

# Apex – Populate a lookup relationship using an External ID

Paddy November 14, 2016 Apex No Comment

There are a few different ways to do this but recently I came across a really easy way that I thought I should share with everyone!

In this example I have an Account and I have another object called AccountChild\_\_c. The Account object has a field called ExternalID\_\_c (which is an External Id field) and the AccountChild object has a field called Account\_\_c which is the lookup to the Account.

When I create the AccountChild record in apex, I want to populate the Account lookup using the external id as I know the external id but not the actual Account Id. Doing this saves me a query and a loop to find and populate this information.

```
1 String extID;
2
3 AccountChild__c childRecord = new AccountChild__c();
4
5 childRecord.putSObject('Account__r', new Account(ExternalID__c = extID));
6
7 childRecord.Name = 'Name';
8
9 insert childRecord;
```

In the example above, I was able to insert a child record and populate the account lookup using the external id on the account instead of the account id. If I know the external id already, this saves me doing a query to find the account ids and reduces the complexity of the code.