Workflow To Place Tables Using MicroStation

The steps outlined below will cover a few different ways tables can be used in MicroStation.

Assumptions for workflows listed in this document

These workflows assume that you have a drawing (.dgn) open. If you need help creating/opening a drawing (.dgn), please refer to How to Create New DGN Files.

What are table seeds and why are they necessary?

Table seeds control the formatting of the table (i.e. text formatting, text alignment, line type/color/weight, etc.). Table seeds are necessary to save time formatting the table and make adhering to statewide standards easier.
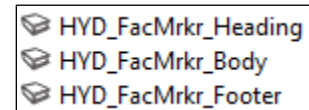

Some tables require multiple seeds for 1 table (i.e. "Heading", "Body", and "Footer"). These seeds will have the same name with the exception of this type of seed (see image above). It is best to start with the "Heading", then the "Body", and last the "Footer". This will give you the locations to snap to and make it easier for you to place the tables. The table origin will always be the top left corner of the table. This is an application setting that cannot be changed. **"Heading" and "Footer" seeds should never be linked to Excel.**

Placing an empty table

To place an empty table, follow the workflow below:

1. Select **Drawing>Annotate>Tables>Place Table** on the ribbon.

2. Ensure the 'Empty Table' icon is selected.

3. Choose the appropriate table *Seed* or "None" to place a manually sized table <u>without</u> standard formatting. When using a seed, place the "Heading", "Body", and "Footer" seeds in that order to make placement easier.

4. Choose the *Text Style* and *Active Angle*.

5. If a *Seed* is not used, enter the *Row Count* and *Column Count* desired.

6. Left-click in the active model (for the top left corner of the table) to place the new table.

7. After placing the table, the location, size, formatting, and contents can be modified. See '**Editing tables**'.
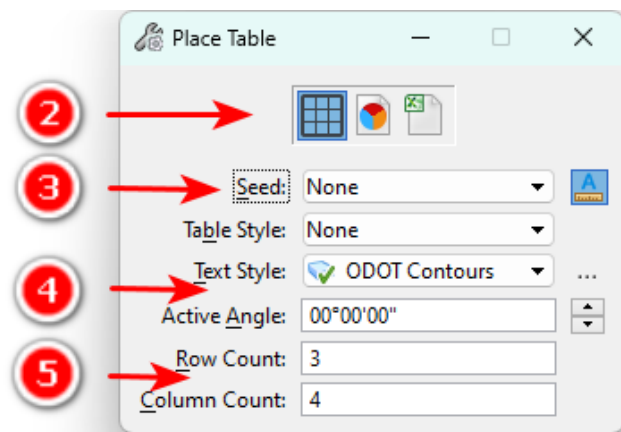
Placing a table linked to Excel

To place a table linked to Excel, follow the workflow below:

1. Select **Drawing>Annotate>Tables>Place Table** on the ribbon.

2. Ensure the 'From File' icon is selected.

3. Choose the appropriate table *Seed*. It is important to do this before selecting the Excel file and never use "None". If you leave "None" set it will change to "From Excel" after you select the Excel file. This could cause MicroStation to crash or this could take a very long time to load. Also, the formatting for the table will not be the way you will need/want. If you don't have a seed to match your data, contact your CAD Standards representative to request a new seed to be created.
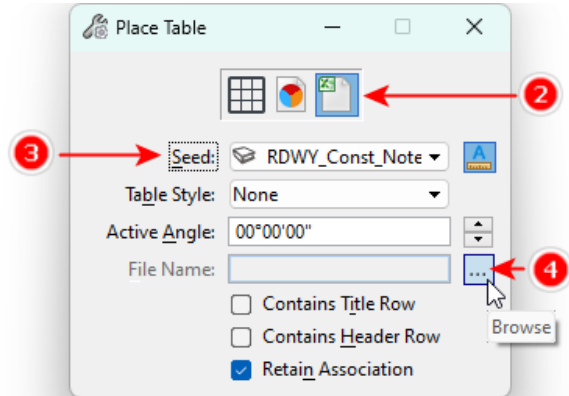
    NOTE: Remember to never link "Heading" or "Footer" seeds to Excel.

4. Select the ... button to the right of the *File Name* field.

    NOTE: The *File Name* field will be blank until a file is selected. If a file was previously selected in the current session of MicroStation, it will appear in the name field and will be selected automatically. Follow step 4 to select a different file.
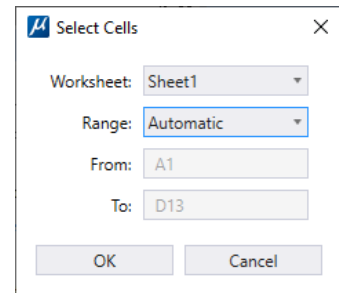
5. In the *Open* dialog, browse to the location, select the Excel file, and then select the *Open* button.

6. In the *Select Cells* dialog, select the *Worksheet*, *Range*, and *From/To*. Range selections are either *Automatic* for the extents of the data in the worksheet or *Manual* to select the range using the *From/To* fields. Select *OK*.

    NOTE: After selecting *OK* and moving your cursor into the drawing window, wait until the *Generating Table* progress bar appears and disappears. The table should be displayed and following your mouse cursor as you move it in the drawing window. **Don't get click happy!!!** Be patient and let MicroStation draw the table.
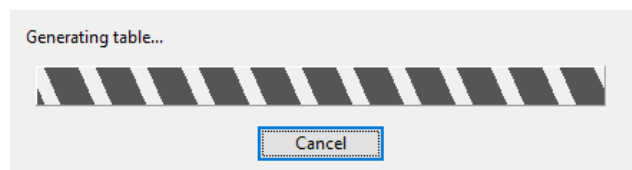
7. Left-click in the active model (for the top left corner of the table) to place the new table.

8. After placing the table, the location, size, formatting, and contents can be modified. See '**Editing tables**'.

Editing tables

After a table is placed, it can be edited. There are several features that can be edited on a table, but here are the more common edits.

Moving a Table – A table can be moved just like any other element in MicroStation using the 'Move' command.

Adding/Changing Text – A table is similar to a text element. With or without the table selected, simply double click on any cell within the table to edit the text for that cell. The 'Edit Text' command will also work to edit the text within a table.

Adding Rows/Columns, Merging Cells, Modifying Cell/Row/Column Sizes, Text Formatting, and Table Symbology – After selecting a table, the ribbon automatically changes to the "Table Tools" tab and the table highlights showing the row numbers down the left side and column letters across the top. These "Table Tools" commands are fairly self-explanatory and very similar to Excel. See the two images below to show the "Table Tools" ribbon tab and a highlighted/selected table.
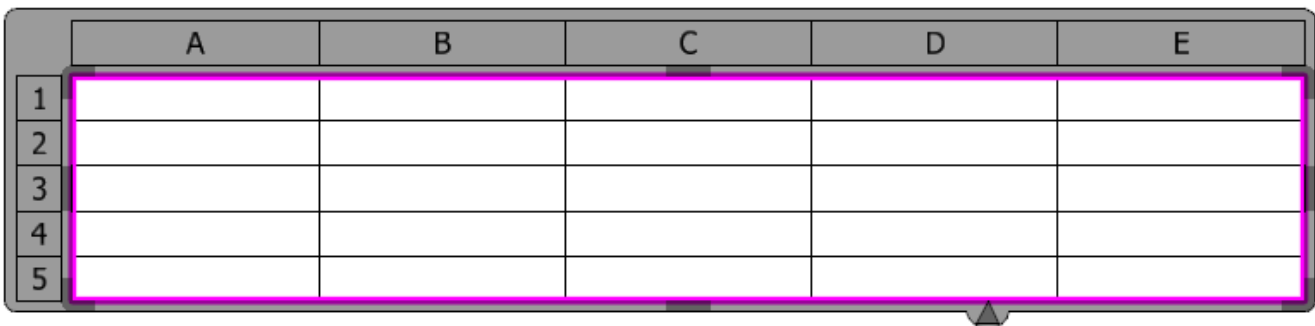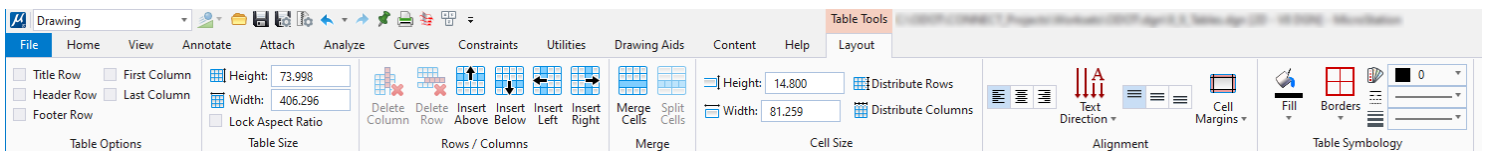
Updating an Excel linked table – Select the table that needs to be updated. On the "Table Tools" ribbon tab, select the "Refresh Table from Data Source" button in the *Rows/Columns* group. See the image below. This will only update the selected table and only 1 table at a time. To update all tables in a model, type in the key-in "table refresh all" and press *Enter/Return*. This key-in is a quick way to update all tables within a model.
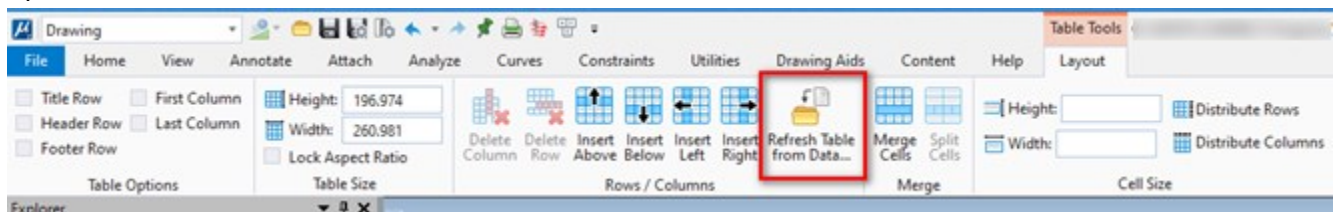
Removing an Excel link – Hoover your cursor over the ![X] in the middle of the table. In the popup menu select the "Remove Link" button on the far right. See image to the right. This will remove the link and you will not be able to link this table to Excel again. If you need to get the linked Excel table back, place the table again using the "From Excel" option explained above.

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