

# Creating Custom Master Files

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## Overview

For large scale projects it may become necessary to make use of custom [Master File](#) (.esm format) for user-created plugins to refer to. This is particularly useful for projects involving new world spaces or circumstances that require multiple people developing simultaneously. This tutorial will present a method for doing just that.

## Creating the Master File

In order to create a Master File, you must convert an existing Plugin. The following is a step-by-step procedure detailing this process:

1. Simply rename the ".esp" extension of the Plugin file, that you want to convert to a Master File, to ".esm"
  - *I ended up using an FTP program known as FileZilla for this, but you can do so through a variety of other means such as Command Prompt.*
  - *To use Windows Explorer to do this, go to Organize > Folder and Search Options > View > Hide extensions for known file types. Uncheck the box. For more details and for pictures, follow this link: <http://www.mediacollege.com/microsoft/windows/extension-change.html>*
2. Open the Creation Kit and load the ".esm" data file you have just created and then save it.
  - *This in order to have the Creation Kit recognize it as a true Master File.*

## Referencing the Master File

If you expect to have a Plugin reference the Master File: open both the Master File and Plugin (as active) and simply re-save your Plugin. It is strongly recommended that you back up your original Plugin in case you do something wrong. Like if you realize you did not want your .esp to reference a particular Master File.

## Removing a Mod's Dependency on a Master File

Master files should never be removed from a master file list for an .esp unless it is certain that the .esp never actually refers to any content in the master.

Some cases where this operation might be performed:

- *The .esp was connected to a master by accident.*
- *Modding work has been done to transfer all the content from the master elsewhere or to remove it from the game. So where the .esp used to need its master, now it no longer does.*

## Some possible methods:

- To remove an unused master file from a plugin using the CK, follow these steps:
  1. Launch the Creation Kit.
  2. Navigate to File >Data
  3. Select any required plugins as normal.
  4. Select the plugin from the list and notice the list of parent masters on right.
  5. Select the master file to remove on the right and press Ctrl+Delete.
  6. If you receive an error regarding the ID, select "Yes."
  7. Click "OK."
  8. After the plugin is finished loading, save the changes.
- To remove the connection to an .esp master, one can simply load up the mod in the CK without .esmifying the .esp master in Wrye Bash, and then save the mod in the CK. (This action can be performed by accident and is a leading cause of ruined mods with .esp masters.)

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See also: [Changing the Order of Master Files in the Master File List for a Plugin](#)