



How To Write an ALEPH Table Header (alephe_headers)

All Releases

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The purpose of this document

This document attempts to set forth the appropriate manner in which ALEPH table headers must be written in order that they display correctly in the ALEPHADM client.

General guidelines

1. Every line should begin with an exclamation point (!).
2. NEVER use tabs in tables and their headers. The ALEPHADM client does not know how to read data that contains tabs.
3. The table name and purpose should be written at the head of the table. (This does not relate to the ALEPHADM client.)
4. The date of the last update should be written at the head of the table. (This does not relate to the ALEPHADM client.)

Example: tab16

```
!=====
!      tab16 - Due dates, fines & limits
!=====
! Last header change: 21/11/99
```

5. From 12.4 and higher, when editing tables through ALEPHADM, it is possible to see lines that have been marked out with a ! at the beginning of the line. These lines appear in yellow, and the line can be activated by unmarking it (i.e., removing the ! sign). These lines should be in the correct column format, moved one position to the right (because of the !).

You can also add comment lines to the tables (even though they cannot be displayed in the ALEPHADM table). In order to ensure that the ALEPHADM client will not delete these lines, in addition to ! at the beginning of the line, you must also have the word "rem" or "*", followed by a blank (For example, !rem Jody decided to comment this out 1999/10/14 or !* Jody decided to comment this out 1999/10/14).

Following are examples of the two types of comment lines, as they should be written:

- **Table line**; appears in yellow in the ALEPHADM client; is identified by ! at the beginning of the line in the table; all data on the line is in the format of the table, moved right by one position,

For example, from edit_doc_999.

```
## 260##          a D Lplace          Y F      E PLA
!## 260##         b D LPublisher      Y Z      E PUB
!## 260##         c D LYear           Y       E XXX
```

- **Free text comment line**; does not display in ALEPHADM client,

For example, from tab_sublibrary

```
!rem
USM20 2 USM20 L USM20                                16A          ALEPH
!rem =====
!rem MAB Libraries
!rem =====
!* =====
```

When saving a table in ALEPHADM, all lines are deleted which are not:

- in table format (i.e., within column confines)
- or which are not prefixed by ! and in table format
- or which are not prefixed by !rem or !*

Table header codes

TABLE_KEY (optional)

The TABLE_KEY line defines the columns which make up the “key” of a line in the table. The TABLE_KEY is used by the ALEPHADM client for display in FORM mode. List the columns that make up the key, separated by commas, no spaces.

In order that all lines of the table be treated individually in the FORM mode, the TABLE-KEY MUST include enough columns to make each line unique.

For example, tab16
TABLE_KEY 1,2,3,4

HELP, END_HELP (optional)

The text that is written in the section from HELP to END_HELP is displayed when F1 is pressed, or the question mark icon (?) is clicked, when the user is in EDIT mode of a table in ALEPHADM. Do not use semicolons (;) in this section!

For example, tab18.lng

```
! HELP
! 0000 ALL
! 0001 Photo request
...
! 9997 Damaged material
! 9998 L
! 1000 Payment
! END_HELP
```

COL (mandatory)

The COL lines define each table column. Except for the first parameter (column number), which is separated by a period, the parts of each COL line are separated by a semicolon. Each COL line MUST have 3 occurrences of a semicolon. There must be at least one space between parts of the line.

For example,

```
! COL 5. 10; FLOAT_DOT {7,2}; #;  
! COL 6. 1; ALPHA {L}; ;  
! COL 7. 30; ALPHA_NUM; ;
```

The sections of the COL line are:

Column number (mandatory, followed by period - space)

For example, 7.

Column width (mandatory, followed by semicolon - space)

For example, 30;

Type of column (mandatory, followed by semicolon - space).

The possible values are:

ALPHA_NUM

0-9, A-Z, no blanks, no special characters

NUM

0-9

TEXT

FLOAT_DOT

right-justified number with decimal (i.e. price)

FLOAT_NO_DOT

right-justified number

TIME

DATE

For example,

```
! COL 1. 4; NUM; ;
```

Optionally, column type can be further defined as UPPER or LOWER, by adding “, UPPER” or “, LOWER”

For example,

```
! COL 3. 5; ALPHA_NUM, UPPER; ;
```

Column type can be further defined, with {...}, giving valid values for the column. These values are displayed as a drop-down menu in the ALEPHADM client, or as a

hint when a column entry is double clicked for update. The hint is only relevant for column types FLOAT_DOT or FLOAT_NO_DOT. In these cases, the hint displays the format of the data entered in this field.

For example,

```
! COL 5. 10; FLOAT_DOT {7,2}; - displays as hint
! COL 6. 1; ALPHA {L}; - displays as drop-down
```

In all other cases, {...} values display as a pull-down menu.

Wild card character (optional, but a semicolon (;) must be present)

Actually, this is any character outside the character set defined in type of column. This generally serves to define the wild card, which is usually #.

For example,

```
! COL 2. 2; NUM; #;
```

Column name (mandatory)

This is written on a new line. It is displayed at the head of the column in ALEPHADM. It must have a semicolon (;) at the end.

For example,

```
! Date parameter;
```

Column hint (optional, but line must be present)

This is written on a new line. It is displayed when the cursor is placed on the column head in ALEPHADM. Separate lines are retained. It must have a semicolon (;) at the end of the last line, and may NOT have semicolons elsewhere.

For example,

```
! Date parameter:
! + in Column 5 = no.of days to add
! A in Column 5 = actual date;
```

Column help (optional, a semicolon (;) need not be present if no help is defined)

This is written on a new line. It is displayed when the user right-clicks on the column head in ALEPHADM. Separate lines are retained. There must be a semicolon (;) at the end of the last line.

For example,

```
! COL 22. 4; ALPHA_NUM, UPPER; ;
! Maximum renewal period;
! Maximum renewal period:
! D days/W weeks/M months
! nnn - number of units;
!
! example: D007 - renew up to a maximum of 7 days
! W004 - renew up to 4 weeks;
```