4.04. Item master lists

Updated: Version 3.1

Master lists are standard lists of items you would supply to wards, clinics, etc. on a regular basis. Once set up, a master lists can be assigned to customers or Virtual stores, and then used to support Stock Control including imprest orders. Master Lists are useful to stores which have a number of customers or virtual stores that they supply whose lists of stock items are either identical or very similar.

Choosing the **Item > Show item master lists...** menu item or clicking on the **Master lists** button on the *Item* tab of the navigator displays a list of the current master lists in your datafile in this window:



If the list of master lists is long, you can type something in the *Search master lists* field and the list will only show master lists that contain what you have typed.

Master lists can only be managed (created, deleted, edited, applied to stores or customers) on the Central Server in a synchronisation system.

Buttons on the Show master lists window

Add master list

Click on the *Add Master List* button and you are presented with this window:



Description

Enter the name of the master list here - this is the list name that everyone will see e.g. `All items: General warehouse`. Any non-printable characters entered before or after the description will be removed. Any entered in the description will be replaced with an underscore (_).

Note

Add any note or information here that will help you and others understand what the list is for.

Discount %

The % discount to apply to sell prices for the items on the masterlist when they are issued on a customer invoice. Will not affect prices on prescriptions. The discount is applied after other sell price calculations or substitutions are made.

Automatically add new items to this master list

If you check this, any new items created, whether manually or during import, will be added to the master list. This is a particularly helpful setting when you are using master lists to control the visibility of items in stores.

This master list is a patient list

If checked, this tells mSupply to use the prices on this master list for any of the items on this list on prescriptions (not customer invoices).

Is default price list

If checked then tells mSupply to use the unit prices set on this master list as the unit sell price for those items instead of other prices. This price will be applied to prescriptions as well as customer invoices.

Buttons on the Master list window

Add item

You then populate the list with the required items by clicking the **Add Item** button:



- On entering the first few characters of the item to be ordered and pressing the Tab key, the (by now!) familiar list will appear from which the desired item is selected by double-clicking.
- If the imprest system is used in your organisation, the quantity is entered in the *Imprest Quantity* field. If the imprest system is not being used, you don't have to enter anything in this field.
- If you want this list to determine the price of this item for customers using it, the price is entered in the *Price per unit* field. If not, no entry is required in this field.

Remove item(s)

To remove one or more items from the master list, select (click) the row(s) and then click on the **Remove item(s)** button.

When master lists are controlling visibility of items (see the 26.07. Virtual stores page for details) then removing an item from a master list will make it invisible in all stores where that master list is used. However, if there is stock of that item in the store, the stock remains visible and the stock can be removed by distributing it, making an inventory adjustment, or returning it to the supplier on a supplier credit.

Save sort order

- The order in which the items are ordered dictates the order in which they populate various transaction forms in mSupply.
- Clicking on any of the column headings allows you to sort the list according to that heading.
- You also have the ability to click on an item in the list, and drag it to a new position.
- Once you are happy with the sort order, click this button to save the order.

Copy to clipboard

The master list is copied to the clipboard when this button is clicked so that you can paste it into other applications on your computer e.g. a word processor or spreadsheet application.

Update price using monthly average

Also only visible if the **Use program pricing** preference is turned on (see the 15.03. Invoice preferences page for details). When you click this button, mSupply calculates a weighted average price for each item from all the cost prices on all supplier invoice lines that were confirmed in the number of months previous to the current day for each item shown in the text box below the button (defaults to 12). That calculated price is then shown for each item in the *Price* column. When you click on the **OK** or **OK & Next** buttons these prices will be saved on the master list, if you click on the **Cancel** button the prices will revert to what they were before. mSupply will create a log record when the function is run so that you have a record of the old and new prices - see the 25.19. The system log page for details on viewing the logs.

Import item list

You can import a list of items created elsewhere e.g. an accounting application or a spreadsheet. This can save you a lot of time when creating a master list!

The file to be imported must be tab delimited text file, which is most easily created in a spreadsheet. The file must contain columns in this order:

- **Item code** Must match an existing item code.

  If you are *not* importing imprest quantity or price, then this is the only column needed. The following columns are not required.

- **Item name** For information purposes only and is not actually imported. You can leave this

column blank if you like, however, if you are importing imprest and / or price data, then you must include the column, it's just that the entries can be blank.

- **Imprest quantity** Optional and can be left blank. You would leave the entries blank if the master list is not going to be used for an imprest.
- **Price** Optional and can be left blank. You would leave the entries blank if the master list is not going to be used for pricing

Records in the file are, of course, separated by the end of line character, which will be created by the spreadsheet when you save the file as a **Text (Tab delimited)** format.

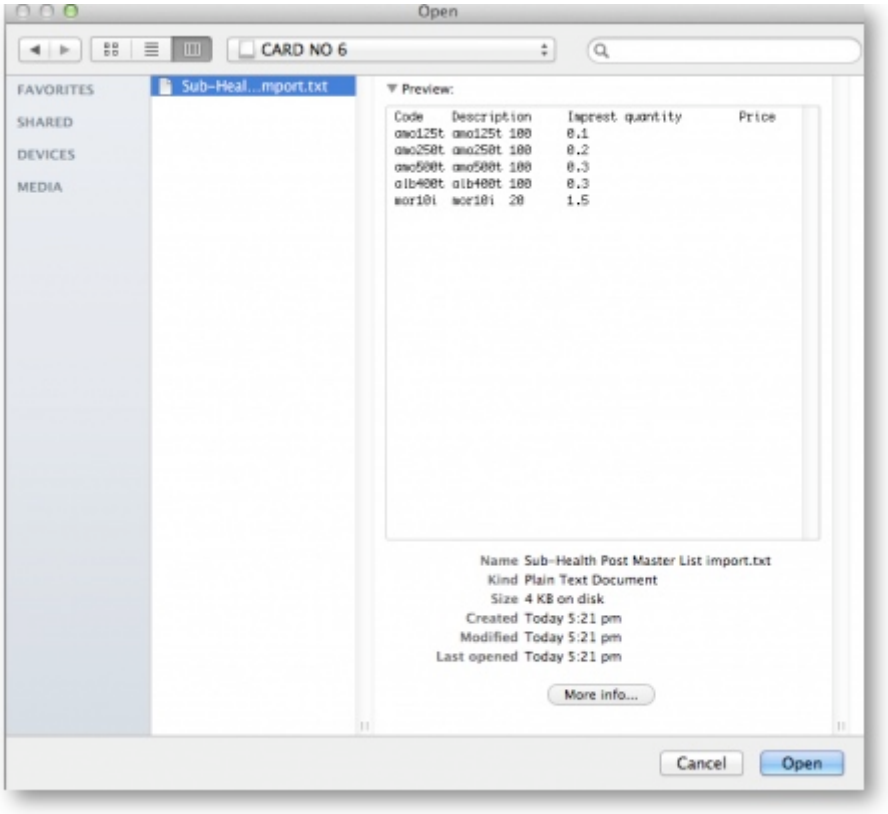
For example:

Item code	Item name	Imprest quantity	Price
amo250t	amoxycillin 250mg tab	800	4.50
amo500t	amoxycillin 500mg tab	300	5.50

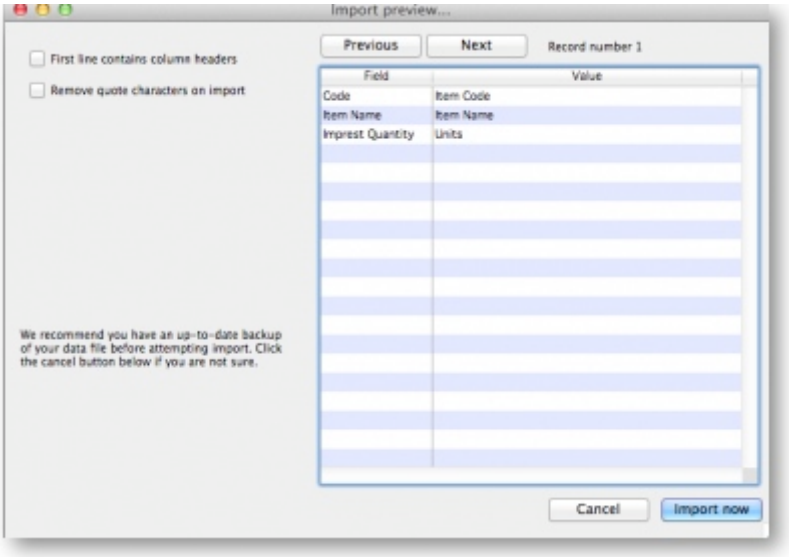
Clicking on the *Import item list* button takes you to a prompt:



after which you can select the file:



And then the import preview dialogue box is displayed:



On this screen you use the *Next* and *Previous* buttons to move through the records and see what details will be imported for each. The *First line contains column headers* tells mSupply whether to ignore the first record in the import file (checked = ignore first line of file). The first record in the import file often contains headers describing the fields in each record, not actual data.

The *Remove quote characters on import* checkbox, if checked, tells mSupply® to strip all " characters from the data. This is recommended. In fact, this option can be selected anyway without detriment to the import.

- Any new items on in the import will be added to the end of the master list.

- If you import items that are already on the master list, they will not be added to the end of the list. The existing entries will have their **Imprest Quantity** and **Price** details *updated* with the imported values.

Clicking the *Import now* button executes the import with the settings you made and takes you back to the master list screen with the imported items now showing in your master list.

The *Cancel* button also takes you back to the master list screen but, obviously, does not execute the import.

Search field

If you need to find a specific item in the master list you can type something in the *Search items* field just below the buttons. Only the items in the list with a name or code that contains what you typed will be shown, all others will be hidden.

Tabs on the Master list window

Items

Shows the list of items on the master list.

In use by

Shows which customers and stores the master list has been assigned to:



The table contains a list of all the stores and facilities (non-store names) that are visible in the current store. The stores or facilities that are already using this master list have the checkbox in the *Uses this master list* column checked. The *xxx*/*yyy* figures just below the table on the right hand side show how many names are currently displayed in the list (*xxx*) and how many names in total are visible in this store (*yyy*).

- **To assign a master list** to a store or facility (non-store name) in the list, simply check its checkbox in the *Uses this master list* column.
- **To remove a master list** from a store or facility uncheck its checkbox in the *Uses this master list* column.

If the list of names is long there are a few things you can do to find the ones you want and quickly set or unset master lists for them:

- Check or uncheck the **Store** or **Facility** checkboxes to turn on and off the display of Stores and non-store names in the list.
- Type something in the *Search Names* field. The list will only show stores and facilities that

contain what you type in this field.
- Click the **All on** button to check all the checkboxes visible in the *Uses this master list* column.
- Click the **All off** button to uncheck all the checkboxes visible in the *Uses this master list* column.

Tags



Master lists can have tags applied to them to identify them for certain configurations. The tags applied to the master list will be shown in the Tags section.

To **add** another tag, simply click into the box inside the *Tags* area and type then name of the tag to attach. Click off the tag and the tag will be added. To **remove** any tag, simply click on the small 'X' in its top left hand corner.

Program settings

Master lists can be used to define programs. This is the tab where program settings are made, to see all the details please see to the 4.05. Programs page.

Delete master list

From the *Item Master lists* window, selecting the *Delete Master List* button allows you to delete a list which is no longer required.

- This action has significant consequences for any customers who are users of the list. So to prevent accidental deletion, this action cannot be completed until any customers who are users of it have their assignment with it removed.
- To find out which customers and stores the list is assigned to, open the master list and click on the *In use by* tab. If the list on this tab is empty, you will be able to remove the master list. Refer to the Assigning a list to a customer section below and the 25.08. Virtual stores page to remove the master lists from customers and stores respectively.

Duplicate master list

Should you wish to create a Master list which is very similar to an existing one, click on this icon, and a new Master list with the same name (description) but with `// (Copy)//' appended to it is created; this can then be edited and renamed to suit your requirements.

Report

To create a custom master list report, click on the **Report** button on the Master list window. This will open the custom report editor and you can create your custom report there.

Print

To generate a built-in report based on all the master lists in the list, click on the **Print** button on the Master list window. You will be given the following options:

- **General:** This report shows some of the simple settings for all the master lists (whether it is a program, whether it is a patient list, whether it will have new items automatically added to it etc.)



- **Cross tab: Item vs Master list:** Opens directly in Excel. The rows are all the items on master lists, the columns are all the master lists and the cells contain *Yes* if the item is on that master list.



- **Items without master list:** This shows all the items in your datafile that are not included on any master list.



Assigning a list to a customer

To assign a list to a customer, the customer's details need to be on screen; Choose **Customer > Show customers** , or using the Navigator, select // Show customers// , fill in the appropriate details, and press *Find*, or just press *Find*, then double click the entry required on the // Names // list. You will see the name's detail window:



Once the desired customer's *Edit Customer/Supplier* window appears click on the // Item Lists// tab to see this window:



Buttons in the Item Lists section:

- **Add Master list:** Click this to select a master list to add to the customer from a list of all master lists which have been created. You will see this window:



Double-click on the list you want to add to the customer; the window will close and the selected list will be added.

If the list of master lists is long, you can type something in the *Search master lists* field, then only lists

that contain what you typed will be displayed.

- **Delete list:** Select a master list and click on this button to un-assign it from this customer. The master list remains in mSupply, it is not deleted.

When operating multiple stores in mSupply, you can sometimes have difficulty with item visibility: an item might be on a master list for a particular customer but if the item is not visible in the store you are logged into when using the list, then the item will not appear.

A temporary fix can be achieved by setting the item visibility in a particular store to match an item list - refer the Visibility tab. This is only a temporary fix. If you add a new item to a master list, the visibility of that item in the stores using that list will not be updated.

To avoid this problem, you can set a preference (see here for details) to have the visibility of items on lists altered to match the visibility of the name for which the lists are made.

- **Printing:**
  - Before printing, choose either *Sort by Group* or *Sort by department*
  - Choose whether to send to Excel® or your printer.
  - Click **Generate**

Information button

Edit list properties

The attributes of a list are set by double clicking on the name of the list. This window is displayed:



The options should be checked as appropriate:

- **Imprest**: If checked, this list will populate an imprest customer stock history created for the customer.
- **Customer stock history**: If checked, this list will populate a customer stock history created for the customer.
- **Ordering list for web**: Means that the list represents all items that the customer can order using the mSupply Customer interface. If a customer who uses the customer interface for ordering stock does not have a list with this option checked, they will not be able to order any items.
- **Price list**: Means that the prices on this list will be used for these items when they are being distributed to this customer on a customer invoice. The price on this list will override any sell prices that individual stock lines have. Only one list can have this option checked for each customer.

Using master lists to control item visibility in stores

You can use master lists to control item visibility in each store. This will make the items visible in each individual store match exactly the items included in the master list(s) selected for that store.

Control of item visibility by master list can have drastic unintended consequences!
It affects **ALL** stores in the system.

- Do not turn it on unless you know what you are doing!

One unintended consequence: An mSupply store can only order from another mSupply store those items that are on master lists which have been assigned to *both* stores.

For example:

Central store has the following master lists assigned:

- **All items** (includes all items in the system)
- **HIV items**

Kathmandu store has the following master lists assigned:

- **HIV items**
- **TB items**

Kathmandu store tries to place order from the **Central store** for:

- Items on the **HIV items** master list. This succeeds, because both stores have been assigned the **HIV items** master list.
- Items on the **TB items** master list. This fails because the **TB items** master list has not been assigned to the **Central store**, *even though* the TB items are all included in the **All items** master list .

Procedure - item visibility

For example, let's say there are 100 stores, and you want all of them to have the same item visibility:

1. Create a master list and add some items.
2. Go to each store and make sure that the master list is selected.
3. Turn on the **Automatically update item visibility in all stores to match master lists used by each store** preference (see the 16.01. General preferences page for details).

- Now whenever an item is added or removed from this master list, the preference will automatically update the visibility for all of the 100 stores, so that the items visible for each individual store matches the items included in the master list.
- Adding an item to a master list will automatically add that item to visibility for all stores using that master list
- Deleting an item from a master list will automatically remove that item from visibility for each

store using that master list, provided that it is not included in *another* master list in use by each store respectively.

When deleting items from a master list no checks are made about whether items have stock in any stores using that master list to control item visibility. The items will become invisible in those stores (so they cannot be re-ordered for example) but the stock **will not**. All stock in stores can be issued on a customer invoice or prescription, or included in inventory adjustments and stocktakes, regardless of whether the item is invisible or not. **It is impossible to hide stock in mSupply!**

If you've been running your mSupply for some time without controlling item visibility by master list and you now want to move to it, you will likely want to start by creating a master list containing **ALL items** and applying visibility to all existing stores according to that **ALL items** master list. Then, over time, different master lists can be created and applied to those existing stores.

To create a **ALL items** master list, you can export all items, and then import them to the master list, refer above.

Master list Tips

Creating a re-ordered master list

You may need to create a new master list which is similar to an existing one, but with significant changes, including, particularly, changing the sort order.

Small master list:

If this is a small list, this is relatively easily achievable by:

1. Select 'source' master list
2. Duplicate it to the new master list
3. Add any new items to the temporary master list
4. Re-organise the list to the desired sort order

Large master list:

However, if the list is a long one, then the re-organising can be extremely tedious, especially over a dodgy internet connection to the Central server (editing master lists must happen on the Central Server)! This is best achieved by:

1. Select 'source' master list
2. **Duplicate** it to a temporary master list
3. Add any new items to the temporary master list
4. **Copy to clipboard** (using button)
5. Open a blank Excel sheet and Paste the clipboard in to cell A1
6. Delete the first four lines in the spreadsheet
7. Filter the table of data
8. Do the necessary edits including any re-ordering
9. Save as a tab separated values text file
10. Back in mSupply, create your new master list from scratch (**Add master list** button).
11. **Import master list** (using button)
12. Once you've verified that it worked the way you wanted it to, **Delete** the temporary master list

Re-order existing master list

This method can even be used to effectively re-order an existing master list, but be careful; stop any syncing if in a synced system, and take a backup of your datafile before embarking on this:

Method 1:

1. Stop syncing (if in a synced system) and make a backup.
2. Create your new, correctly ordered master list as described above.
3. Assign this list to all the same names as the original master list was assigned to.
4. Unassign the original master list to all names
5. Delete the original master list
6. Rename new list

Method 2:

1. Stop syncing (if in a synced system) and make a backup.
2. Create the tab delimited text file for your new, correctly ordered master list as described above.
3. Delete all but one of the items on the original master list. This one item is ideally the item that will be at the 'top' of the reordered list.
4. Import the tab delimited text file to the original master list.

This is scarier (deleting items of master lists is a big deal), but avoids the need for steps 3 - 6 of Method 1.

Removing an item from a master list when it is currently in stock

There are a number of circumstances under which you will need to remove an item from a master list when it is currently in stock including:

- The item is being phased out and you don't want facilities to be able to order it
- The item should never have been on the master list and users have accidentally recorded stock of the item

In these cases, it is relatively straightforward to remove an item from a master list - *except* that if your system is using master lists to control item visibility in stores, then:

mSupply will not allow you to remove an item from a master list IF **any** store that is assigned to that master list has:

- The item currently in stock AND
- The item is not on any *other* master list assigned to that store.

There are two options open to you:

Use a temporary master list to assist with the process

1. Create a temporary master list with the item(s) to be removed.
2. Assign the temporary master list to all the affected stores that still hold stock of the item(s).
3. Remove the item from the original master list. This should now be possible as the condition above should be met.
4. As each store removes the stock of the item(s), un-assign the temporary master list from the store.
5. Once all stores have removed stock of the item(s), the temporary master list can be deleted.

// Previous: **4.03. Item categories** | Next: **4.05. Programs** //

From:
https://docs.msupply.org.nz/ - **mSupply documentation wiki**

Permanent link:
https://docs.msupply.org.nz/items:master_lists?rev=1789957906

Last update: **2026/09/21 02:31**