Make A Text List

v6.6

For macOS 11+/Music v1.1+/TV v1.1+
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This script can assemble a list of tag information about the selected tracks (or tracks in the selected playlist) using a configurable pattern substitution string and then provides the ability to export the formatted text to the clipboard, a text file or the Print Dialog where it can be printed, previewed, printed-to-PDF and so on.

For macOS 11 and later only.

This script is Donationware. If you use it and like it please consider making a donation to support my AppleScripting efforts. Click here for more info.

Installation:

This script, "Make A Text List",is an **AppleScript applet** and can be run by double-clicking its icon in the Finder. Thus, it can be installed anywhere you find it convenient to access. However, it is probably best accessed from the Script menu of the application you will be using it with, from where it can be launched by clicking its name.

For the Music app
To make an AppleScript available in your **Music** Script menu, install it in the Music "Scripts" folder. This is located at *[user name] / Library / Music / Scripts /* . **Music** will look for AppleScripts in this folder.

For the TV app
Likewise, the **Apple TV** application will look for AppleScript files in *[user name] / Library / Apple TV / Scripts /* . (That's right, "Apple TV".) Indeed, for this script to run at all with the TV app it *must* be installed in this location.

> *The user Library directory may be hidden by default. To make it visible, hold down the Option key on your keyboard and select* **Go > Library** *from the Finder.*

If the *[user name] / Library /* folder does not contain the application-appropriate named folder or "Scripts" folder, then create them and put the script(s) in the "Scripts" folder. AppleScripts will then appear in the corresponding app's Script menu, and can be activated by selecting by name and clicking. Be sure to also save this Read Me document in a safe and convenient place.
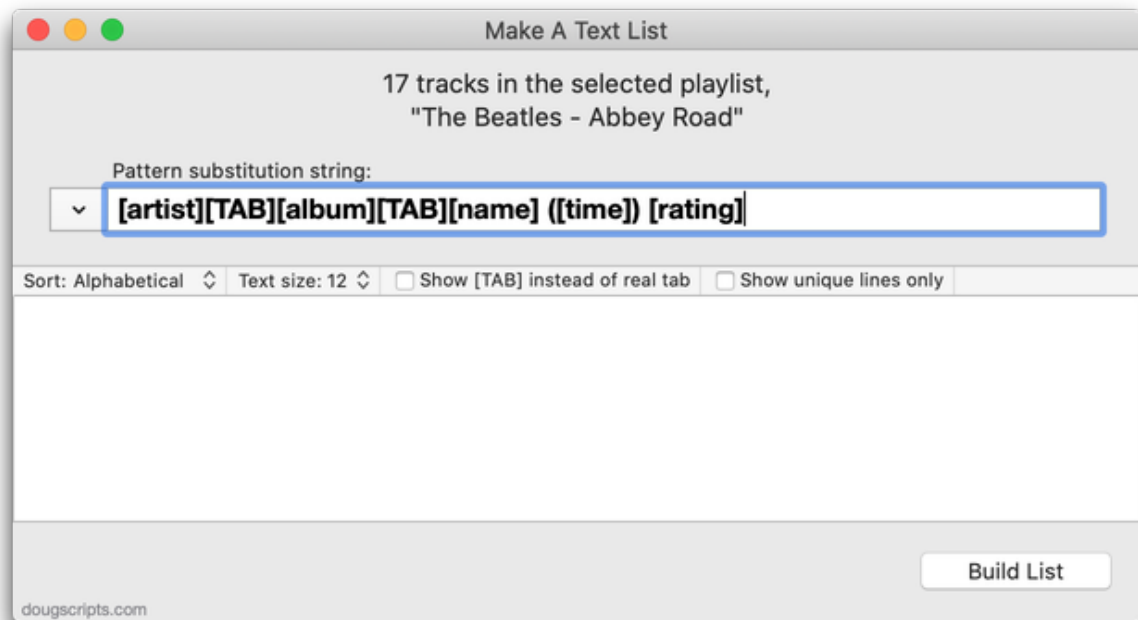
See the online Download FAQ **for more info and video on downloading and installing AppleScripts.**

Initial Caveat:

Using AppleScript to create a list of track data will not produce instantaneous results. Each track has to be examined. While this process is *brisk* is it not *fast*. Hundreds or thousands of tracks may take several seconds to process.

How to use:

Launch the app. It will detect the tracks or playlist you have selected in the Music or TV app and display this information at the top of its main window.
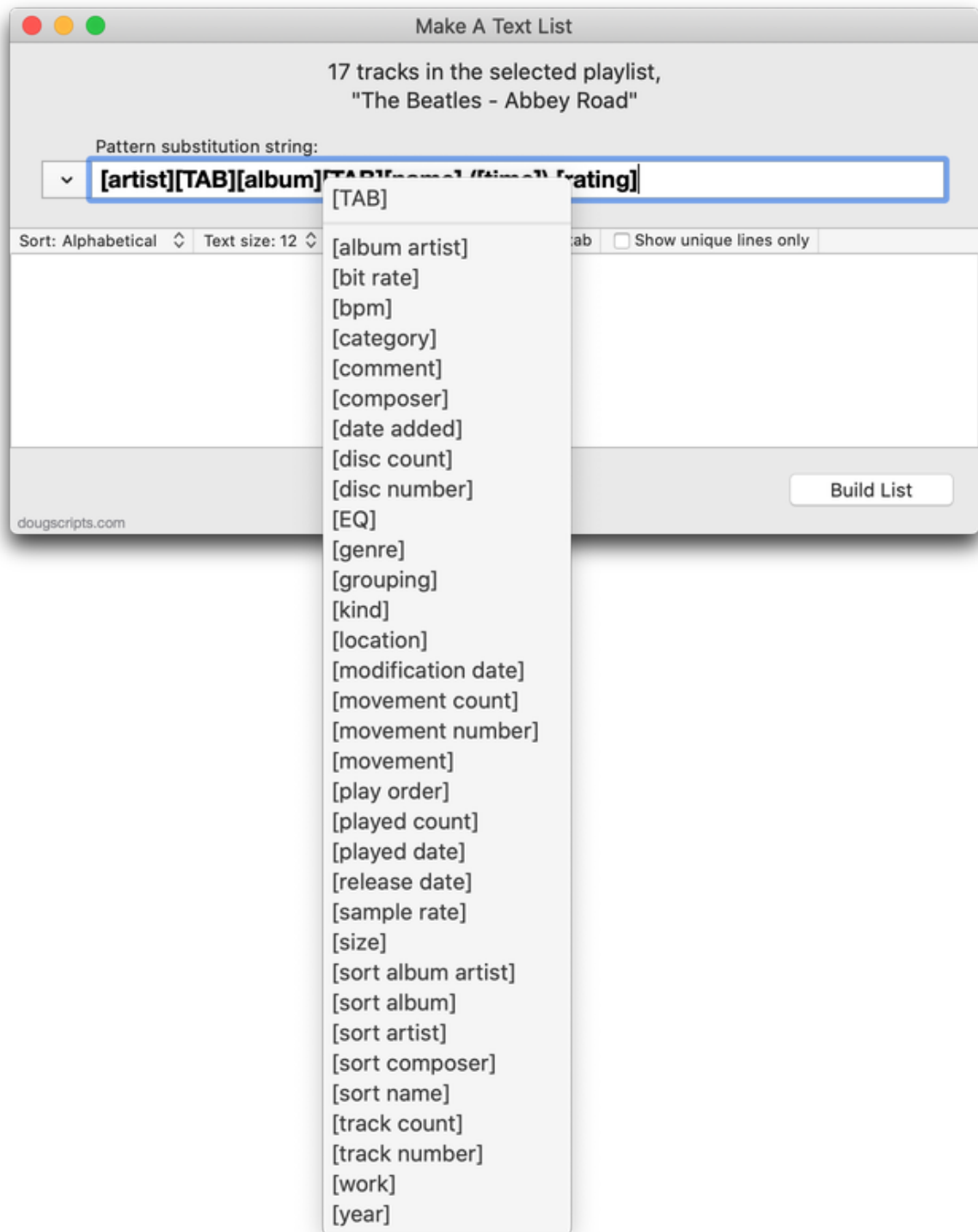
The Tokens Field & Pattern Configuration String

The highlighted **Tokens Field** is for configuring the **Pattern Substitution** string. This string will be the template for assembling each row of track information.

The Pattern Substitution string can contain **bracketed substitution tokens** and **user text**. When preparing the information from the selected tracks, this string will be applied to each row of track information such that the corresponding track information will be substituted for the bracketed tokens.
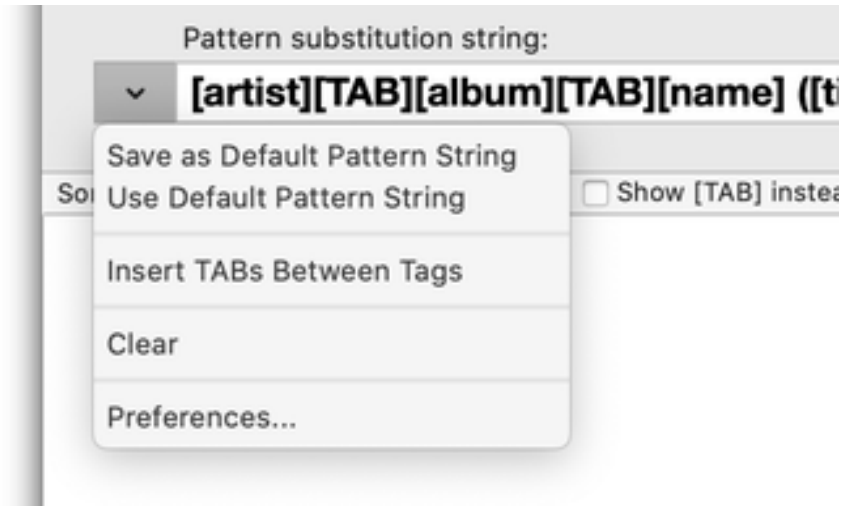
A menu of allowable tokens can be displayed by right-clicking in the field. Selecting a token from the menu will insert it at the current cursor position.

> • You shouldn't need to type bracketed tags manually. *But if you do*, they must be one of the tags listed in the popup menu.

> • Navigating inside the Tokens Field is easier using the Left and Right Arrow keys rather than the mouse.

(I have not yet worked out a way to use *literal* bracket characters. A future version will enable them to be escaped. So: **don't use the "[" or "]" characters** unless they are part of a token.)
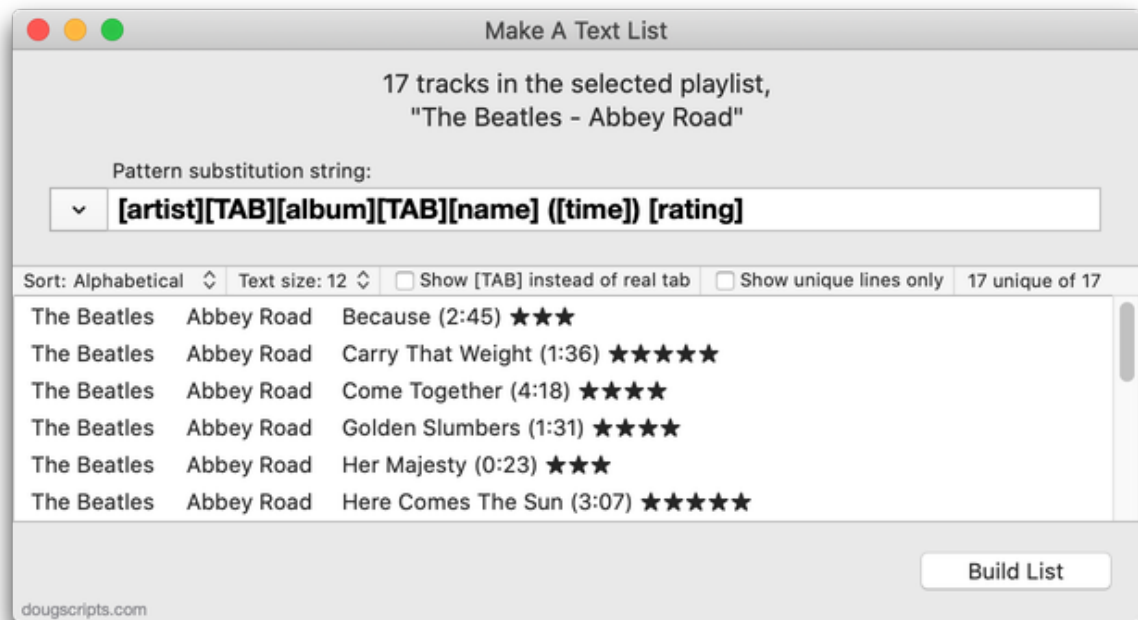
The Tokens Field's Action Menu

Click the arrow button to display the Tokens Field's **Action Menu**.

> • **Save as Default Pattern String** - store the current Tokens Field's contents to use as the default.

> • **Use Default Pattern String** - replace the contents of the Tokens Field with the stored default pattern string.

> • **Insert TABs Between Tags** - Removes any **user text** from the Tokens Field leaving just the **bracketed tokens** and inserts a [TAB] token between each one.

The remaining two commands' functions should be obvious.

Processing

When the Pattern Substitution string is satisfactory, click the **Build List** button (or press **Command-L**) to begin processing the information from the selected tracks. For example:

You can see how each row of track data has been configured using the Pattern Substitution string.

Processing the List

It will take a few moments to obtain the information for each track from the Music or TV app. The number of selected tracks and the number of substitution tokens are factors; more of either will lengthen the processing time.

• Whenever the Pattern Substitution string is re-configured or the track/playlist selection in Music or TV is changed, the list will need to be **manually** updated by clicking the **Build List** button.

When processing has completed, each row of track information will be displayed, line by line, in the main view. and these formatting options become available in the main view's accessory bar:

• **Sort** (Alphabetical and Source Order) - Track information is gathered from the Music or TV app in the order which the tracks are currently sorted in the selected playlist—even for a track *selection*. Choose "Source order" to maintain this sort order in the main view. However, *depending on how the Pattern Substitution string is configured*, it may be desirable to sort the rows in the main view alphabetically.
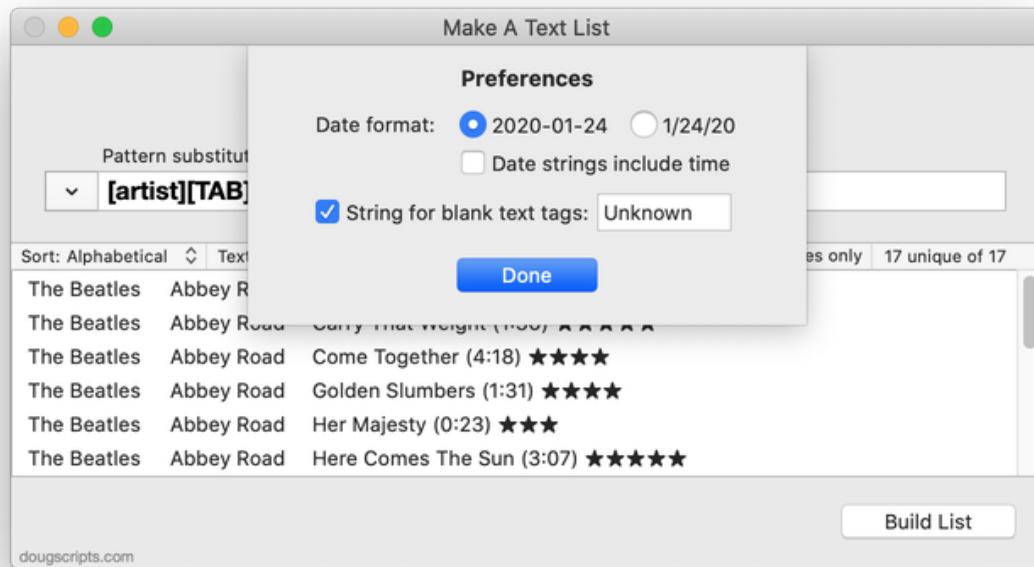
• **Text size** - Selecting a new text size from the popup will re-display the list at the selected point size. This text size does not effect how the information is exported via clipboard or text file. But it will effect how the information is printed or PDF'd.

• **Show [TAB] instead of real tab** - Default tab stops can cause lines of text containing tabs to render unpredictably. As a visual convenience, this option will render any real tabs as "[TAB]" in the main view; this setting only affects text display and does not effect how the text is exported.

• **Show unique lines only** - If the Pattern Substitution is configured in such a way that there are duplicate listings (perhaps it doesn't contain tags that distinguish an individual track such as "[name]" or "[track number]"), this option will simply display only the lines that are unique in the list.

• **unique of total lines** - Displays the number of unique text lines and the total number of text lines.

Additionally, several export options will become available in the **File** menu:

• **Copy to Clipboard** (**Shift-Command-C**) - Copies the list of tracks to the clipboard, with each row of text information separated by a carriage return.

• **Export as Text...** (**Shift-Command-S**) - Saves the list of tracks to a text file, with options to either:

> • Export *as formatted* in the main window, substituting occurrences of **[TAB]** (if any) with a **real text tab**, or from **3 to 5 spaces**

> • Export *only the tags* formatted as 4**-spaces-delimited, tab-delimited (TSV)** or **comma-delimited (CSV)**, the latter two formats suitable to import into a spreadsheet application,

• **Print...** (**Shift-Command-P**) - Displays the system Print Dialog so that its **PDF Popup** can be accessed. Depending on the text size used in the main window, this option may or may not be fruitful. (Currently, there is no consideration of PDF exporting and no means to alter margins, justification and so on.)

Preferences

The Preferences panel is available from the Application menu, from the Tokens Field's Action Menu or by pressing Command-comma.

The Preferences panel displays date and time format options and the text to use when a text tag is empty or blank.

If this option is check-marked, the default text is the word "Unknown", such that missing tag text will appear as "Unknown Artist", "Unknown Genre", "Unknown Sort Director" and so on. I suppose "Missing", "Empty" or "No" are other possibilities. If this option is unchecked, then no text will be shown when a particular text tag is blank.

Helpful Links:

Information and download link for this script is located at:
https://dougscripts.com/itunes/scripts/ss.php?sp=mxmakeatextlist

If you have any trouble with this script, please email me.
My name is Doug Adams
support@dougscripts.com

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Recent Version History:

v6.6 January 17, 2023
- Maintenance and minor performance fixes
- Accommodations for macOS 13 Ventura

v6.5 November 13, 2021
- Accommodation for macOS 12 Monterey
- Fixes line break formatting issues when using the Print Dialog
- Adds option to choose export delimiter format
- Minor UI and performance enhancements

v6.4 May 4, 2021
- Fixes printing issue under macOS 11.3
- Fixes minor issue accessing CD track information
- Performance and UI enhancements

v6.3 November 7, 2020
- Accommodations for macOS 11 Big Sur
- Performance, UI and security enhancements

v6.2 January 24, 2020
- Adds Sort and unique/total lines options to the accessory bar

v6.1 January 22, 2020
- Adds support for the Music app
- Adds "Insert Only TABs" option to Token Field's Action Menu
- Adds "Show [TAB] instead of real tab" option to accessory bar controls
- Fixes issue when encountering tracks without location property
- Fixes issue with date formatting
- Performance enhancements

v6.0 December 11, 2019
- initial release -- this is a major rebuild of a script for *iTunes* which only remotely behaved like this one.

This doc last updated January 17, 2023

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