

# InstallShield Tip: Creating a Shortcut to a File on a Drive that does not Exist

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The following steps demonstrate how to create the shortcut properly and why each step is taken.

1. Create an entry in the Directory table that we will reference later. For this example, MYDIR was created.

Directory (Identifier)	Directory_Parent	DefaultDir
MYDIR	INSTALLDIR	test

Notice that INSTALLDIR is set as the parent of the new directory. This is a temporary placeholder. MYDIR's value will be reassigned in a later step. DefaultDir can have any value that you choose. This will also be reassigned at a later time.

2. Create a shortcut in the Shortcut view under System Configuration. When choosing the type of shortcut, be sure to choose Shortcut to Preexisting File. Select the shortcut to set its properties. Be sure to complete the Description property and, if you want an icon different from the file type that will be associated with the target, complete the Icon File property. The important property to this tip is to set the Target property to [MYDIR], followed by the file name which will be the target of the shortcut. For this example, the target will be an access database called test.mdb. In this case, set the Target property to "[MYDIR]test.mdb".
3. Create a Custom Action to Set a Directory. In this step, the directory previously created will change in value to the proper location. To do this, select the Custom Actions view under Behavior and Logic. Next, create a new custom action of type New Set Directory. For the Directory Name, choose MYDIR from the drop down list. Set the Directory Value to the true location of the file, such as z:\databases\access. Leave off the trailing backslash. Windows Installer includes the backslash since the directory is surrounded by square brackets. This is just the directory path, and not the path and the file name. The file name was already specified in the shortcut property Target.
4. Insert the action into the proper sequence. This is the last trick to create the shortcut. While still in the Custom Actions view, choose the Installation Execute Sequence drop down list. Above, it was stated that CostFinalize validates directory entries. Since we need to have our directory reference changed after any validation occurs, choose After CostFinalize from the list.