Using Buttons

Databases can be made easier to use by people who don't know how to use FileMaker Pro through the use of buttons. Buttons are simply graphics placed on the screen to represent commands. All the user has to do is point the cursor at the button and click the mouse button for the command to be run. Buttons can be set to carry out one of three different tasks:

- Switch the screen to another layout.
- Perform a command from the menus.
- Run a script which is a recorded sequence of commands

Buttons can be created using the BUTTON tool, using pre-drawn graphics or by drawing them using the FileMaker Pro Drawing Tools. They can be placed in existing layouts or they can be placed in a layout of their own.

Loading the Prepared File

An updated version of the Library Orders database has been prepared for you. It contains some extra fields and data which will be used in this section.

A   Opening the File

1   Load FileMaker Pro, click on OPEN AN EXISTING FILE and select OK. Or close the current file and select OPEN from the FILE menu.

2   Access the FMP7 SUPPORT FILES are and open the CHAPTER 7 folder.

3   Open the file:

<div align="center">Library Orders 7</div>

4   If asked, select SYSTEM'S SETTINGS for the DATE and TIME FORMAT.
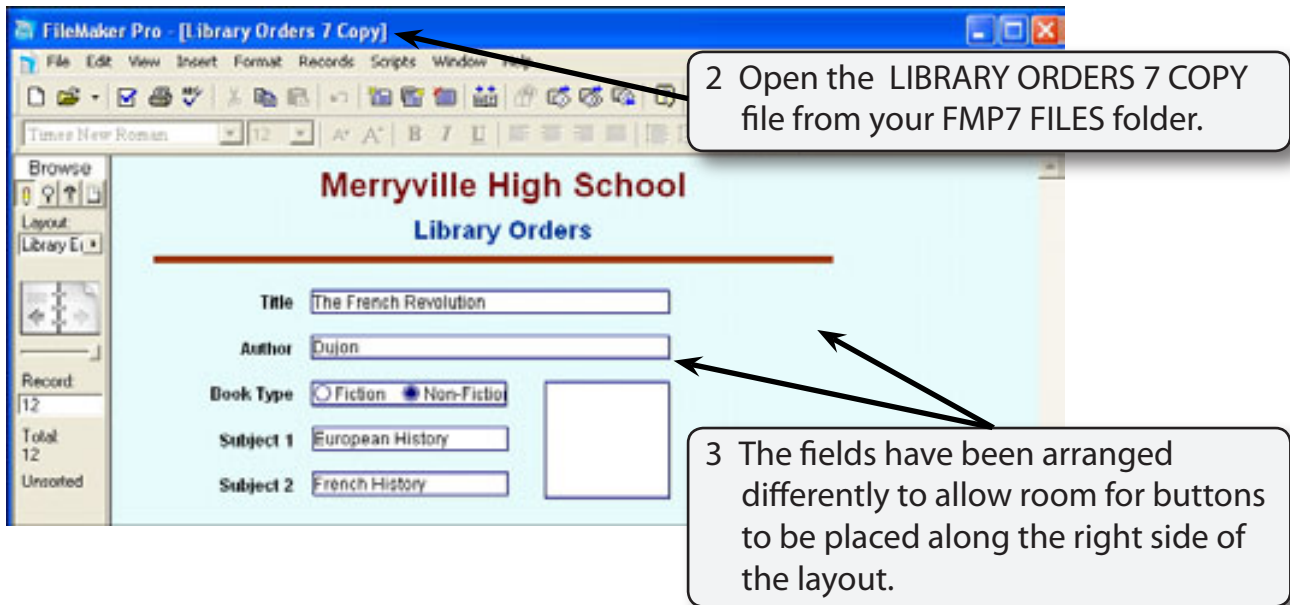
B   Saving a Copy of the File

The file must now be saved then opened from your STORAGE folder.

1   Display the FILE menu and select SAVE A COPY AS.

2   Access your STORAGE folder, open the FMP7 FILES folder and save the file under the name:

<div align="center">Library Orders 7 Copy</div>

C   Opening the Copy File

1   Close the LIBRARY ORDERS 7 file.

2 Open the LIBRARY ORDERS 7 COPY file from your FMP7 FILES folder.

3 The fields have been arranged differently to allow room for buttons to be placed along the right side of the layout.
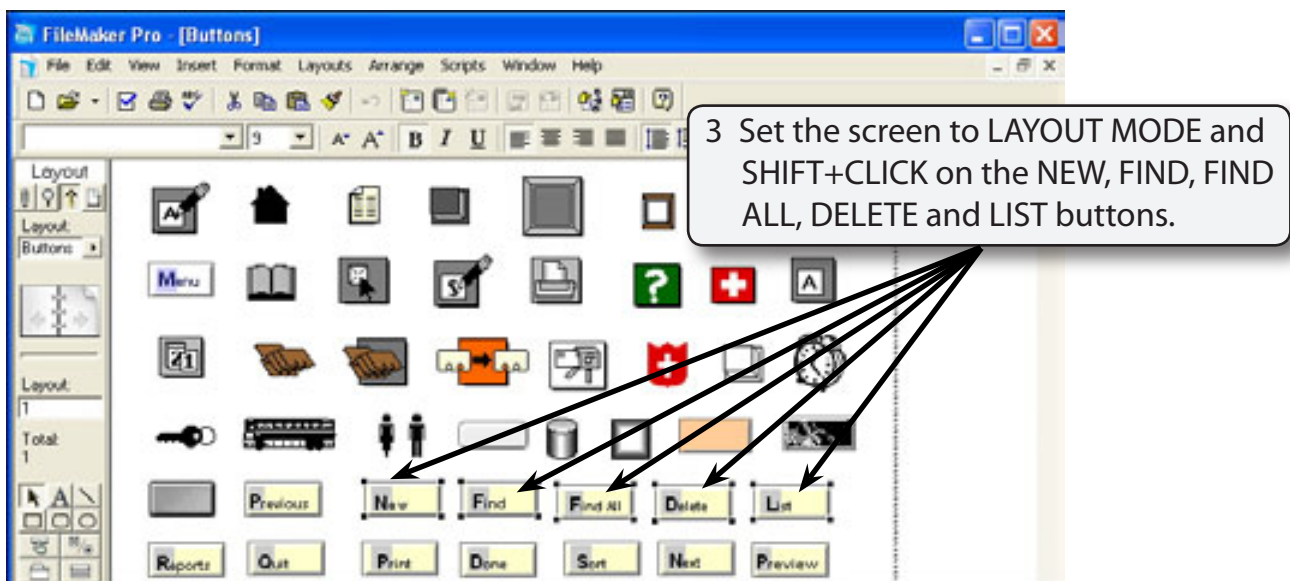
Looking at the Layouts

You will be using a database similar to the one that you used in Chapters 5 and 6. The file has four layouts:

- *Library Entry*   to enter data into the database and to maintain the database.

- *Book List*   which displays individual book purchases in a Standard Layout.

- *Purchase List*   which displays individual book purchases in a Columnar Report.

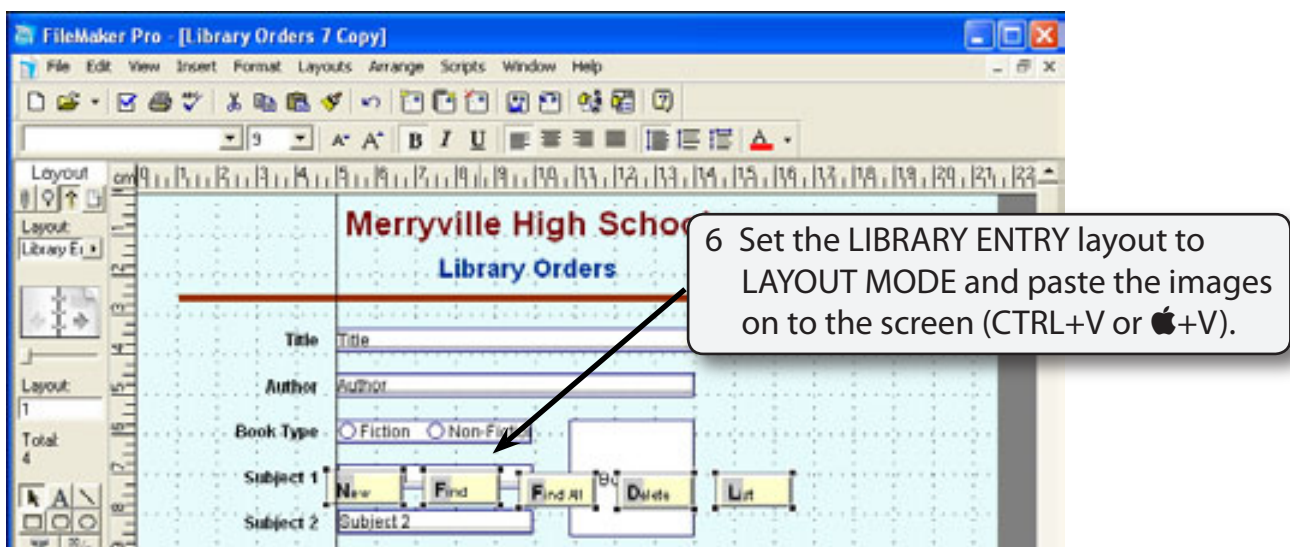- *Purchase Table* which displays individual book purchases in Table view.
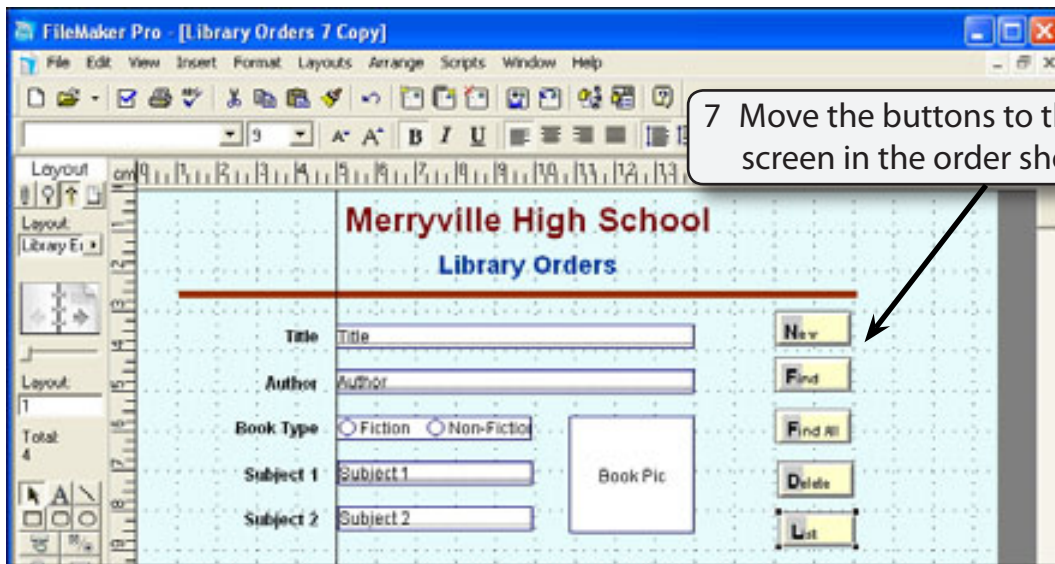
Using Graphics as Buttons

Any object can be set to be a button. In this case some sample graphics will be inserted and set to buttons that perform different tasks.

1   Select OPEN from the FILE menu.

2   Access the FMP7 SUPPORT FILES and open the BUTTONS file. It has a range of different buttons that you can use in your databases.


3 Set the screen to LAYOUT MODE and SHIFT+CLICK on the NEW, FIND, FIND ALL, DELETE and LIST buttons.

4   Press CTRL+C or ⌘+C to copy the buttons to the clipboard.

5   Close the BUTTONS file to return to the LIBRARY ORDERS 7 COPY file.

6 Set the LIBRARY ENTRY layout to LAYOUT MODE and paste the images on to the screen (CTRL+V or ⌘+V).

7 Move the buttons to the right of the screen in the order shown.

8 The buttons can be aligned and evenly spaced.
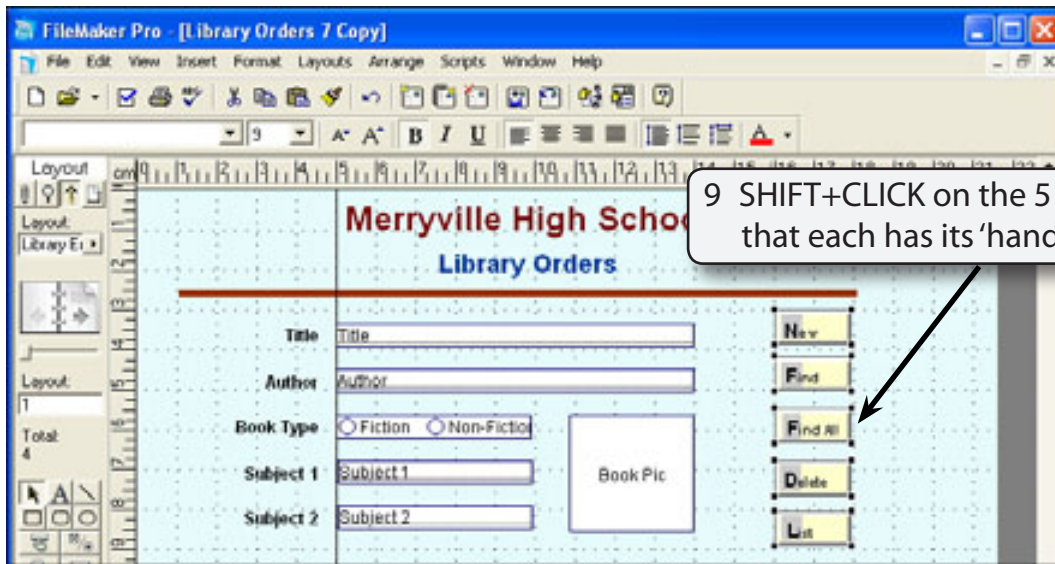
9 SHIFT+CLICK on the 5 buttons so that each has its 'handles' displayed.

10 Display the ARRANGE menu and select SET ALIGNMENT. Select LEFT EDGES to align their left sides and select OK.

> 11 Display the ARRANGE menu again and select SET ALIGNMENT. Select DISTRIBUTE SPACE in the TOP TO BOTTOM frame and select OK.
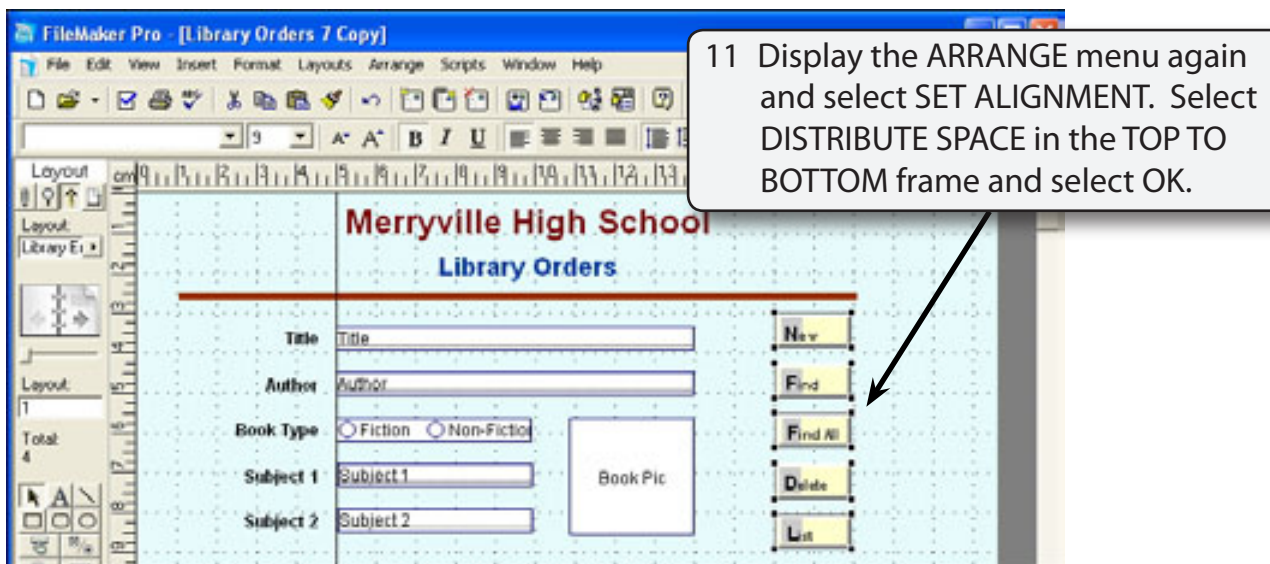
NOTE: Distribute space (top to bottom) has moved the buttons so that the vertical space between each of them is the same.

Formatting the Buttons

A   The New Record Button

A button can be set to provide a new record when the user clicks on it.

> 1 Click outside the buttons to remove the selections then click on the NEW button.
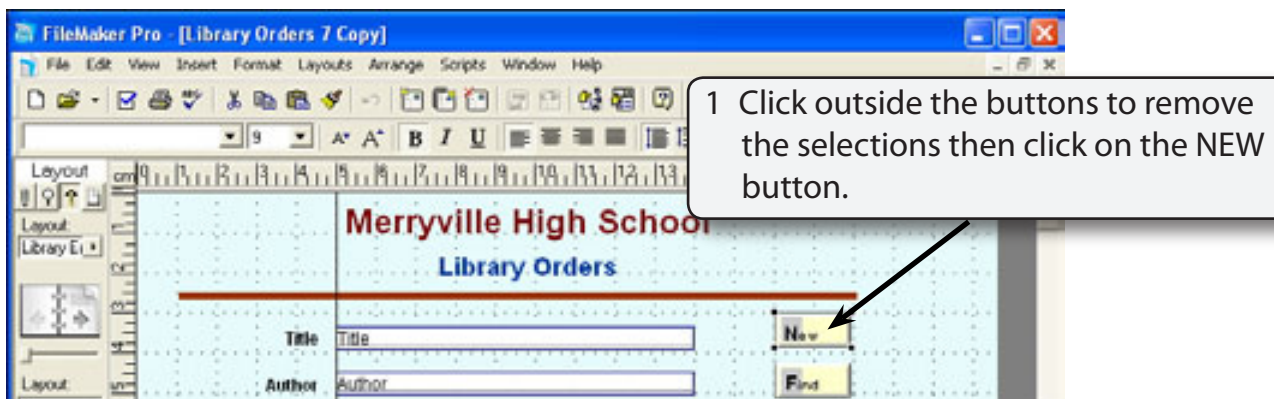
2   Display the FORMAT menu and select BUTTON.