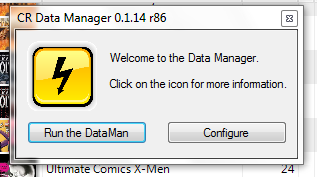
**docdoom & T3KN0Gh057**  
Data Manager for ComicRack

The Manual v3

covering CR Data Manager up to Version 1.0





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# Purpose

If you are using ComicRack to organize your comic library there is sometimes the need to enter data based on rules. So you might want to set the series group to “Gotham” for all *Batman* books. Or you scraped your data from Comic Vine (using the excellent ComicVine Scraper) and discover that some of the information in the ComicVine database is not correct. So you want to set the publisher information for the first 200 issues of *Walt Disney’s Comics and Stories* to Dell instead of Boom. This plugin will complete all these tasks automatically.

# Installation

Download the latest version of the Data Manager from [here](http://code.google.com/p/cr-data-manager/downloads/list). In ComicRack then select “Edit -> Preferences -> Scripts”. Click on “Install” and select the file you just downloaded. You have to restart ComicRack afterwards.

**Important:** if you install the Data Manager plug-in over a previous version please **don’t remove the older version** (selecting “Edit -> Preferences -> Scripts -> RC Data Manager -> Remove”). Otherwise you will lose your previous self-defined rules for the Data Manager. Just install the newer version over the old one and you will be fine.

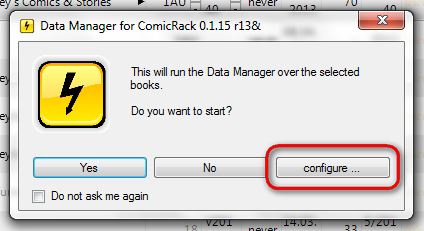
# Usage

## Setting up the configuration

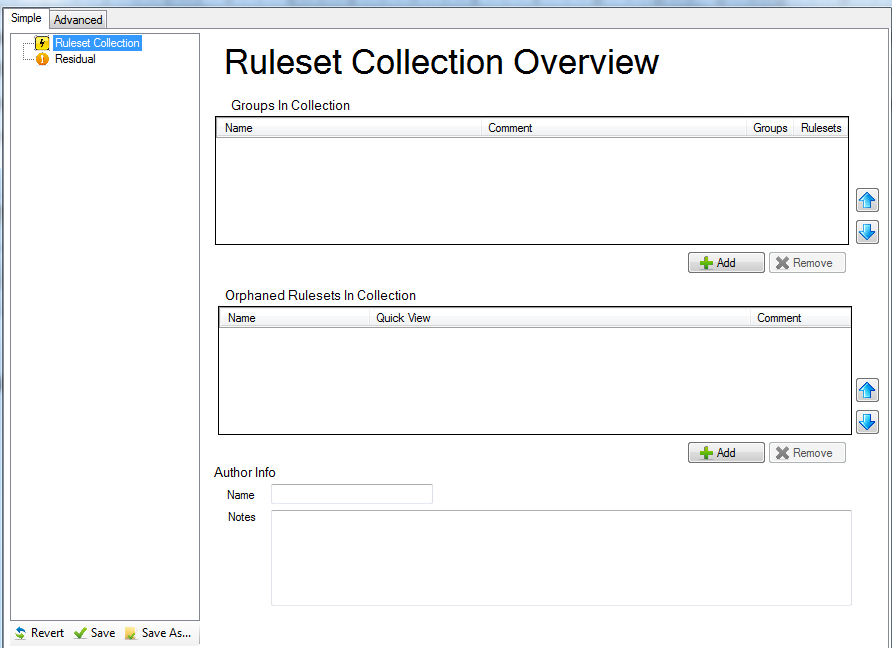
Before you run the Data Manager for the first time you have to define your rules. Start the Data Manager from the context menu in the library browser or from the toolbar in ComicRack. The icon of the Data Manager is the yellow square one with the black flash symbol inside:



When this dialog appears click on “configure …”:



If you have not used the Data Manager before you will not see any rules because you have not yet defined any:



In the next steps you will learn how to create some simple but powerful rules.

## How-to: Create a few simple (but powerful) rules

### Step 1: What shall your rules do?

At first step you should take a bit of time to think about what your rules should do. Some people want to correct data they scraped from the ComicVine database into their books, others might want to automate the process of preparing their books before they are moved by the Library Organizer.

Let’s start with the last example: A lot of people organize their books by Series Groups. Series Groups group several series with a similar content or main character or whatever. So you might want to use a Series Group “Gotham” for all books that are more or less located in Gotham and a Series Group “Metropolis” for all the Superman books.

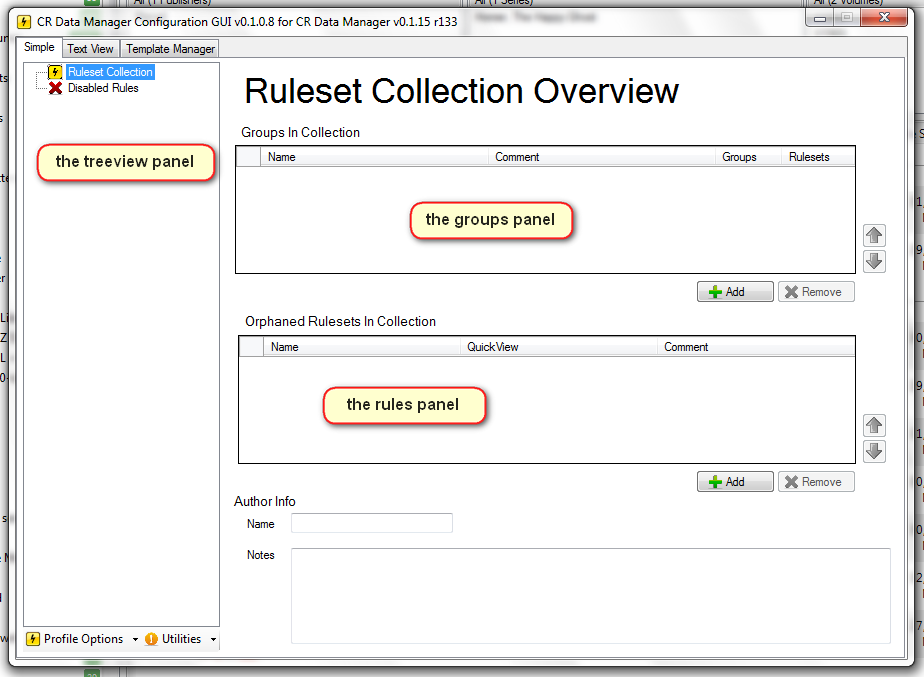
This would make it easy to later organize your books in folder structures like this:



In this example we would like to organize our books by the main character. The next step demonstrates how to prepare your rules so that your books can easily later on organized by the Library Organizer in this main character structure.

### Step 2: Understanding the GUI editor window

To create your first rules open the the configuration editor via the “configure …” button as described above. You will see mainly three rather empty panels inside the editor. Let’s take a quick look at them:

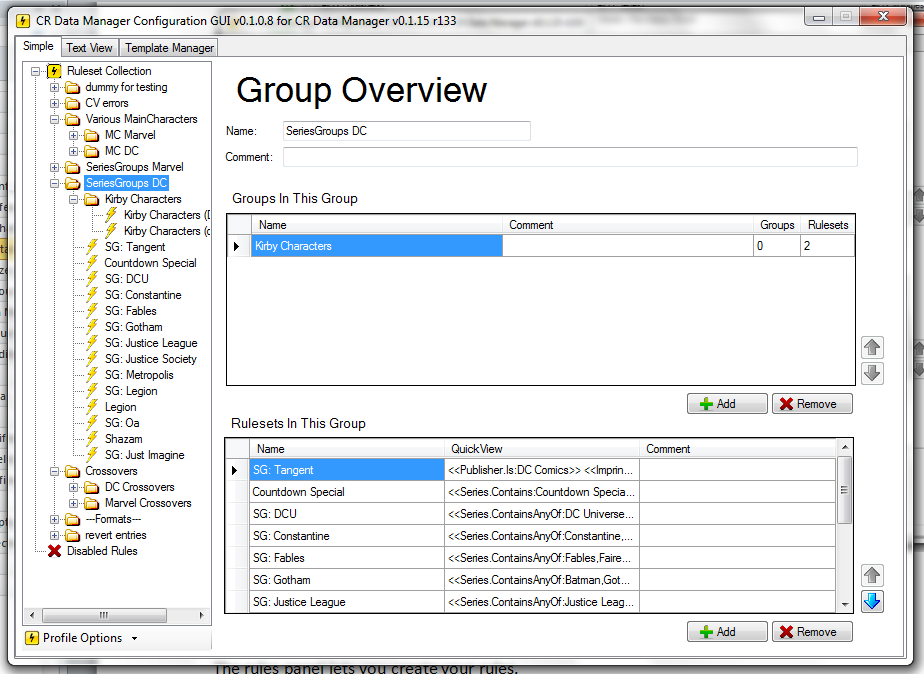


The treeview panel will later display the list of the rules you defined.

The groups panel helps you organizing your rule sets by placing them inside groups.

The rules panel lets you create your rules.

To give you an idea how this window looks like once you created and organized your rules see this example:



Looks quite nice and organized, doesn’t it? So let’s get on to the next step where you finally build your first rules.

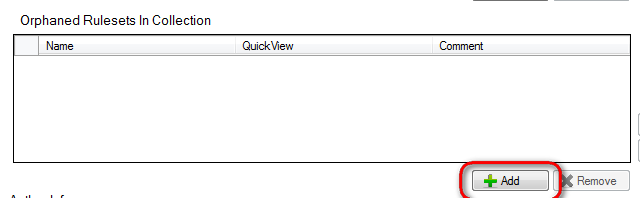
### Step 3: Build your rule set

A rule set contains of two parts. Part one defines the rules or criteria the Data Manager uses to decide which books shall be treated. Part two defines the actions which Data Manager should make based on your rules.

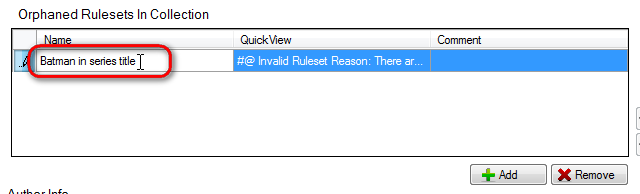
#### Part 1: Define the rule

Now we want to build our rules. First we want to define that all books that have “Batman” in the series title should get the enty “Batman” in ComicRack’s Main Character field.

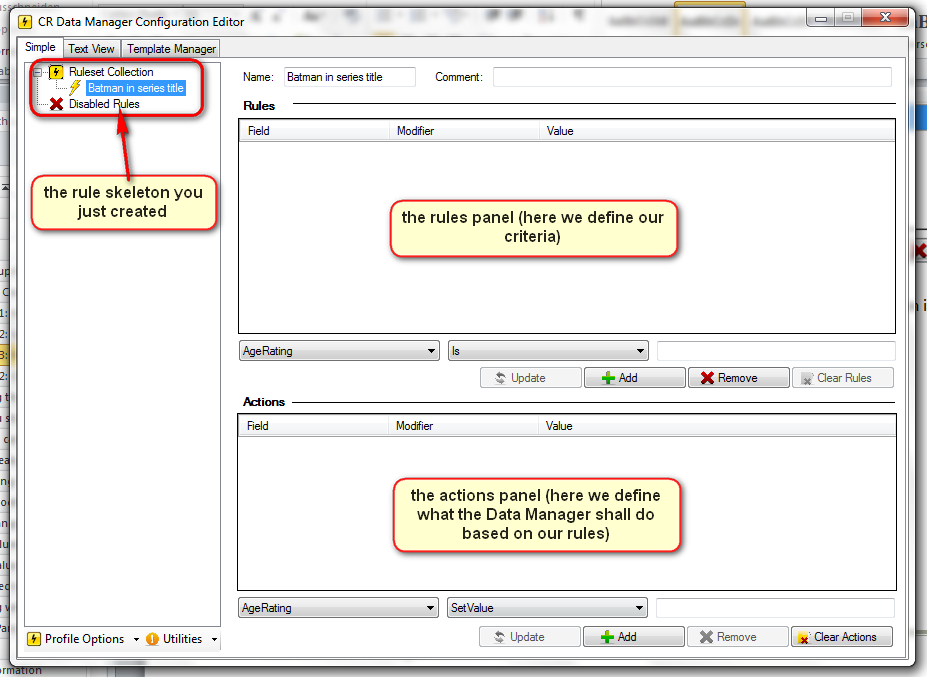
Click on the “Add” button below the rules panel:



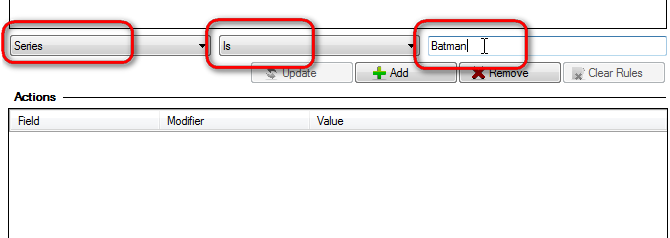
After that the skeleton of your first rule is displayed in the rules panel. Click in “Name” field and give this rule a meaningful name (that will make it later on much easier to find it):



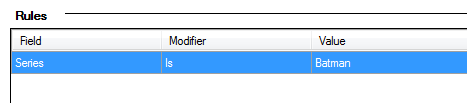
Now take a look at the treeview panel and notice that your rule is attached there. Click on it and the editor gives you the interface to finally enter your rule:



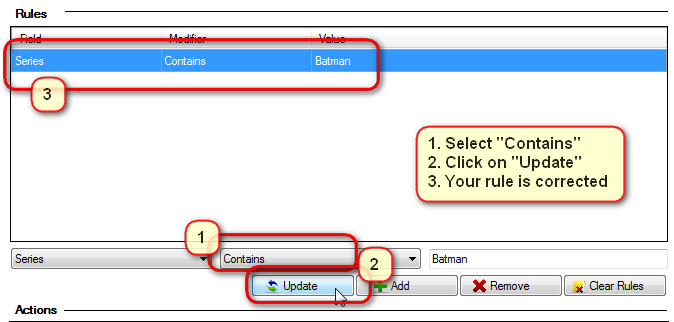
Remember: our rule shall be “all books with Batman in the Series title”. So select “Series” in the first dropdown box below the rules panel. Select the range modifier “Is” and enter “Batman” as the value. Finally click “Add”:



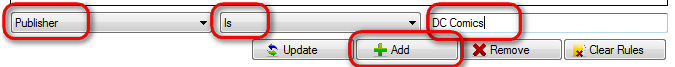
Your rule is now displayed in the rules panel:



But it seems we made a mistake: if we use the modifier “Is” this rule would only select the books where the exact series title is “Batman”, but not also “Batman: The Dark Knight”, “Batman and Robin” and so forth. In this case the range modifier “Contains” is exactly what we need. To correct that you only have to select “Contains” in the second dropdown box below the rules panel and click on “Update”:

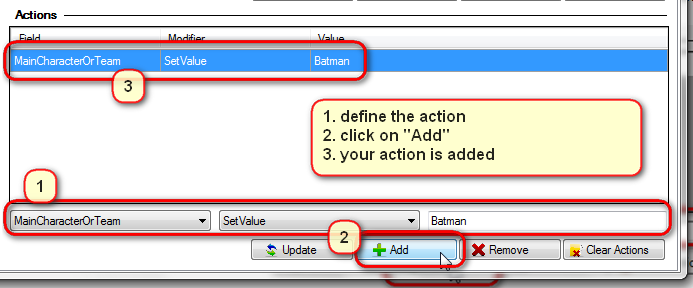


You can also add more criteria to one rule: maybe you want to be sure that **only** the Batman books should be handled by this rule that are published by DC Comics, simply select the Batman rule in the treeview and add this rule:



#### Part 2: Define the Action

Now we define what shall happen with these books. It is done in a similar way like we created the rule above: Below the “Actions” panel you define what value will be set (in this case “MainCharacterOrTeam” shall be set to “Batman”). Click on “Add” afterwards:



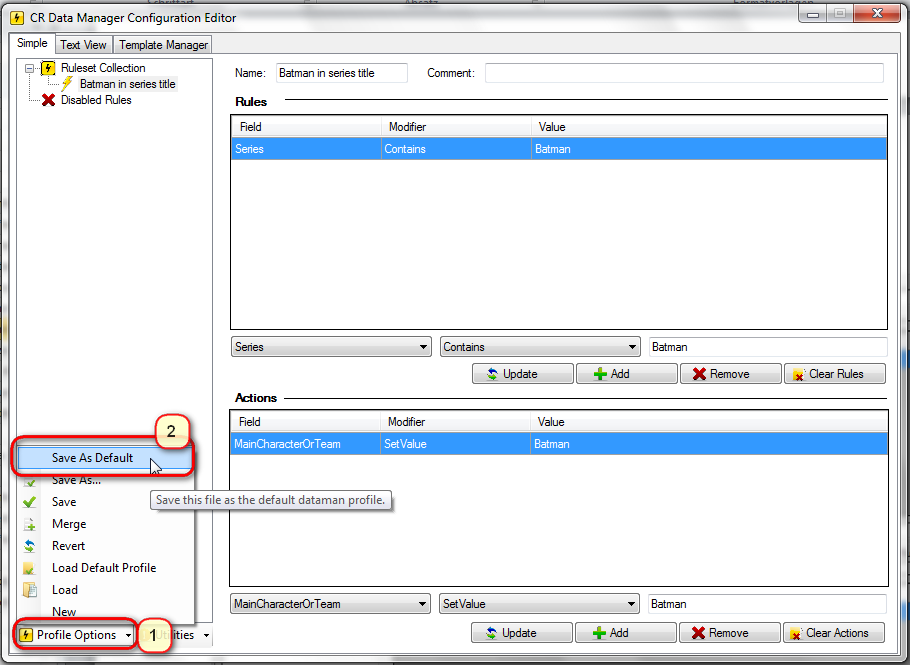
That’s all. Even with this very small rule set you could later on set the MainCharacter field for hundreds of books to “Batman” (where it fits) with one mouse click. Of course you can add hundreds of groups and thousands of rules to help you make organizing your library a lot easier.

This was a very simple example but should give you an idea how to build rules with the Data Manager.

Later on in this manual all fields and modifiers are further investigated.

#### Part 3: Save your precious work

If your rule editor now looks like the image below you are finished with your first rule and should save the work you’ve done:

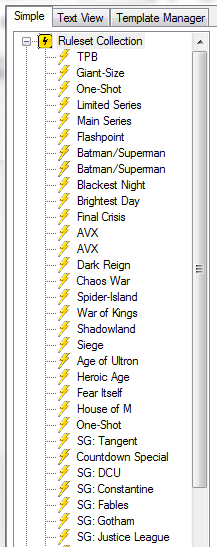
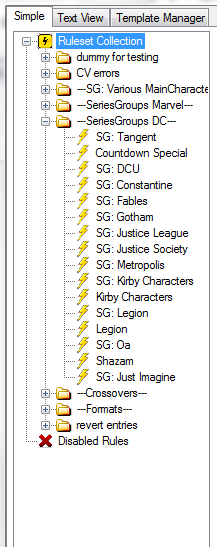


To save your configuration for the first time first open the menu “Profile Options” in the lower left. Then click on “Save as default”. Later on you can also use the option “Save”. The difference will be explained in another chapter of this manual.

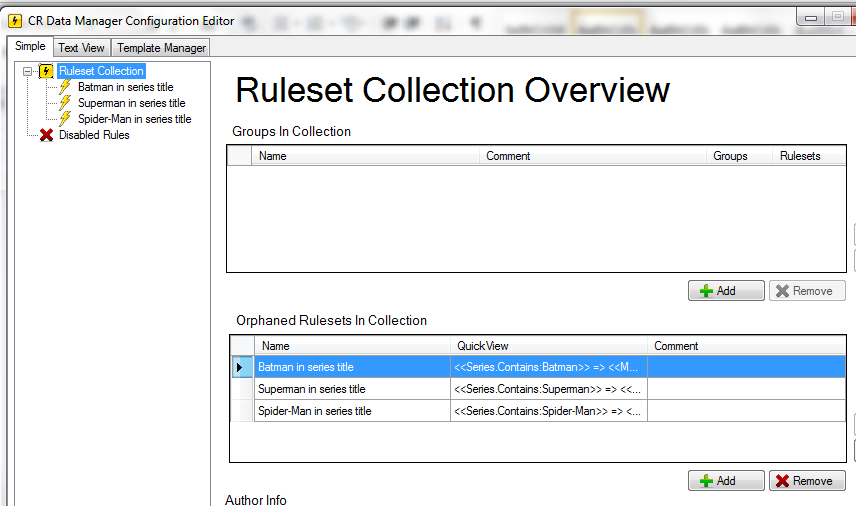
**Note:** To create further rulesets you do it like described above: select “Ruleset Collection” in the treeview panel, click on “Add” in the rules panel, give the rule a name enter your criteria and actions.

### Step 4: Organize your rules (using groups)

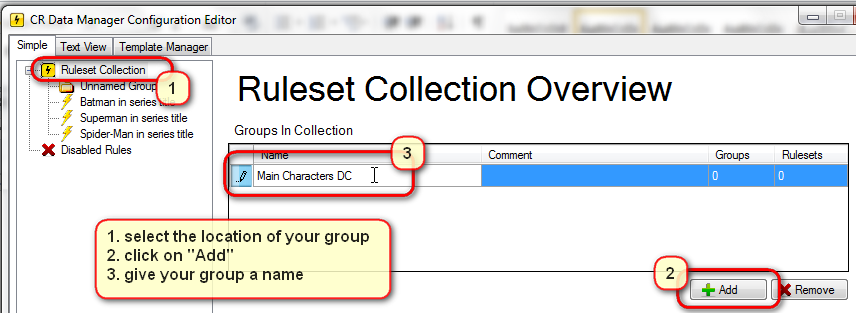
Once you created a lot of rules you will discover that it is quite hard to scroll through them to find the single rule you want to update or delete. Take a look at these two examples: the left one is quite hard to read, it is much easier to navigate and find what you are looking for in the example on the right side:

This is where groups help to organize your ruleset collection. Groups in the Data Manager are like folders in the Windows Explorer: you use them to collect items.

So we assume that you have created three rules so far and you want to organize them in the folders “Main Characters DC” and “Main Characters Marvel”:

To achieve this you first have to select the location in the treeview panel where you want to create the group. As we have no further groups the only location possible is “Ruleset Collection”). Click on “Ruleset Collection” in the treeview panel and then on “Add” below the groups panel:

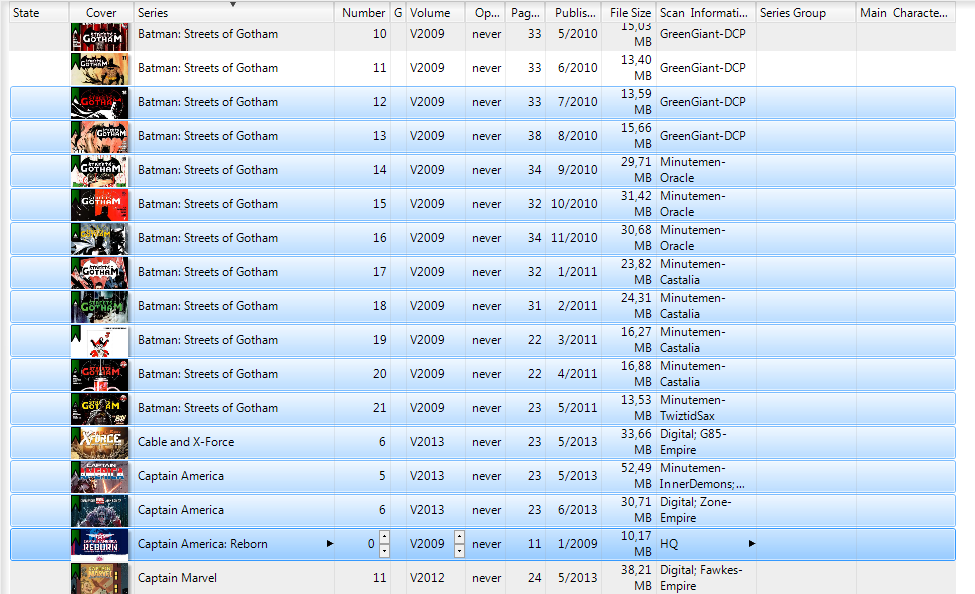


|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| After you have given your group a name the treeview panel should look like this: |  |
| Repeat the steps and create another group “Main Characters Marvel”. Don’t forget to click on “Ruleset Collection” because that is where you want to store your group! Your treeview panel should look similar to this now: |  |
| To move your “Batman”, “Superman” and “Spider-Man” rules to the correct folder simply drag them with the mouse to that group and drop them there. Isn’t it simple? Afterwards your treeview panel should look like this: |  |

Now your rules are finished and you can let the Data Manager do its job.

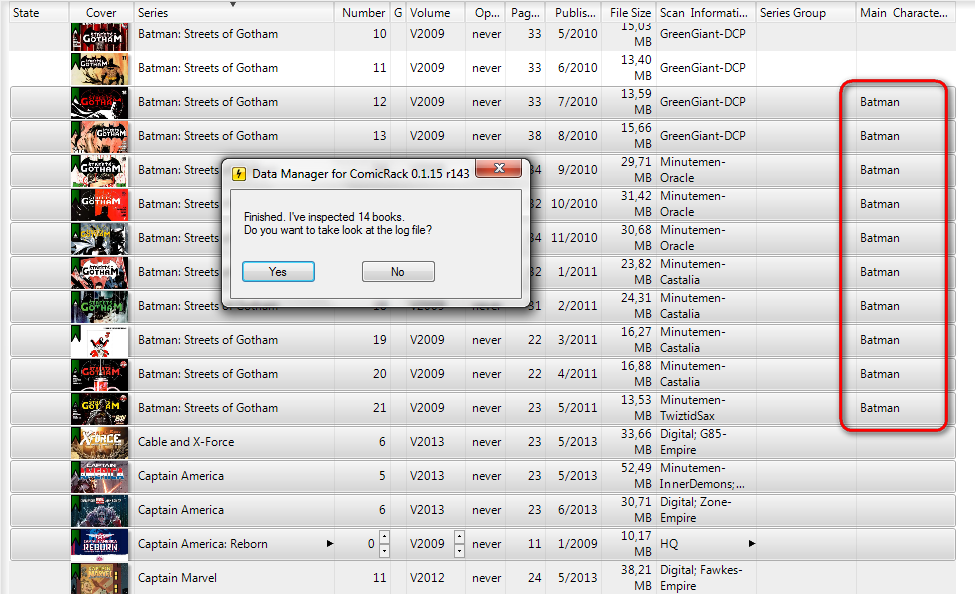
## Running the Data Manager

After you edited the configuration you select the books that the script should handle in the ComicRack browser. Only the books you selected will be treated by the Data Manager:

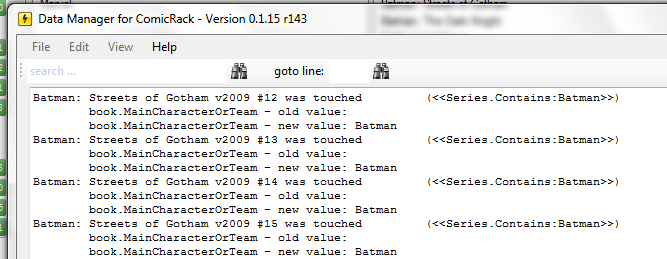


|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Now click icon in the ComicRack toolbar (Remember? It is the square yellow symbol with a black flash): |  |
| When asked if you want the Data Manager to run, click on Yes: |  |

Once you clicked on it the Data Manager will edit the selected books in your library according your rules configuration on the fly. This is the result, the Data Manager actually set the field “Main Character” of all the books you selected to “Batman” (where it fits!).

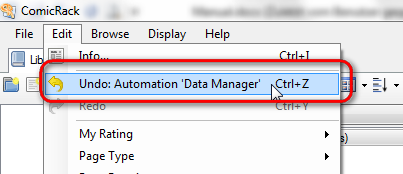


You may click on yes to take a look at the log file which tells you what data was altered by the Data Manager. A sample log file will look like this:



The Data Manager will only modify the books you have selected in the ComicRack browser. You don’t have to be afraid that it will affect your whole library (unless you have selected all books in your library, of course).

Also: you can always roll back the modifications to your library done by this script by selecting the “Edit -> Undo” command in ComicRack after you ran the Data Manager:



**Note:** The Data Manager will run over your books in exact the order as displayed in the treeview panel of the ruleset editor.

# Why you should run the ComicVine Scraper before the Data Manager

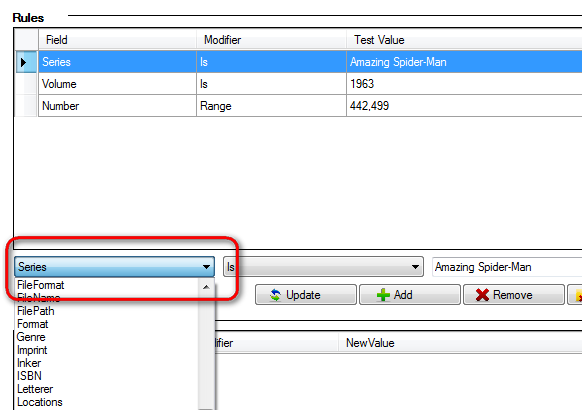
You might get unexpected results when you run the Data Manager on books that have not been scraped by the ComicVine scraper or have uncommitted values (so-called “Shadow values”). These uncommitted values will not be recognized by the Data Manager. So it is highly recommended to scrape the books first and afterwards additionally select “Automation -> Commit proposed values”.

Also: if you use the Library Organizer plug-in you should run the Data Manager on your books **before** that. The Data Manager will help you a lot to set the metadata of your books to be handled by the Library Organizer properly. A good rule is to run the standard ComicRack plug-ins in this order:

1. run ComicVineScraper
2. commit proposed values
3. run Duplicates Manager / Scan Info from Filename / More Scan Info from Filename
4. **run Data Manager**
5. run Library Organizer

# Which data can be edited by the Data Manager?

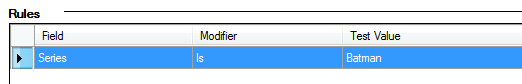
To see what fields can be used by the Data Manager simply open the ruleset editor and click on the dropdown lists below “Rules” or “Actions”:



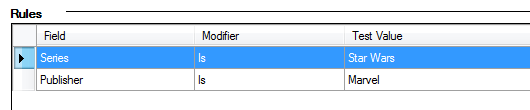
# Advanced features

## Combining Criteria

The simplest way to define a rule is a rule like this:



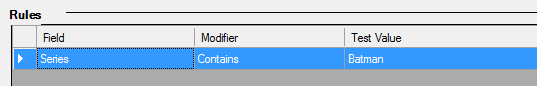
Which means: select all books where the word “Batman” is the series name. But sometimes you want to be more specific. So maybe you only want to set the series group of the Star Wars series to ‘Marvel Cosmic’ if the publisher is Marvel. In this case you have to enter both criteria (Series is “Star Wars” and Publisher is “Marvel”). The complete rule would be:



**Note:** These criteria are always treated like combined with a logical AND operator. That means all criteria must be fulfilled for a rule to be executed.

## Using Modifiers

In the previous example above we have set the series group of all issues of any series named ‘Batman’ to ‘Gotham’. This would edit data in all books where the series is exactly ‘Batman’ but would ignore all series like ‘Batman: The Dark Knight’. You can use modifiers to select books in a more specific way. So if you want to select all books where the word ‘Batman’ is somewhere in the title you would use the modifier ‘Contains’. The rule



would select not only ‘Batman’, but also ‘Batman and Robin’ and ‘Adventures of Batman’.

There are a lot more modifiers available than help to make your rules much more sophisticated.

## List of range modifiers in the “Rules” part of a ruleset

These are the modifier that can be used to limit the books which the Data Manager should touch:

#todo: add all modifiers

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Modifier** | **Purpose** | **Example** |
| Is | select all books where the content of [field] is exactly like [value] | selects all books which series is exactly “X-Men” (but not “Uncanny X-Men”) |
| Range | select all books in a given range  **(This will only work for the fields Number, AlternateNumber and numerical fields.)** | selects all books which number is in the range from 1 to 10 (including). Minimum and maximum value must be divided by comma. |
| Not | select all books that would be excluded | selects all books where the publisher is anything else but not ‘Marvel’ |
| Contains | select all books where the phrase is found somewhere in the field | Selects all books where the series contains the word ‘Batman’  Selects all books where the exact phrase “Batman Robin” is somewhere in the series, but not where “Batman **and** Robin” is in the series field |
| NotContains | Select all books where the phrase is **not** found somewhere in the field **(can only be used with non-numerical fields)** | Selects all books where “Batman” is not found somewhere in the series. |
| ContainsAnyOf | Select all books where any of the values is found somewhere in the field **(can only be used with non-numerical fields, the list of values must be separated by commas)** | Selects all books where Batman or Robin or Joker is found somewhere in the series. |
| NotContainsAnyOf | Select all books where any of the values is not found somewhere in the field **(can only be used with non-numerical fields, the list of values must be separated by commas)** | Selects all books where neither “Superman” nor “Batman” is found in the series. |
| ContainsAllOf | Select all books where all of the values are found somewhere in the field **(can only be used with non-numerical fields, the list of values must be separated by commas)** | Selects all books where “Bat” **and** “Super” are found somewhere in the series. |
| IsAnyOf | Select all books where the field is exactly as one value from the list | #todo |
| NotIsAnyOf | Select all books where the field is not exactly as one value from the list | #todo |
| Greater | select all books where the value is greater than the phrase | Selects all books where the number is greater than 10 |
| GreaterEq | select all books where the value is equal or greater than the phrase | selects all books where the number is equal to or greater than 10 |
| Less | select all books where the value is less than the phrase | Selects all books where the number is less than 10 |
| LessEq | select all books where the value is equal or greater than the phrase **(this can only be used with numerial fields)** | selects all books where the number is equal to or less than 10 |
| StartsWith | select all books where the value starts with the phrase **(can only be used with non-numerical fields)** | selects all books where the series name starts with “Bat” (like Batman or Batwing) |
| NotStartsWith | select all books where the value does **not** starts with the phrase **(can only be used with non-numerical fields)** | #todo |
| StartsWithAnyOf | Select all books where the value starts with any of the given phrases **(can only be used with non-numerical fields, the list of values must be separated by commas)** | Selects all books where Series starts with either ”Super” or “Bat”. |

### The Number field problem

As ComicVine (as does ComicRack) allows any characters in the Number field of an issue (like ½, ∞ and everything else unthinkable) it cannot be guaranteed that range modifiers like Range, Less, Greater etc. work correctly with the Number field. If you use a rule like



the Data Manager will find all issues with issue number 0, 0.5, 1, 2, 3 up to 10. But it will not find the roman numeric literal V .

## List of value modifiers in the “Actions” part of a ruleset

These are the modifier that can be used set new values:

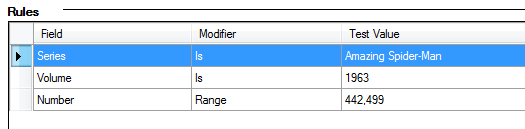
|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Modifier** | **Purpose** | **Example** |
| SetValue | sets the new value | Sets the field Format to the new value “TPB” |
| Calc | perform calculations (see example below) | Replaces the current number of the book with current number minus 1. This modifier will only work in numerical fields (including Number). **But take care if the book’s number is no real numeric value (something like ‘∞’ or ‘1AU’ etc.). This might lead to unexpected results.** |
| Add | add a new value to a field of type string (including multi value fields) | Adds “Metropolis” as a tag |
| Replace | replace a value in a field of type string (including multi value fields) | Removes “Metropolis” and adds “Superman” instead |
| Remove | remove a value from a field of type string (including multi value fields) | Removes “Metropolis” from Tags |
| RemoveLeading | Remove a value from a the beginning of a field | Removes a leading “The” from the series name. This way you can e.g. change the title “The Incredible Hulk” to “Incredible Hulk” |

## Calculated values

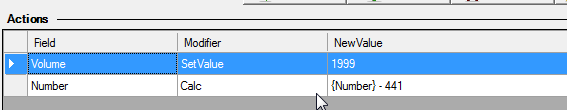
A very powerful feature of the Data Manager plugin is the use of calculated values.

One of the most notorious incorrect information on ComicVine is the “integration” of the 1999 volume of Amazing Spider-Man into the 1963 volume. How can the DataManager help to enter the correct information into your library?

It is quite simple: First you have to select the incorrectly dated books in your library. Our rule is: select all books where the series is “Amazing Spider-Man” volume “1963” where the number is in the range from 442 to 499 (including). The rule condition would be:



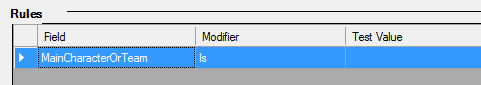
Now we have to define what needs to be corrected. We want to change the volume to 1999 and correct the issue numbers to 1 (instead of 442), 2 (instead of 443) etc. This means we have to deduct exactly 441 from the original number. So this would be the “Actions” part of your rule:

:

**Note:** If you use field names within the calc modifier you have to enclose them in curly brackets.

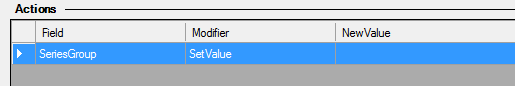
## Working with empty values

The Data Manager allows the usage of empty values. You might want to use a rule to set the vaue of SeriesGroup to something only if the field MainCharacterOrTeam is empty. For this purpose you write this rule:



Simply leave the test value empty and the script will look only for books where the Main Character field is empty.

With the same logic you can remove values from fields. Suppose you want to remove the values from SeriesGroup where SeriesGroup is “Avengers” you would use

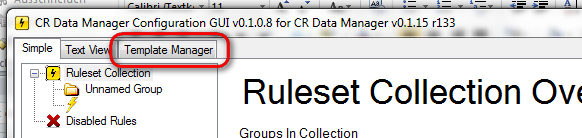


## Working with Rule and Action Templates

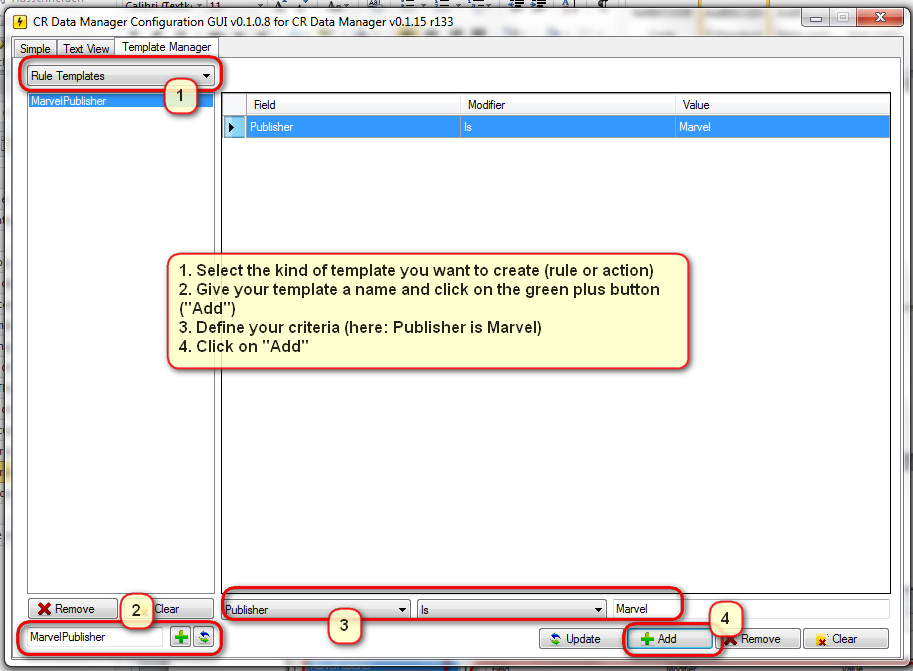
When you create your rulesets you will discover that you often have to enter very similar rules. Assume that you create a lot of rules for Marvel main characters you want to define your ruleset that way that it also contains a condition like “Publisher Is Marvel”. Instead of adding this condition each time manually you can create a template and apply this template later to any ruleset you create.

### Step 1: creating a template

We create templates in the “Template Manager” tab at the top of the Configuration editor:



It is quite easy to create a reusable template: Change to the “Template Manager”, select the kind of template you want to create (in this case: a rule template), enter a name for your template and finally define the criteria in your template (here: “Publisher” is “Marvel”):



**Note:** in the name of templates no blanks and equal signs (‘=’) are allowed.

### Step 2: Applying a template

#todo: applying a template. Function does not work in RC4

## #todo: The Profile Options menu

#todo: the Utilities menu

## #todo: Parser directives

END\_RULES: Especially for testing.

# Links

Discussion about the Data Manager in the ComicRack forum: <http://comicrack.cyolito.com/forum/13-scripts/30963-the-cr-data-manager-enter-data-automatically-based-on-rules-0112>

Downloads: <http://code.google.com/p/cr-data-manager/downloads/list>

Any suggestions for new features and bug reports may be posted here: <http://code.google.com/p/cr-data-manager/issues/list>

The Data Manager has not been created to earn a living. But if you like to honor the effort and help keeping the Data Manager alive and progressing you are kindly invited to donate a few bucks here: <https://www.paypal.com/cgi-bin/webscr?cmd=_s-xclick&hosted_button_id=YYDNBFQKCLAGQ>

# License information

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