

Urgent notice

freedb.org and its services will be shut down on March 31st of 2020.



Search the freedb database advanced

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1. General questions

1.1. What is freedb?

freedb is a database to look up CD information using the internet. This is done by a client (a freedb aware application) which calculates a (nearly) unique disc ID for a CD in your CD-Rom and then queries the database. As a result, the client displays the artist, CD-title, tracklist and some additional info.

1.2. Can I download MP3s or other music files from freedb?

freedb is not a file sharing service, we do not offer any MP3s or other music-files for download!

1.3. Where can I buy a CD I found in the freedb database?

freedb does not sell CDs and we have no information if and where a CD can be bought.

1.4. Can you provide additional information regarding a CD in the database?

Since all information is submitted by freedb users, we have no additional information about the CDs in our database.

1.5. How can I access freedb?

You should use a freedb-aware program. You can take a look at our (incomplete) list of [freedb-aware applications](#).

1.6. How can I tweak my CDDB-aware program to use freedb.org instead of cddb.com?

If there is no direct option to choose freedb instead of CDDB, take a look at our [list with config-hints](#), where you can find solutions for many CDDB1-aware programs. Programs supporting CDDB2 can not be tweaked to access freedb, as CDDB2 uses a different (proprietary) protocol. If there is no solution for the program you're trying to use and you don't find one yourself, please ask the authors of that program to add freedb-support.

1.7. On which ports do the freedb-servers run?

The servers run cddb on port 8880 and http on port 80. The path for http-access is /~cddb/cddb.cgi.

1.8. Where can I find a list of freedb mirror-servers?

The current list of [freedb server mirrors](#) can be found [here](#). A list of ftp mirrors for download of the database can be found in our [Download/Database section](#).

1.9. Is it possible to search the online freedb database?

Unfortunately not, we will release a new online search soon.

1.10. What about commercial and non-commercial licenses

This service will remain license-free and will be available for unrestricted use by any commercial or non-commercial user or developer. All commercial and non-commercial licenses of the existing software components and the database are only available under the terms and conditions of the GPL.

1.11. How often is the database updated?

We update our master server as well as the mirrors with new submissions several times a day.

1.12. How can I run my own local freedb-server?

You have to have a Unix- or Linux-system to run your own local freedb-server. Download the server software, which you can find in the [download section](#). A very helpful HOWTO is included in the archive.

1.13. I installed my own local freedb-server. Can I automatically receive updates?

No. We only provide automatic updates for official freedb mirrors. You'll have to wait for the offline database updates to be released on freedb.org. If you want to be informed about new database archives, please watch our website and the forum for new entries.

2. Submitting new entries

2.1. How can I submit my CD's to freedb?

You need a freedb-aware program supporting submit. For Windows you can e.g. use MAGIX Music Manager, Feurio!, CDex or Audiograbber, for Linux you can e.g. use Grip. A longer list of [freedb-aware applications](#) supporting submit can be found [here](#). The info can be submitted via http or via e-mail (depends on the programs, which method is supported). When submitting via e-mail, the submissions have to be sent to freedb-submit@freedb.org.

2.2. Are there any rules for submitting CDs to freedb?

Yes, there are:

1. Never submit info completely in capitals or completely lower case, if there is no special reason for that.
2. For bands that have a leading "the", simply leave out the "the" (e.g. use "Rolling Stones" instead of "The Rolling Stones") (this rule does not apply to "The The" ;-)
3. Names of people should be written "first name last name" - NOT "last name, first name".
4. Use the name of the artist repeated on the "title" field if there is no title (usually seen on an artist's first major label release, such as with the B-52's)
5. When submitting a CD-Extra, name the data-track "Data" or something like that - do not leave the track-title blank.
6. When submitting a sampler or compilation, you should include the track-artist in the track-name, using the syntax "artist / track-title" and set the CD-artist to "Various"

2.3. Can I submit corrected information, or would that be discarded as "already in the database"?

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Yes, you can. The important thing with this is the revision, which the newly submitted entry has. It has to be higher than the revision of the existing entry (otherwise the newly submitted entry is discarded). So you need a program supporting revisions. Fortunately most programs support revisions in their latest versions. If you are a Windows-User, you can e.g. try Audiograbber, CDex or EAC, which support revisions and increase them automatically, when resubmitting. As a Linux-User, you can try Emptytree Seedy or gtdc. To be sure that this works, you should first query freedb for the entry, change it and resubmit it. Please be careful, and select the correct category for the submit (it has to be the same as the original entry's category).

2.4. Can I correct database entries I found via the web-based search, if I don't have the CD?

Yes, you can. On the website displaying the content of the entry you want to correct, note a disc ID on the "ids:" line and the accompanying category and click on the disc ID. This will now show you the raw database entry. Copy the complete entry to your e-mail program, do the changes you want to do and increase the "Revision" by one. The subject of the e-mail must be "cddb category discid" where category is the category of the original entry (do not change it!) and discid is the disc ID of database entry. Now send the e-mail with the corrected entry to freedb-submit@freedb.org. Make absolutely sure that you send the e-mail as text-only. HTML-e-mails will be rejected by the server software!

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2.5. Can you (freedb) add more genre categories to the database?

It's theoretically possible, but we won't do that, as a lot of programs rely on exactly the 11 current categories to exist. Additionally a lot of entries in the current database would be misplaced, if we added new categories. But there's a better solution: If you're using a program supporting protocol level 5 (e.g. the latest versions of CDex, dMC and Easy CD-DA Extractor), you can store any genre name inside the database entry (additionally to the general classification)!

2.6. Which genre categories are there and where should I put rap or pop CDs?

This is the list of the 11 freedb categories:

blues (self explanatory)
classical (self explanatory)
country (self explanatory)
data (ISO9660 and other data CDs)
folk (self explanatory)
jazz (self explanatory)
newage (self explanatory)
reggae (self explanatory)
rock (incl. funk, soul, rap, pop, industrial, metal, etc.)
soundtrack (movies, shows)
misc (others that do not fit in the above categories)

Additionally to the general classification freedb supports a genre field in the database entries, which can be filled with any genre name. To do so, you need a program supporting protocol level 5.

2.7. My freedb-submission was rejected with error-reason "Discid collision in category xy". What's the problem?

The disc ID, which is an important factor in identifying a CD, is not as good as it could be - in fact, it is pretty bad as a unique identifier for a CD. Therefore completely different CDs (with the same length in seconds and the same track number) can have the same disc ID. A disc ID, however, can only exist once in each of the 11 categories. This disc ID algorithm and the cddb protocol can unfortunately not be changed without losing backwards compatibility to existing applications - and we definitely want to keep backwards-compatibility.

If you receive a rejection e-mail telling you, that there was a disc ID collision in the category you tried to submit the entry to, that means, that in that category the disc ID of your CD is already used for a different CD. When querying the server for disc information with your CD, you don't see the existing entry (which is for a different CD), because the server software checks not only the discid, but also the track offsets when trying to determine, if an entry is a match or not. In order to submit your CD to freedb successfully, you will have to select a different category - even if it does not really fit for the music style of your CD. Since a specific genre can be specified for a database entry in addition to the category, a wrong category choice is not really that problematic.

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2.8. My freedb-submission was rejected with error-reason "Existing entry found with higher revision than submitted". What's the problem?

In order to prevent correct database entries from being overwritten by new (possibly incorrect) submissions, freedb uses revisions for its database entries. When reading a database entry from freedb, an application supporting the revision system stores the revision of the existing entry. If the user changes the entry (to correct mistakes) and re-submits it, the application increases that revision by 1 for the re-submission. So if the server receives an updated database entry with increased revision, it knows, that the user submitting the updated entry really saw the original entry. If the revision is not increased, the server software has to assume, that the user never saw the original entry and is possibly overwriting an entry, that is already perfectly ok.

In order to ensure that a re-submission really works, you should first query freedb for the entry and then correct and re-submit the info (without closing the application in-between, as it might "forget" the revision of the original entry when being closed).

2.9. My freedb-submission was rejected with error-reason "Unsupported charset in header". What's the problem?

Submissions must be in the US-ASCII, the ISO-8859-1 (the 8-bit ASCII extension also known as "Latin alphabet #1") or the UTF-8 charset. The application you used for submit specified an unsupported charset for the submission - which is something you should report as a bug to the application's author, if there isn't already a new, bugfixed version available.

2.10. My submission was rejected with error-reason "unauthorized client/revision". Why?

We had to block the program version you're using from submit, because it generates erroneous submissions. Try getting a newer version of the program - the author of the program was informed about the problems and most likely there is already a new, bugfixed version available, which is not blocked from submit.

2.11. My submission was rejected with error-reason "garbage character on line xy". Why?

The server software found a character in the submission, which is not valid in the charset specified for the submission by the application you used. Only applications supporting the new protocol level 6 can submit entries with Unicode characters - older applications are limited to the ISO-8859-1 (aka Latin1) charset. In order to find the character which caused the rejection, start counting the lines in the rejection notice beginning with the "# xmcd" line, until you reach the line number mentioned in the rejection reason.

2.12. My submission was rejected with error-reason "Submission is not utf8, existing database entry is utf8". Why?

The reason why a UTF-8 encoded entry can't be overwritten with a non-UTF-8 entry is that a UTF-8 entry (eg. in Japanese) may contain character data which can't be presented in the ISO-8859-1 encoding. These characters will, except for some Eastern characters which will be transliterated, be shown as question marks in clients which haven't been updated to support UTF-8 (the entry is, in fact, probably all right). This will provoke people to try and overwrite it (eg. with transliterated Japanese, or worse, S-JIS presented as ISO-8859-1) while there might be no need to do so. This message will become less common as clients are updated. Ask the author of the application you use to support UTF-8.

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3. Database-files

3.1. How often do you release the database archives?

We try to release a complete archive in Windows and Unix format and an update in Unix format once a month. However, there is no guarantee for this. Please do not send e-mails, asking for updates!

3.2. Can you inform me, when new database archives are available?

If you want to be informed about new database archives, please watch our website and the forum for new entries.

3.3. What is a .bz2-archive, how can I decompress it?

bzip2 is a very good compression-algorithm. If you don't know how to decompress it, visit the bzip2 and libbzip2 official home page. If you prefer a GUI-based program and are running Windows, try Power Archiver (Shareware) or 7-Zip, which is Freeware. There's also a bzip2-plugin available for the popular Total Commander.

3.4. Why can't I extract the Unix-format database under Win9x or WinME?

The rock and the misc directory contain more than 38.000 files. Unfortunately the FAT-filesystem cannot handle that many files in one directory. Since WinNT and Win2000 use NTFS, they don't have the problem.

As a solution you should download the Windows-format database archive instead. It consists of far fewer files, as it includes several database entries per file.

3.5. Why aren't there update files available for the Windows-format database, like those for the Unix-format database?

Direct updates for the Windows format database are not possible, but that's no problem as you can use the freedb Updater (which is available on the ftp-servers) to update your Windows format database using the Unix format update files.

3.6. Why do I get lots of 0 byte files when extracting the Unix-format archives under WinNT/2000/XP and how can I extract them properly?

The Unix-format archives contain several hardlinks. Extracting them under WinNT/2000 doesn't work properly (as links are not supported by Windows) when using common decompressors, so you will get 0 byte files instead of the links. But there is a way to extract the files properly.

Download star.exe, bzip2.exe and the cygwin1.dll from

<ftp://ftp.berlios.de/pub/cdrecord/alpha/win32/>

Put them somewhere in your path and run

```
star -x -bz -copylinks f=/cygdrive/driveletter/path_to_your_archive
```

in the directory, to which you want to extract the database.

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