

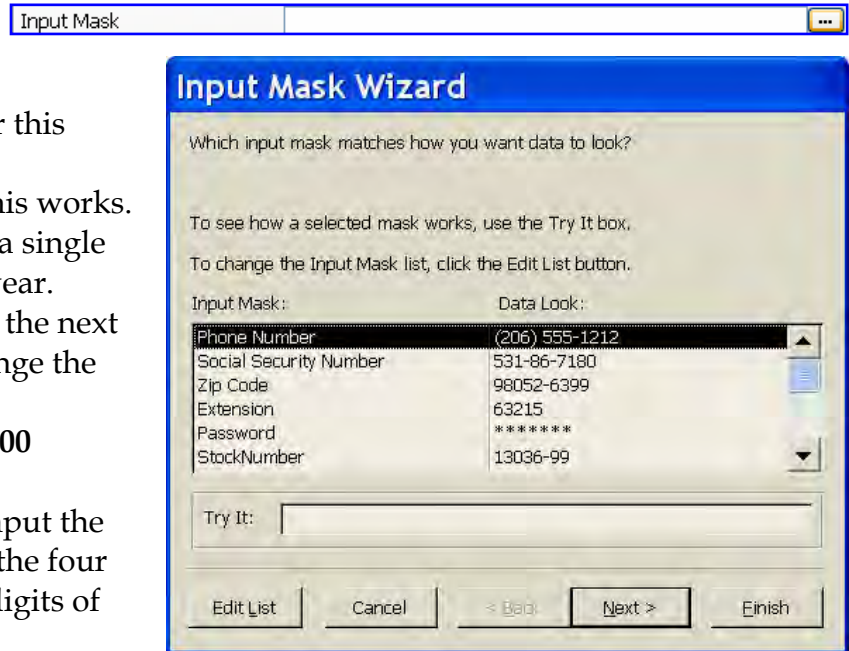
INPUT MASK

An Input Mask is used to control how data looks when it is entered into a table. It also can be used to define the format in which the data is stored. To create an input mask for the Date of Last Order field, complete the steps below:

Defining an Input Mask

For this document, you will use the Sales Merchandise table that was created from the instructions in the document, **Creating a Table Using Design View**.

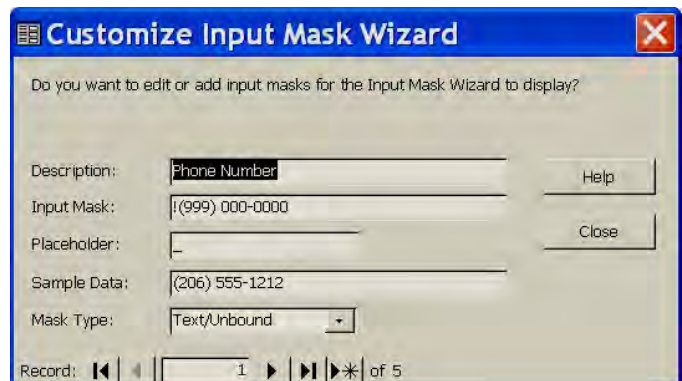
- ❖ Click **Input Mask** under the **Field Properties** for the **DateOfLastOrder** field.
- ❖ Click the **ellipsis** (three dots) at the end of the **Input Mask** box (see illustration below).
- ❖ The **Input Mask** dialog box will appear (see illustration below).
- ❖ Choose the **Short Date** option for this exercise.
- ❖ Click the **Try It** box to see how this works. Input a date, using a zero before a single digit year.
- ❖ Click the **Next** button to move to the next step. This box allows you to change the Input Mask layout.
- ❖ In the area where it says **99/99/0000** remove the last two zeros.
- ❖ Click in the **Try It** box again to input the date. This time you will not use the four digit year, but only the last two digits of the year.
- ❖ Click **Next** and then click **Finish**. The Input Mask criteria will appear in the Input Mask area of the Field Properties.



Creating a New Input Mask

It is not always possible to use one of the pre-defined Input Masks for a particular field. It then becomes necessary to create an Input Mask. For this exercise, we want to create a new Input Mask for the Stock Number field. To do this:

- ❖ Click the **Stock Number** field in the Design view window.
- ❖ Click the **ellipsis (...)** at the end of the Input Mask box.
- ❖ The **Input Mask Wizard** dialog box will appear (see illustration above).
- ❖ Click the **Edit List** button at the bottom left side of this dialog box.
- ❖ The **Customize Input Mask Wizard** dialog box will appear.
- ❖ Click the **New Record** button at the bottom of the dialog box. It is the last button after



New Record Button

the word record, the one with an arrow and an asterisk.

- ❖ In the **Description** box, input **StockNumber**.
- ❖ In the **Input Mask** box, input **number 9** five times (99999), a **hyphen (-)**, and **two** more **number 9s** (99).
 - When a series of 9s are inserted, it means that any number between 0 and 9 can be inserted into the field.
 - The entry of these numbers is not required.
 - Plus and/or minus signs are not allowed when information is entered.
- ❖ In the **Placeholder** box, insert a **hyphen (-)**.
- ❖ In the **Sample Data** box, input **13036-55**.
- ❖ Leave the **Mask/Type** as **Text/Unbound**.
- ❖ Click **Close** to exit the **Edit Input Mask Wizard** dialog box.
- ❖ Click the **Stock Number Input Mask** from the list, if necessary.
- ❖ We aren't going to make any additional changes, so click the **Finish** button to apply this **Input Mask** to the **Stock Number** field.
- ❖ When data is input into this field, the hyphen will appear automatically. This means that only the numbers have to be input.