBLE HELP

29. *Tab: Help Entry: Bubble Help Text:* **Print Registration Report**. (Click OK)

SIZING AND ALIGNING BUTTONS

30. Resize the button so it is just big enough to hold the graphic and the label.
 - To size and align one button object based on another, the procedure is the same as for objects on a form.
 - a. Click the first button and then SHIFT + Click the second button.
 - b. *Arrange Toolbar:* **Align Size**, then **Left Align**.
 - You can evenly space a series of buttons by using the Arrange Toolbar > Vertical and/or Horizontal Spacing.

MOVING BUTTONS

Buttons may also be moved by dragging them or, for more exact placement, by using the keyboard.

- Use the arrow keys to move from one grid line to another.
 - To move in small increments, hold down SHIFT and use the ARROW keys to move up, down and sideways.
31. CTRL + S to Save the form.



32. Go to *Form View*.
33. Go to *Form View*.


- The button takes on the appearance of the settings we applied.



34. Put the cursor on the button.
 - Button help further defines the purpose of the button.



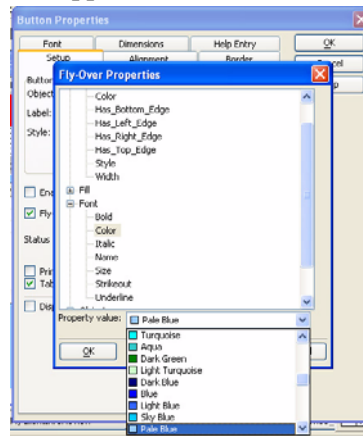
- Notice the Fly-over effect. When you place the cursor over the button, it turned white with black lettering. In the next section, we will customize that effect.

35.  Return to Design Mode.


Customizing a Fly-Over Effect

When you place your cursor over the button and it changes, color and/or font, the effect is known as Fly-Over. New buttons created with Version 8 have the fly-over effect default set at White with black text (see “Put the cursor on the button.” on page 245). That can easily be changed.

36. Open Button Properties.
- Press F12 or Right click > Properties.
37. Tab: Setup
38. *Fly-Over Effects*: Click checkbox. (Yes)
39. Click Set Fly-Over Appearance.




40. Choose the following settings:
- Border: *Color*: Red.
 - Fill: *Accent Color*: Yellow; *Color*: Sea Green
 - Font: *Bold* = True; *Color*: Black.
41. Click Apply. (Click OK Twice)
42. CTRL + S to save.

43.  Go to Form View.

44. Put the cursor on the button.
- The button takes on the new formatting.



45. **Test** the button.

46.  Return to Design Mode.

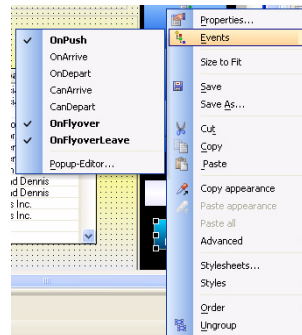
Understanding Button Events

All objects have events as well as properties. As expected, events are milestones in the life of an object. On your birthday, you might expect to mark the event with a birthday cake. When you create a button, you want something to happen when it is pushed. This event is called **OnPush**.

The list of events for a button are OnPush, OnArrive, OnDepart, CanArrive, CanDepart, OnFlyover and OnFlyoverLeave. Actions may be set for none, one or all.

47. Right click on the button you just made. Choose Events and inspect the submenu.

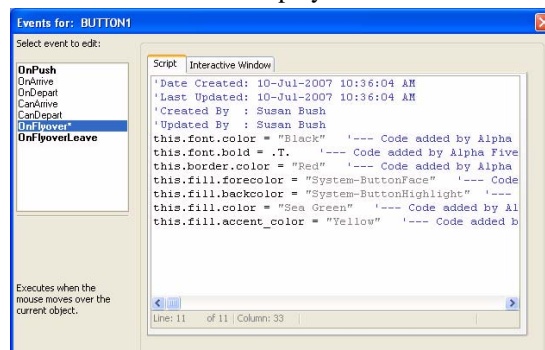
- OnPush is checked and bolded because the Button Genie placed our actions in that category when we created the button.
- OnFlyover is checked and bolded because we set Flyover in the Properties dialog box.
- *OnFlyoverLeave* is checked and bolded. The action to return to the original state is automatically created when *OnFlyover* is selected.



- Xbasic is constantly being written in the background as you make menu choices.

48. Click on the button* and press **F11**.

- The Events for the button are displayed.



*. You can also use one of the buttons on the **ClientInfo** form for this exercise.

49. Click on **OnFlyover**.

- The syntax is displayed.
- The Xbasic code is displayed in black.
- The settings are in gray.
- The annotations—comments on what the script means—are in blue. Notice that the annotations begin with an apostrophe [‘] telling Alpha Five to ignore the text.
- At the end of each line is the warning: **Code added by Alpha Five. Do not modify.** This notation simply means that things may not work properly if you modify the script. You can, of course, ignore the warning by simply changing the code.
 - a. On the last line, change “Yellow” to “Black”.
 - b. Save and test the fly-over to see the change.
 - c. If desired, go back in and reverse the above change.
- You may also copy any part of the code and put it in another script.

50. Click **Close** to close the *Button Events* dialog box.

- The form itself and each object it contains has its own set of events.

51. Right click > Events for the following objects.

- The background of the form.
- The Tabbed object.
- The Browse.
- A field.

52. Close the form.

Setting multiple actions for a button

This will be a two button script. The first button will take the user to the point of viewing records marked for deletion. The user can then review the marked records and, if necessary, manually unmark any that should not be deleted. For example, we used First Name, Last Name and Company as the criteria for marking the records. We did not include Middle Initial. It is possible that John J. Jones and John K. Jones both work for XYZ Company. One of these records would need to be unmarked manually to exclude it from the delete operation.

The second button, already created for you, completes the script by deleting the duplicate records.

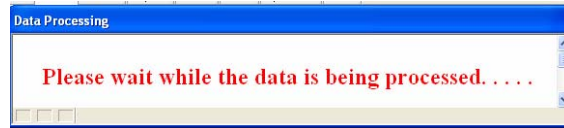
- In this exercise, we will use the Button Genie to write a script that will run the operations we created in Chapter 7. In addition, the script will also open a form and a browse.

This exercise will make extensive use of the Code Editor and will serve as an introduction to Action Scripting. By selecting a series of choices, we will assign several actions to a single button.

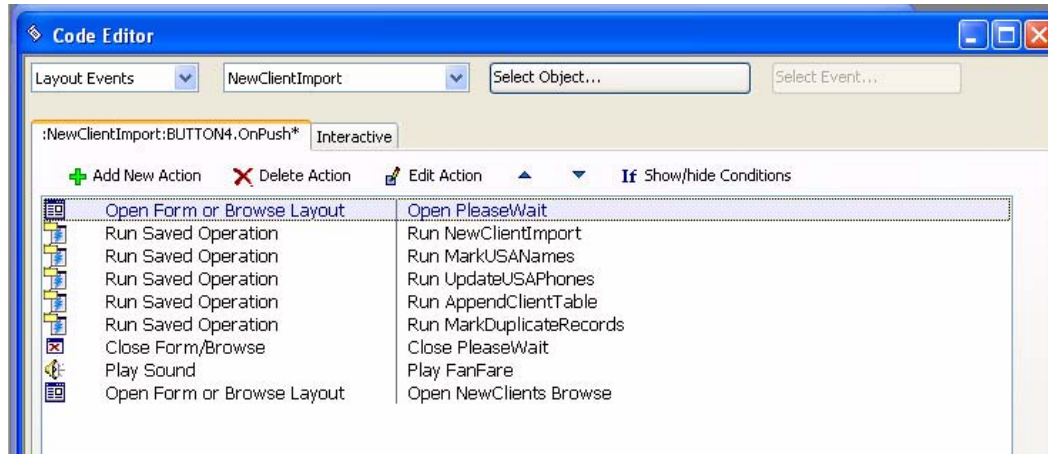


PLEASE TAKE A MOMENT TO
READ THIS

- a. When the button is clicked, a form opens that asks the user to wait for the data processing to be completed.*



- b. Then, five operations will run without interruption by confirmation dialog boxes.†



- Import records: **NewClientImport.**
- Mark records: **MarkUSANames.**
- Update records: **UpdateUSAPhones.**
- Append records: **AppendClientsTable.**
- Mark duplicate records: **MarkDuplicateRecords.**

- c. We will then close the PleaseWait form, play a sound to alert the user that the data processing is completed and open a Browse so the user may view the records to this point.

ID	Enter Date	Last Name	First Name	MI	Company		Ac
00017	12/29/2005				Baker, Baker and Campbell Ltd.	12th Floor, Monroe Building	
00022	12/29/2005				Multiactive Software Inc.	1090 West Pender St.	
00023	12/29/2005				Swenson Plumbing and Heating	145 Haddock Road	
00008	10/10/2001	Anderson	Betty	H.	Anderson & Associates	7221 - 1st Street NW	
00011	12/04/2001	Anderson	William	H.	Anderson & Associates	7238 - 31st Street NW	
00024	12/29/2005	Anderson	William	H.	Anderson & Associates	7221 - 1st Street NW	
00009	10/14/2001	Appleton	Betsy	R.	Red River Inn	Armadale Lane	
00010	10/20/2001	Bush	Susan	H.	Liberty Manuals Company	P O Box 453	
00014	03/16/2003	Campbell	Mary		Tri-Star Aircraft Corp.		
00025	12/29/2005	Campbell	Mary		Tri-Star Aircraft Corp.	319 Douglas Avenue West	
00002	09/30/2001	Franklin	Andrew	D.	Vanter Management Services Ltd.	2844 Mountain Parkway	
00026	12/29/2005	Franklin	Andrew		Vanter Management Services Ltd.	2844 Mountain Parkway	
00007	09/30/2001	Greenfield	Allan		Brown Cottage Inn	78 Red Wand Rd.	
00003	09/30/2001	Halton	Geoff	M.	Halton, Walker and Dennis	1312 Washington Avenue	
00027	12/29/2005	Halton	Geoff		Halton, Walker and Dennis	1312 Washington Avenue	
00004	09/30/2001	Hendrickson	Mary	G.	Vantage Industries Inc.	1645 Mountain Highway	
00015	09/14/2004	Hendrickson	Thomas	M.	Vantage Industries Inc.		
00028	12/29/2005	Hendrickson	Thomas	M.	Vantage Industries Inc.	1645 Mountain Highway	

*. This exercise shows several Action Scripting events, including opening a form. To show a status bar while a script is running, see “Part 1. Creating a dialog box that shows script progress” on page 309.

†. If you completed the exercises in the previous chapter, you will be familiar with the confirmation dialog boxes that appeared as each operation was run. When running a series of operations, the dialog boxes would each need to be confirmed by the user in order to continue to the next operation. Since they are unnecessary for the first button, we will have the operations Run Silently. In other words, we will suppress the dialog boxes.

In the second button, we kept the dialog box that asks for confirmation of record deletion, in case the button was pressed accidentally.



NOTE

d. We will then test the button.

If you did the exercises in the previous chapter, you may use the operations that you created.



A REMINDER



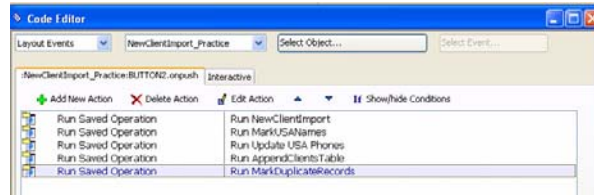
Save, save, save as you go along. This time click the **Save** button (on the toolbar) when you are in the Code Editor.



1. Open the **NewClientImport_practice** form in design mode.
2. Create a new button under the Import List label as follows.
 - Toolbox: Button control.
 - Draw the button on the form.
3. *Label: **Import Client List**.* (Click Next)
4. Click **Add New Action** and select the following choices.
 - a. Category: **Operations**; Action: **Run Saved Operation**. (Click OK)
 - b. *Tab: Operation: Type: **Import records**; Name: **NewClientImport**.*
 - c. *Tab: Options: **Run silently**.* (Click Next) (Click Finish)
- The Define Button genie is fine for a single action, but it does not have a Save button, nor can you add a comment, therefore we will define the remaining actions at the Code Editor (aka Script Editor).
5. Click **Launch Script Editor**.
 - The Code Editor opens.
 - If the *Code Library* and/or *XBasic Explorer* Panes open, close them. We do not need them for **Action Scripting**. Once closed, they should remain out of sight for future Action Scripting sessions.
6. Click the small pencil at the lower right of the Code Editor. Enter the following comment:
 - Run NewClientImport**
 - As the list builds, you will see the advantage of comments.
7. Click OK.
- Next, we will add four more new Actions to the script:
 - Settings for each:
 - a. Click **Add New Action**.
 - b. Category: **Operations**; Action: **Run Saved Operation**. (Click OK)
 - c. *Tab: Operation: Type: **See below**; Name: **See below**.*
 - d. *Tab: Options: **Run silently**.* (Click Next twice)
 - e. *Comment: Enter **Run <Operation Name>*** (Click Finish)
 - Operations Tab listings:
 - Tab: Operation: Type: **Delete, Mark/Unmark records**; Name: **MarkUSANames**.*
 - Tab: Operation: Type: **Update records**; Name: **UpdateUSAPhones**.*
 - Tab: Operation: Type: **Append records**; Name: **AppendClientsTable**.*

- *Tab: Operation: Type: Delete/Mark/Unmark records; Name: MarkDuplicateRecords.*

- At this point, the list looks like this:



8.  **Save** the script (button on Toolbar at top of screen).

- Next, we will add a Browse to the button to show the status of the records to the user.

9. Click **Add New Action**.

- Category: Form/Browse; Action: Open Form or Browse layout.* (Click OK)
- Tab: Open Form or Browse layout?: Browse; Layout Name: NewClients.* (Click Next twice)
- Comment: Open NewClients Browse* (Click Finish)

- There are now 5 Operations and 1 Browse attached to this button.
- Since this is a long script, we want to warn the user that he/she may have to wait a few minutes for it to complete.

10. Click Add New Action.

- Category: Form/Browse; Action: Open Form or Browse layout.* (Click OK)
- Tab: Open Form or Browse layout: Form; Layout Name: PleaseWait.* (Click Next twice)
- Comment: Open PleaseWait form.* (Click Finish)

11. Use the Move Action Up arrow (next to Edit Action) to move this Form to the top of the list so that it opens first.

- Next, we will close the PleaseWait form.

12. Click on the last **Run Saved Operation** in the list.

13. Click Add New Action.

- Category: Forms/Browsets; Action: Close Form or Browse layout.* (Click OK)
- Close which Form or Browse window? Another Form or Browse window.**
- How will you specify which Form or Browse to close? By specifying the name of the Form or Browse window.*

*. In this case, the choice, Current Form or Browse window will close the NewClientImport_practice form on which the button is placed.

d. Window Name: **Forms**; choose **PleaseWait**. (Click Next)

e. *Comment*: **Close PleaseWait form**. (Click Finish)

In this case, you could have used the default comment instead.

- Next, we will play a sound so the user knows the script is finished.

14. Click **Add New Action**.

a. *Category*: **Miscellaneous**; *Action*: **Play sound**. (Click OK)

b. *Sound File* (.wav) to play. (In most cases this is located at C:\A5_Ver8Book\ABC_V8_Lessons\fanfare.wav.)

c. : Click the Smart Button and choose **fanfare.wav**. (Click Open) (Click Next)

d. *Comment*: Play Fanfare (or accept default). (Click Finish)

15. Move the sound to the 2nd to last position, just above the Browse.

- Refer to the screen shot on page 249 to be sure that the actions are in the correct order.

Be sure to save your changes because Alpha Five may forget to ask before closing the Code Editor and you will lose any edits.


16.  Click **Save** (on the Toolbar) to save the Script.

17. Close the Code Editor by clicking on the X in the right corner.

Now we must save the form. We saved the script as we went along, but is necessary to save the form in order to keep the button and its actions.

18. Press CTRL + S to save the form.

- Next, we will test the button.

19.  Go to Form View.

20. Click the button.

- The script runs and ends by opening the Browse.
- Notice that the duplicate records are marked.

21. When the browse opens, press CTRL + HOME to go to the first record.

- A screen shot of the browse is on page page 249.

22. Close the browse.

EDITING THE SCRIPT

Did any dialog boxes open? If so, you can go back in and check the *Run Silently* box.

- Design Mode > Select button > Right click > Events > On Push.
- Edit the action.
- Save the script, save the form and retest.

COMPLETING THE IMPORT OPERATION

We separated this Import Operation into 2 buttons because we need to examine the Marked records before deleting the duplicates. If you remember, we decided to use Last Name, First Name and Company as the basis for the Mark Duplicate Records Operation



CAUTION



VERY IMPORTANT

and that left us with the possibility that there could be Joe E. Johnston and Joe F. Johnston working for ABC Company. Viewing the records after the Mark Operation gives us the opportunity to make manual adjustments. After that is complete, we will use the second button to delete the marked records.

We have created that button for you.

23. To examine its Events, right click on the **Delete Marked Records** button on the **NewClientImport_Practice** form (in Design Mode).

24. Choose Events > OnPush to go to the *Code Editor*.

- Notice that the Actions have not been commented, so it is hard to know which Operations will run.

25. Click **Edit Action**. *Tab: Operation*.

- The Delete/Mark/Unmark Operation is selected, as is the **DeleteMarkedRecords** Operation. Since that is also the name of the button, we can be reasonably sure that the operation is *Delete Marked Records*.

26. Click Next twice and enter the Comment: **Run DeleteMarkedRecords**. (Click Finish)

- The comment appears and, in the future, we won't have to guess!
- Fortunately, the name of the Browse is easy to figure out because we have only one possibility. This time we'll use the direct commenting method.

27. Click on the tiny pencil at the right corner of the dialog box.

28. Enter **Open NewClients Browse**. (Click OK)

- This is a quick way to correct spelling errors and make other adjustments.

This script **does not run silently** because a delete is a final action and it is possible that the button could be clicked accidentally.

29. Save the changes and test the button.



IMPORTANT NOTE

Commenting

As you noted in the above exercise, commenting is invaluable. Without it, you may not be able to ascertain the original intention of the Action. As Dr. Peter Wayne, Alpha Five Xbasic expert, says, "There are two types of developers: Those who comment and those who wish they had!"

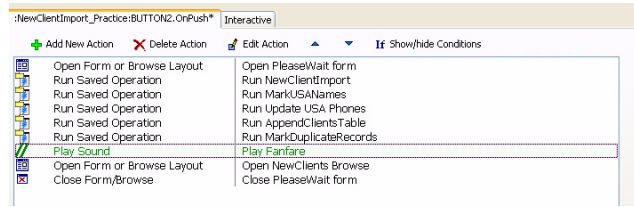
As we have seen, there are two places to enter comments:

- In the final dialog box of the Action Scripting genie.
- The tiny pencil in the lower right corner of the Action Script dialog box.
- Next, we will look at the second use of the word **Comment**.

TEMPORARILY STOPPING AN ACTION

Sometimes when you are designing a script, you need to stop an action while testing and then you want to add it back in later. You can stop any element of an Action Script at any time. It will remain in the list, but the action will not run with the others in the

script. This is called **Commenting Out**. If you decide to add it back in, that is called **Commenting In**. Both actions are available from the Code Editor right click menu.



1. Reopen the Code Editor for the **Import List** button that you created above.
 - Form: **NewClientImport_Practice** (or NewClientImport).
 - Right click on the **Import List** button > choose Events > OnPush.
2. Right click on **Play Sound**.
3. Choose: **Comment In/Out this Action**.
 - The action and its description turn green.
 - The icon at the left turns to //.
4. To test, save your changes, go to Form View and test the button. The script runs, but the sound does not play.
5. Go back in and **Comment In** the **Play Sound** Action. (Click **Save**)
6. Retest the script.

Adding custom graphics for your buttons

You can add your own button graphics to the database. While they are called bitmaps in the button image selector, Alpha Five also allows .JPG files. (They are automatically converted to bitmaps for use in Alpha Five. The original file is not modified.)

Be sure the graphic is small enough to fit on your button. Alpha Five will place the entire graphic on the form. If the button is smaller, only a portion of it will have a button, as in the following example.

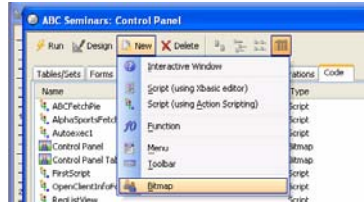


You can, of course, enlarge the button to accommodate the graphic.





1. *Alpha Five Control Panel: Tab: Code.*
2. Click the **New** button; chose **Bitmap**.



3. Click **Import Bitmap from File** and navigate to the Images folder of the lessons that came with this book and choose **control panel.jpg**. In most cases, the path will be:

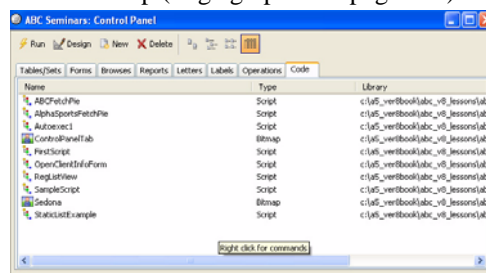
c:\A5_Ver8Book\Images\control_panel_tab.jpg

- Alpha Five will automatically convert the .jpg file to a bitmap.

4. Click OPEN.
5. *Bitmap Object Name: ControlPanelTab.* (Click OK)



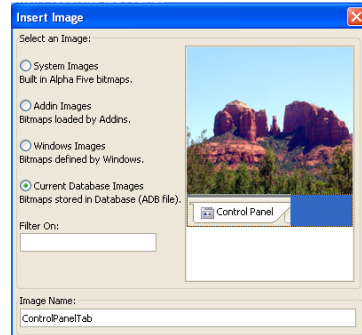
- The default is to store the bitmap with the current database, in its .ALB file. You may choose a different library if you wish.
- The bitmap is added to the listing of Code tab files.
- Note the Sedona bitmap (large graphic on page 254).



6. Open a form, create a new button, go to its properties and click Define Images. At the Insert Image window, choose Current Database Images and then click on the **ControlPanelTab** graphic.

- Its name is inserted as the *Image Name*.

- The large Sedona graphic is also a choice.



7. If necessary, resize the button or the graphic.
8. To learn more about the .ALB file, go to A5 Help > Index Tab > type **.ALB**.



GO TO ALPHA 5 HELP

Password protecting a button

Any button may be password protected, however is most often used on the Startup Form to prevent unauthorized users from entering the application.

In order to activate the button or to remove the password, you **MUST** know the password. If the password is lost, the button will need to be deleted and recreated.




NOTE



CAUTION



1.  Begin in Design Mode for the form.
2. Go to the Properties for any **Button**.
 - Select button, press **F12**.
3. *Tab: Setup.*
4. Check the **Enable password** checkbox.
5. Click **Set Password**.
6. Follow the instructions. (Click OK)
 - You are advised that the password is set.
7. At the Setup Tab, uncheck **Enable password**.
 - You are prompted for the old password.
8. Enter the password. (Click OK)
 - You are advised that the password has been removed.

REMOVING THE BUTTON PASSWORD

This lesson is complete. You may close the database or leave it open if you are continuing to the next chapter.

Congratulations!

In only a few short steps, you can make a button which performs both simple and complicated tasks.

Button, button, who's got the button. From a simple child's game to a sophisticated, user friendly computer tool, the button has seen many uses. The Button Genie makes child's play out of creating buttons to open forms, run reports and initiate most other Alpha Five actions.

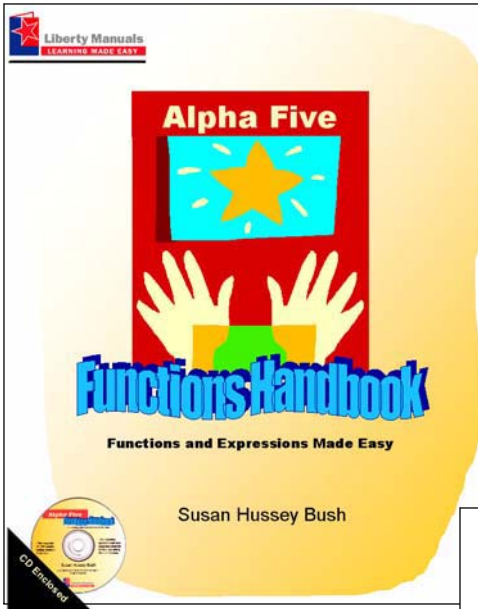
The appearance of the button can be customized. The designer has complete control over font, color and size. Graphics can be applied using the bitmap library or a bitmap from file. Gradient backgrounds, Flyover effects and Bubble Help add interest and function for the user.

The form and all objects on it, including buttons, have events. When a button is created, Alpha Five automatically defines the OnPush event. Actions can also be defined for other events.

It is easy to compile a custom library of bitmaps for buttons.

Password protection is available for buttons. This is often used on an opening form so that unauthorized users are not able to enter the database. Password must be known to disable the protection.

Notes:



Expand your Alpha Five applications with the

Alpha Five Functions Handbook, Functions and Expressions Made Easy.

Alpha Five's Functions allow the development of database applications without programming. In this handbook, they are explained simply, in layman's terms. This manual was born of the author's many years of frustration while searching for the right function for the job. Character, date, numeric, summary or filter—you'll find and use them easily in this logically designed manual.

Alpha Five

Functions Handbook

Functions and Expressions Made Easy

Alpha Five's Functions allow the development of database applications without programming. In this handbook, they are explained simply, in layman's terms. This manual was born out of the author's many years of frustration while searching for the right function for the job. Character, date, numeric, summary or filter—you'll *find and use* them easily in this logically designed manual.

- Organized by use!
- All functions included!
- Syntax given for each function!
- Sample database allows you to test each expression!





Chart chooser — Each chapter has a quick reference to the type of function.



Master Chart — A full list of functions, complete with syntax!

The equipment you will need to have to use this book:

- You will need to have the AlphaFive program installed on your computer. Information on purchasing the program may be found at www.alpha5software.com±
- A companion CD containing the working databases for the book is included with this manual.

* "Get Outta DOS" and "Get Into Alpha Five!" Learning Seminars are produced by Frances M. Peake and Susan H. Bush. For more information, call 1-866-842-2100.

± Liberty Manuals is a separate company from Alpha Software Inc.

BOOKSH ELF CATEGORY:
ALPHA FIVE DATA ACCESS SOFTWARE
Liberty Manuals are printed by
Fisher's Book Printing, PO Box 453, Rutherford, NJ 07070.
1-866-842-2100

LIBERTY USA \$45 Canada \$68
MANUALS www.LibertyManuals.com

Available at www.LibertyManuals.com or call 1-732-842-3000

Alpha Five Made Easy

The Basics and More for Version 8



Three volumes in one!

Step by step instructions for:

- Learning the basics of Alpha Five and enhancing your applications.
- Learning the Web Application Server so you can go live on the web.
- Making the transition from Alpha Four to Alpha Five.

This is the book you've been looking for—**Everything you need to know** to learn the most user-friendly database and web application programs and out there! If you are already familiar with Alpha Five, you will find many tips for a successful application. Learn the new Web Application Server and put your database on the web! Make the transition from Alpha Four to Alpha Five. Now is the time to GET INTO ALPHA FIVE!*

Frances M. Peake, professional database designer and co-owner of Proctor and Peake, Inc., enthusiastically endorses Alpha Five Made Easy and answers a question about Alpha Five.

"The plain-English explanations of each Alpha Five feature in this book show Susan's experience applying the program in a real-world business environment. Readers will find every chapter full of valuable information, regardless of their experience level. On behalf of Alpha Five users and enthusiasts everywhere, thank you Susan, for writing this book!"

"With regards to Alpha Five, we are long time Q&A users and have been looking for a replacement that is easier than Access, dBase, etc., but has the power to write strong applications without a lot of coding. Is Alpha Five the product we are looking for?
— RA DeV, Jr.

"You indicate that you are looking for *"the power to write strong applications without a lot of coding."* In that case, yes, Alpha Five is a better choice than Access. I develop applications in both and I tell you that you can go so much farther in Alpha Five without having to do programming. In fact, you may not have to do any coding at all. Alpha Five offers a lot of commands and properties that simply do not exist in *Access*, where you would have to write your own procedures and functions to do the same thing.

"Even when you need to automate a process, Alpha Five has a number of alternatives to writing code, such as "Action Scripting" that lets you perform the steps you want to automate and generates the code for you. There are, of course, some things that you might dream up that will require writing code in Alpha Five."
— FMP

The equipment you will need to have to use this book:

- You will need to have the Alpha Five program installed on your computer. Information on purchasing the program may be found at www.alphasoftware.com.±
- Alpha Five Version 8 Professional and Enterprise editions contain full design features of the Web Application Server program, but require licensing to use it on the Internet or an Intranet. Call Alpha Software for details.
- A companion CD containing the working databases for the book is included with this manual.

* GET INTO ALPHA FIVE! seminars have been produced by Frances M. Peake and Susan H. Bush. For more information, call 1-732-842-3000.

± Liberty Manuals Company is a separate company from Alpha Software Inc.

BOOKSHELF CATEGORY:
ALPHA FIVE/DATABASE/SOFTWARE
Liberty Manuals are published by
Liberty Manuals Company, PO Box 453, Rumson, NJ 07760.
1-732-842-3000

LIBERTY MANUALS USA \$85 CANADA \$85
www.LibertyManuals.com