Creating links
Guides for Merlin Project Express
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# Creating links - as of December 2018

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This guide shows you how to create dependencies in Merlin Project Express.

Why link

The aim of linking content in a project is to define the sequence in which the activities are worked through logically.

Example: Only when Activity A is completed can Activity B begin. Activity A is the predecessor of Activity B, which is its successor.

Creating links

You can link project activities. When linking, dependencies are created that define a logical sequence.

Select at least two activities that you want to link together.

On the toolbar you will find the Link button. If you click the arrow to the right of the Link icon, the available link types and the option to separate existing links appear.

Click the Link icon or use the keyboard shortcut ctrl + cmd + L for the End to Start dependency type. The two activities are now linked with an arrow.
Alternatives

All roads lead to Rome, including the various possibilities for creating links.

Menu and context menu

In the **Structure → Link** menu item you will find the same options.

Secondary-clicking selected content will display the context menu. This contains the dependency option with the four dependency types.

Linking using the mouse

You can also link activities in the Gantt chart using your mouse. Press and hold the **alt** button while hovering the mouse pointer over an activity bar or milestone.

A small black dot appears on the activity. While holding down the **alt** key, move the mouse to another activity (successor).

The dependency will be created as soon as you release the mouse button.
Linking with columns

In the *Predecessor* or *Successor* columns, you can see the predecessor or successor activity numbers (#).

![Example table]

Enter an activity number in the *Predecessor* or *Successor* columns, to create a dependency of the current activity row to that number.

- **The Successor column is not activated by default.**

Disconnecting links

To disconnect links, click a link line and press the delete key.

![Example diagram]

If you need to delete several links, select all activities and use the **Disconnect** option in one of the **Link** menus.
Dependency Inspector

If you select a link, the **Dependency** inspector appears.

The options contained in the Dependency inspector are responsible for the *dependency* of linked activities, groups, and milestones.

Here you can modify the predecessors and successors, and find them quickly in the project by clicking the *arrow*.

In the **Type** drop-down menu, you can select the *dependency types*. This lets you change the current dependency:

- **End to Start**
- **End to End**
- **Start to Start**
- **Start to End**
Lead/Lag in links

Click a link line to access the Dependency inspector.

Enter a time unit in the Lead/Lag field to lengthen the dependency between the linked activities.

If you enter a negative value, the dependency and the linked activity will move back along the timeline according to the entered lag value. For example, enter -2 days in the Lead/Lag field.

**Lead/Lag** can be entered manually in the Predecessor or Successor columns.

Example: If you enter the value 5ES+2 days in the Successor column for an activity, an End to Start dependency will be created with the Activity #5 and a lead/lag of 2 days.

At the same time, the Activity #5 will be also linked to Activity #1 by a lead/lag of 2 days. Its Predecessor column will show then: 1ES+2 days