

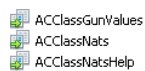
Connecting to the WitpStaff Database using OpenOffice

V1.0 - 22Aug09

The database tables of WitpStaff can be accessed directly by using the OpenOffice Base database program. Once a connection has been established, the data tables in the WitpStaff hsqldb database (named *witp* in all folders) is made available for the creation of custom queries, forms and reports from within the OpenOffice Base application.

This requires some knowledge in database programming and an idea of what the database fields are used for. Standard database techniques can be used to create these custom items which are stored in an additional file (xxxx.odt) created in the WitpStaff directory.

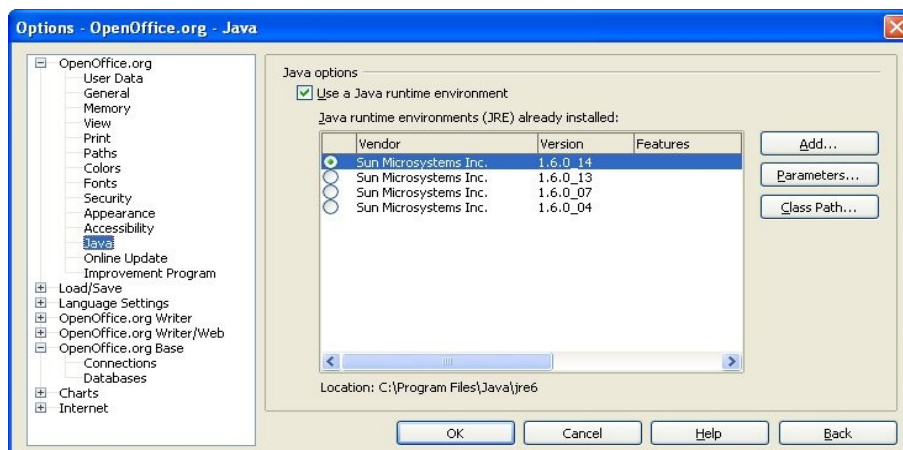
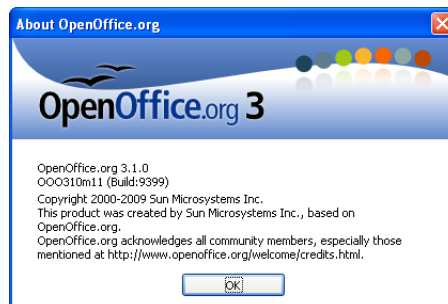
The data in the tables can be changed from within OpenOffice and will be visible to the WitpStaff application. Note that data cannot be changed in *table views* (eg. see below) but that is a limitation of Base.



Note: Marcus has warned that a few things in the WitpStaff database are a bit mysterious (mostly leftovers from WitP times) and that he has and will continue to change the database schema (adding new columns or tables) which may invalidate your custom form/reports. However, I have deleted an existing WitpStaff database and recreated a new one and the existing OpenOffice database reconnected and seemed to pick up the new schema without any problems.

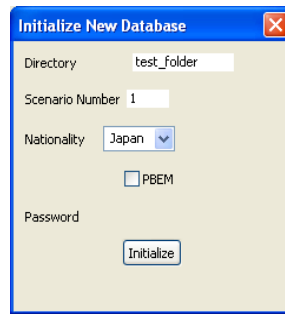
Prerequisites:

This tutorial assumes OpenOffice Suite and JRE are properly installed. The test environment used was OpenOffice 3.1.0 with Java Runtime Environment JRE 1.6.0.14 though I suspect other recent and later versions will probably also work.

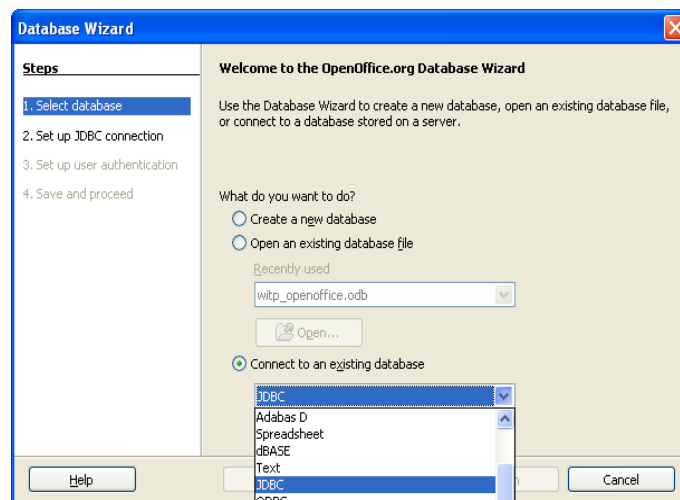


Procedure:

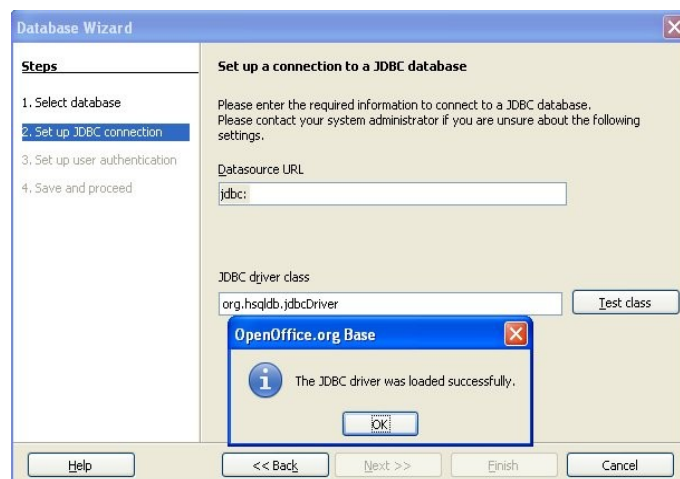
1. Create and initialise WitpStaff database as normal



2. Run OpenOffice
3. Open new database which should open the Database Wizard
4. Select **Connect** to an existing database button
5. Select **JDBC** on the pulldown menu (Java Database Connectivity)



6. Click 'Next'
7. Type **org.hsqldb.jdbcDriver** into JDBC Driver Class field*
* **Ref:** http://wiki.services.openoffice.org/wiki/HSQldb:Tips_and_Tricks
8. Press **Test Class** and ensure the driver loads successfully



The Datasource URL is of the form **jdbc:hsqldb:file:<path>;<options>** for a local database*. WtpStaff always uses the database name **witp** in the folder created during the database initialisation. More than likely your path will be similar to the path below:. Adjust for your own file system.

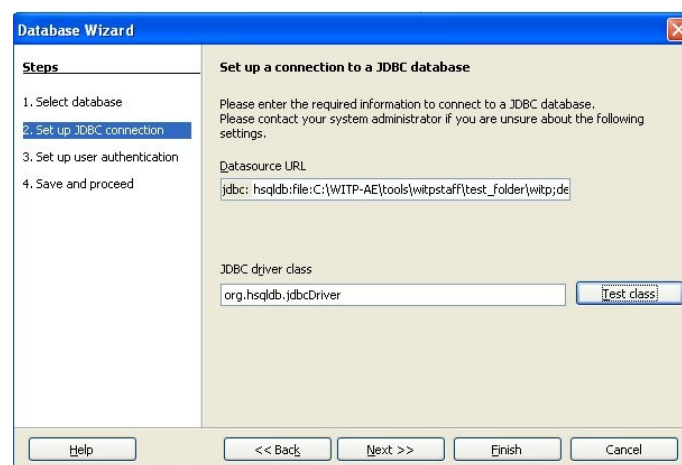
C:\Matrix Games\WITP-AE\tools\witpstaff\test_folder\witp

The option **default_schema=true** appears to be compulsory**

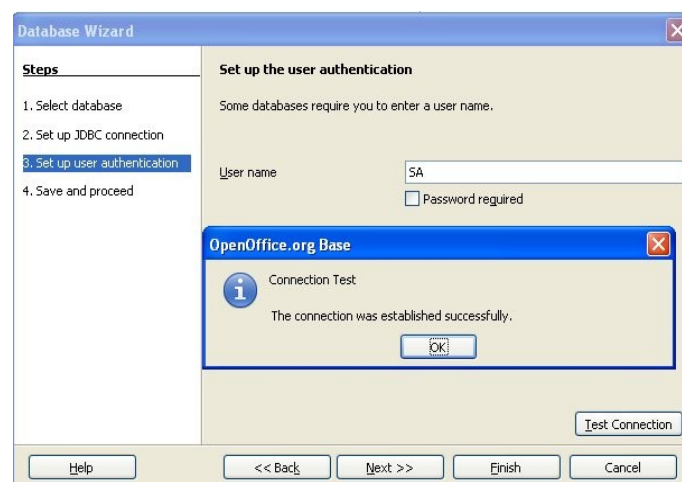
* **Ref:** <http://www.hsqldb.org/doc/src/org/hsqldb/jdbc/jdbcConnection.html>

** **Ref:** http://wiki.services.openoffice.org/wiki/HSQldb:Tips_and_Tricks

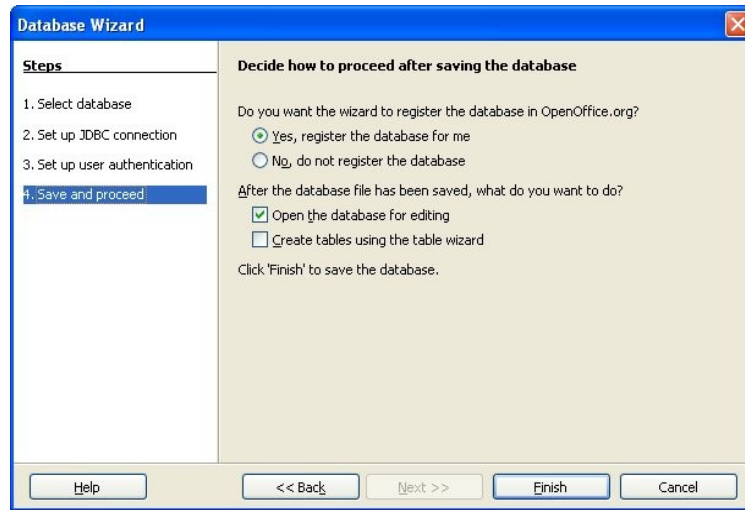
9. Type the Datasource URL (likely to be similar to below) into the field and click the **Next** button.
hsqldb:file:C:\Program Files\Matrix Games\WITP-AE\tools\witpstaff\test_folder\witp;default_schema=true



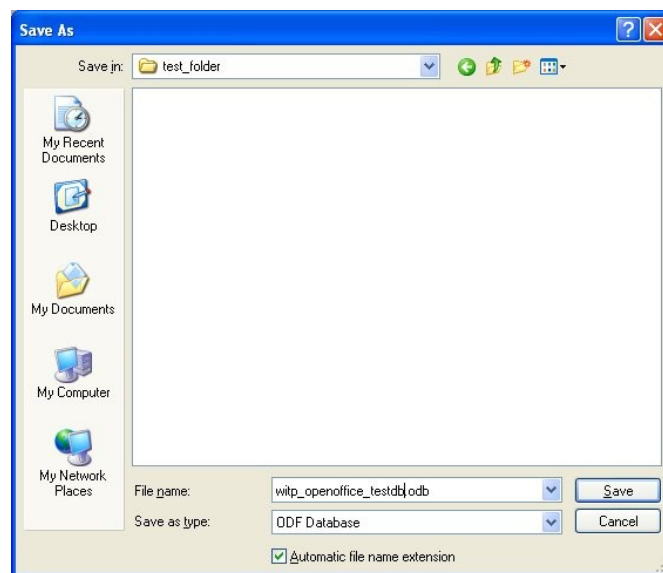
10. Type **SA** into Use Name field (System Administrator) and leave the Password unticked
11. Click on the **Test Connection** button and ensure the connection is successful.
12. Press **Next** button



13. Press **Finish** button



14. Create the Open Base file that contains the connection data and the custom form/reports.
(I would suggest a meaningful name that is different for each WitpStaff database).



15. All done!!

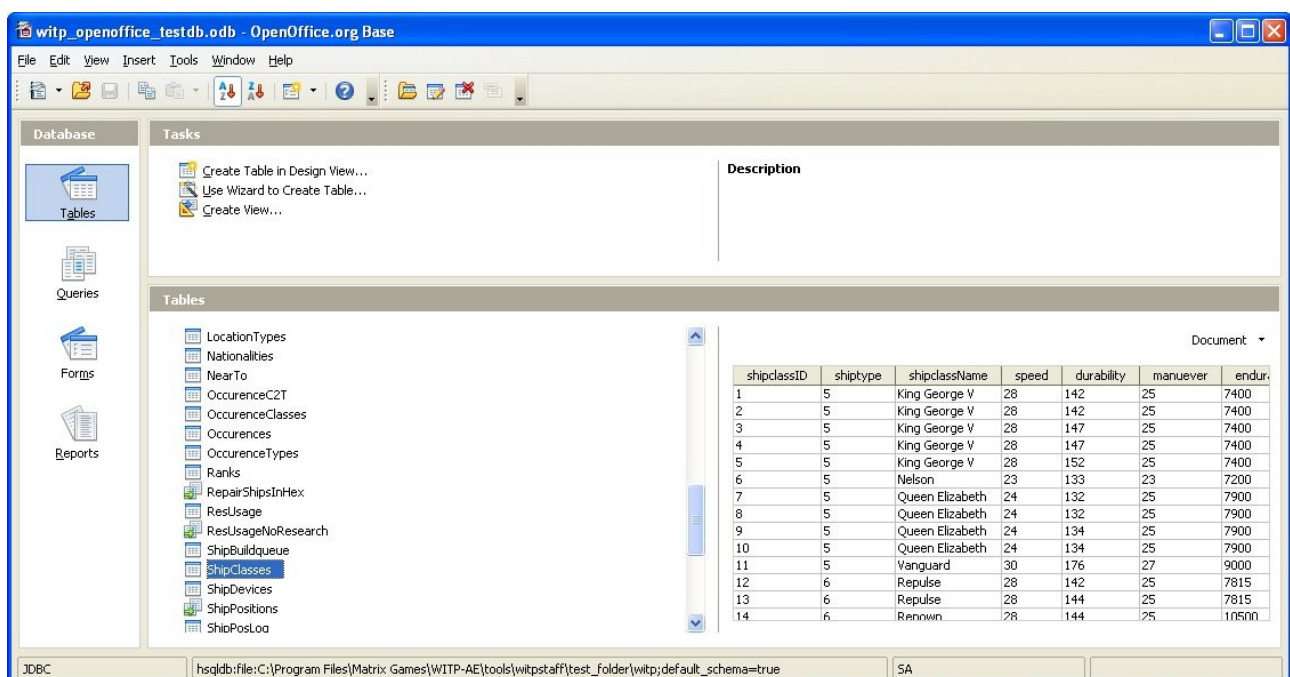
Using the OpenOffice Database:

Simply navigate to the database folder and double click on the xxx.odt file from step 14 above, or create a shortcut to this file.

The database will originally only contain the imported data in tables (and table views). Create your custom forms and reports using the inbuilt tools and save.

To maintain compatibility with WitpStaff, I would suggest that you should not alter any of the existing data tables but create new ones for any additional data. These new data structures should be in the xxx.odt file and won't be overwritten by WitpStaff updates. *(There is no guarantee on any of this of course).*

We will be looking forward to the creative ideas you come up with these tools. Please feel free to share them around.



Updating WitpStaff Database Schema

Marcus warned that the WitpStaff database schema could change which may require the WitpStaff database to be recreated.

To do this, simply copy the OpenOffice xxx.odt file to a temporary location, and delete the WitpStaff folder (otherwise WitpStaff will complain that the folder already exists). Reinitialise the database with the latest version of WitpStaff (using the original folder name) and copy the original OpenOffice xxx.odt file back in from the temporary location.

If the path hasn't changed, OpenOffice should reconnect without any problems and the updated schema applied. Note however the changed fields may affect your custom forms and reports.

Best of Luck,

Reynold
(Forum Alias: Reg)