Creating an ODBC Connection (Windows 2000 Server)
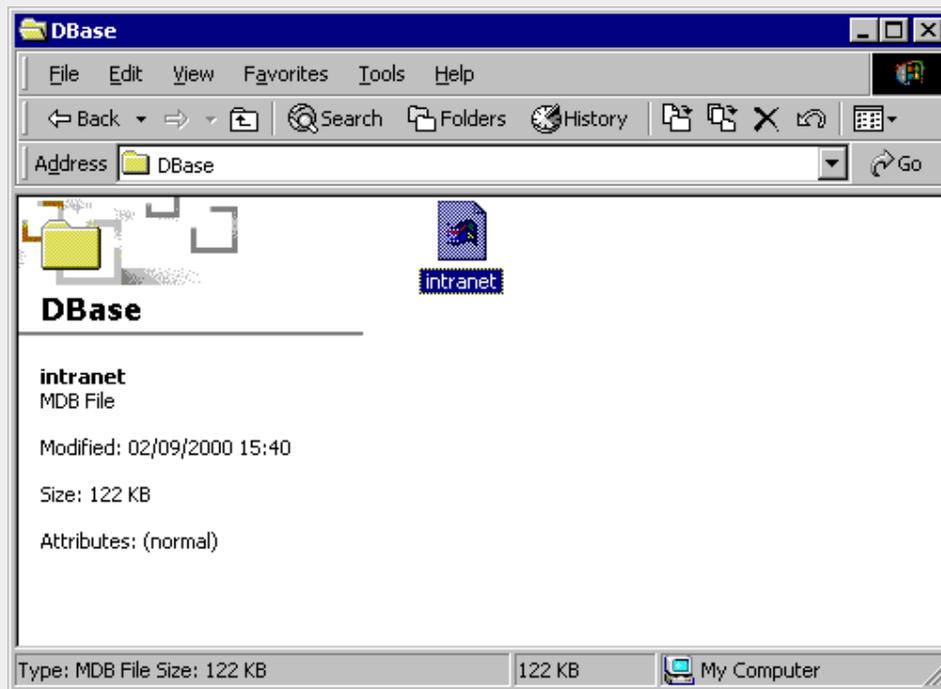
About Microsoft ODBC.
Open Database Connectivity (ODBC) is a widely accepted application programming interface (API) for database access. It is based on the Call-Level Interface (CLI) specifications from X/Open and ISO/IEC for database APIs and uses Structured Query Language (SQL) as its database access language. (Microsoft)

In English, that statement from Microsoft means that you can use ODBC as a medium for reading from, and adding to almost any type of database for your web applications. An API is required because there are so many types of Database you could be using (FoxPro, MS Access, SQL Server, Paradox..etc..) and in an ideal world you should only need one Language for communicating with these databases, hence the ODBC API.

This tutorial will demonstrate the steps required to set up Microsoft ODBC for an existing Microsoft Access 97 database in Windows 2000 Server (although exactly the same steps could be used to set up an existing Microsoft Access 2000 database).

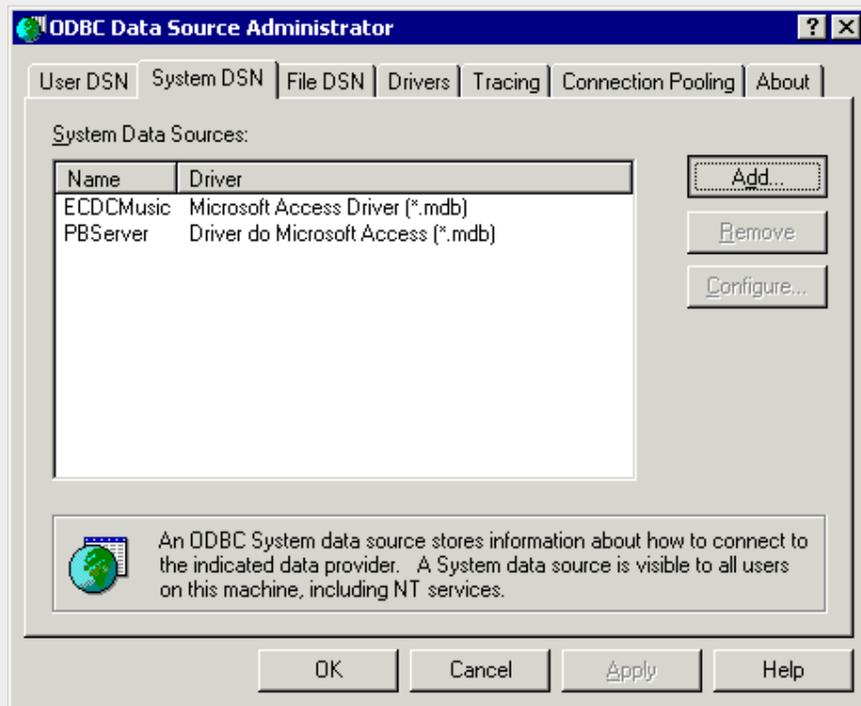**1. Creating and storing a database.**
In this case, I have two disks on my server. One hosts the OS and the other is for storage. Therefore, the intranet.mdb database is going to be hosted in a directory called "DBase" on my D: drive (shown above in Fig 1). Simply make a new directory and drop your database into it. It is a good idea to keep the name simple, avoiding capitals and using underscore instead of spaces.

It's worth pointing out at this stage that because it's your server that's going to be doing all the work, you don't need to store your database within your site. In fact, if your server is one of several in a Network, you don't even need to store it on your Web Server.
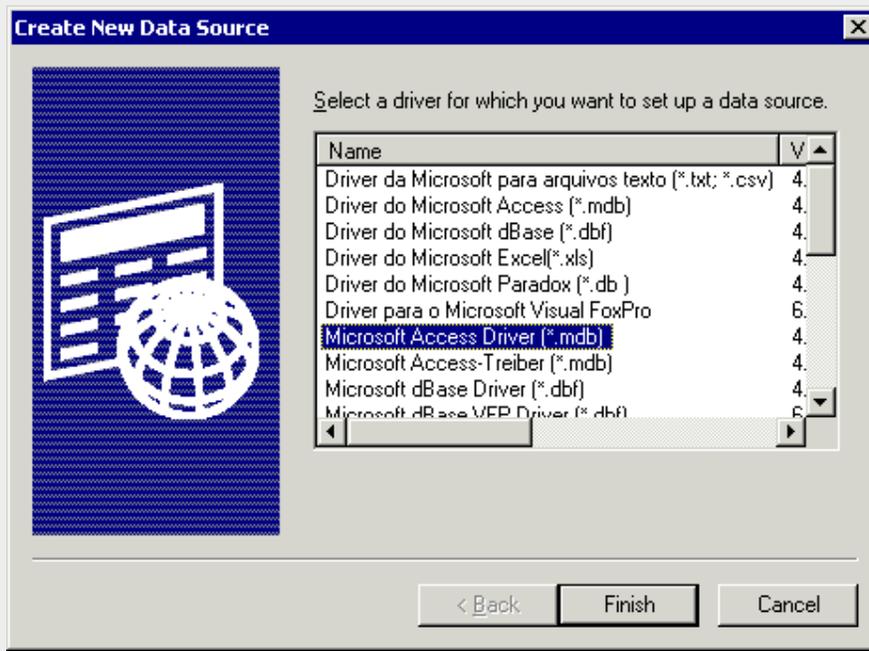
2. Where to find the Data Sources Dialogue
Click on "Start", then "Administrative Tools" and you'll find Data Sources (ODBC) just above DHCP in the list (shown in Fig 2).
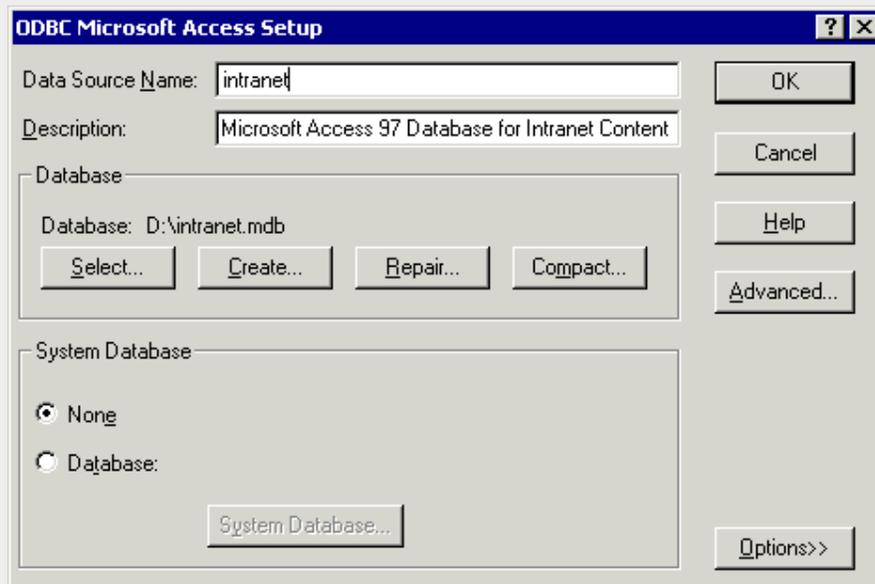
3. The ODBC Data Source Administrator:
You'll probably find that the dialogue defaults to "User DSN". Make sure that you select the "System DSN" tag and click "Add" (Fig 3).
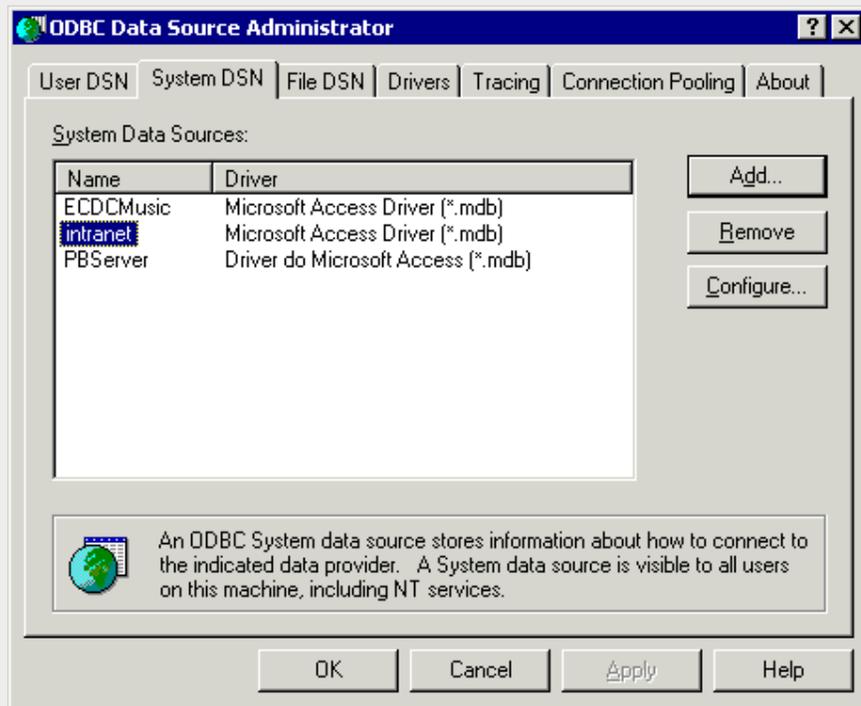
Create New Data Source

Select a driver for which you want to set up a data source.

Name	V
Driver da Microsoft para arquivos texto (*.txt; *.csv)	4.
Driver do Microsoft Access (*.mdb)	4.
Driver do Microsoft dBase (*.dbf)	4.
Driver do Microsoft Excel(*.xls)	4.
Driver do Microsoft Paradox (*.db)	4.
Driver para o Microsoft Visual FoxPro	6.
Microsoft Access Driver (*.mdb)	4.
Microsoft Access-Treiber (*.mdb)	4.
Microsoft dBase Driver (*.dbf)	4.
Microsoft dBase VFP Driver (*.dbf)	6.

< Back   Finish   Cancel

4. Creating a New Data Source:
In our case, intranet.mdb is a Microsoft Access 97 Database. Therefore, we need to highlight "Microsoft Access Driver (*.mdb)" and click "Finish" (Fig 4).

5. ODBC Microsoft Access Setup:

First of all, give the Data Source a name and keep it simple. It's a good idea to give it the same name as the database file (as shown in Fig 5). Then, give it a friendly description in case other Administrators need to know what it's for. Finally, you'll need to point ODBC at the database you created in step 1. In my case it is D:\DBase\intranet.mdb. Leave all the other options as they are and click OK.

6. ODBC with new database connection:

If you have followed these instructions correctly, your ODBC dialogue box should look something like Fig 6 (above). You can make as many DSN (Delivery Status Notification) connections as you like and to almost all types of databases. If the Driver you require isn't listed, you should be able to find it by checking the Web Site of your Database Software Vendor.

An ODBC Connection to an MS Access Database

Here is how to create a connection to a MS Access Database:

1. Open the **ODBC** icon in your Control Panel.

2. Choose the **System DSN** tab.

3. Click on **Add** in the System DSN tab.

4. **Select** the Microsoft Access Driver. Click **Finish.**

5. In the next screen, click **Select** to locate the database.

6. Give the database a **D**ata **S**ource **N**ame (DSN).

7. Click **OK**.