



Mexican Postal Codes Documentation

Introduction:

We were the first company to sell Mexican Postal Codes (since the mid-90s). The postal code data was OK, but there was very little in the way of mapping and latitude / longitude information. We have been working on improving the data and have made many inroads in this area as better mapping products are becoming available. **For the August, 2009 version, we made a dramatic improvement to the quality of the product, both in the base product and the latitude / longitude coordinates.**

In 2008, the Mexican Postal Codes product was totally revamped from the previous version. The reason for this is that we previously received one format from the Mexican Postal Authorities and that format is no longer available. The good news is that the new format is much better (it's upper and lower-case, it has significantly more records, it will be updated much more frequently and will give you multiple formats: English Only characters (where we convert 'ñ' to 'n', 'ü' to 'u', etc.); Unicode UTF-8 standard (which uses double-byte Spanish characters); or the ISO-8859-1 standard which uses single-byte characters (including accented characters) throughout.

We hope you like this improved version of the data and we plan on continually improving it to make it the best product possible. We automate what we can, but much of the work continues to require manual verification.

Overview of Character Sets:

Many U.S. programmers have only had to deal with English characters in their databases, displayed on web pages, etc. With this Mexican data, along with other languages, things have become more challenging since the ASCII character set can only handle up to 256 characters. We've created 3 different files to make this as easy as possible for you to use the data:

- If you have a legacy system that will only accept plain ASCII characters (and won't accept the Extended ASCII characters [the accented Spanish, French and other characters]), you can use the English version of our data files.
- If you can use Extended ASCII characters, we created the ISO-8859-1 (also referred to as 'ISO Latin-1') version of our data. It has the accented characters, but they only take up one byte each. To make your web site read these characters properly, you would add the following META tag to you HTTP header:

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<META http-equiv="Content-Type" content="text/html; charset=ISO-8859-1">

- If you want to make your web site database truly International, than you should look at our UTF-8 file. UTF-8 is part of the Unicode standard and uses single-byte characters for English characters, but uses double-byte characters for accented Spanish characters. To make your web site read these characters properly, you would add the following META tag to you HTTP header:

<META http-equiv="Content-Type" content="text/html; charset=utf-8">

- To compare the difference, we've created this table for you of the codes we use:

Character	Decimal Equivalent	ISO-8859-1 (Hex)	UTF-8 (Hex, 2 Bytes)
Á	193	C1	C3 81
É	201	C9	C3 89
Í	205	CD	C3 8D
Ó	211	D3	C3 93
Ú	218	DA	C3 9A
Ñ	209	D1	C3 91
á	225	E1	C3 A1
é	233	E9	C3 A9
í	237	ED	C3 AD
ó	243	F3	C3 B3
ú	250	FA	C3 BA
ü	252	FC	C3 BC
ñ	241	F1	C3 B1
º (degree symbol)	186	BA	C2 BA
ª (feminine ordinal indicator)	170	AA	C2 AA

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Data File Names:

The file names are a bit long, but let you know exactly what's in the file.

- It will begin with '**mex-**' followed by an '**l-**' if the latitude / longitude is included.
- It will then have '**full-**' or '**demo-**' so you know if you have all records or a subset.
- Next it will say either '**fixed-**' or '**delim-**' for either fixed-width layout, or delimited with a comma.
- Finally, it will have '**english**' for our plain English conversion format, '**iso**' for the ISO-8859-1 format, or '**utf8**' for the UTF-8 format.
- All files have a suffix of '**.txt.**'

Additional Files:

The additional files included with this product are:

- **State files.** These have the Mexican state name and abbreviation in comma-delimited files and are named: mex-states-english.txt, mex-states-iso.txt and mex-states-utf8.txt – one for each type of character set.
- **Type file.** There is an English only text file with the place name types and abbreviations. It's called, '**mex-types.txt.**' You will join this table to the main data file in order to determine the full name of the type, which is abbreviated in the main file. For instance, '**COL**' is for 'Colonia' which basically is a neighborhood / quarter. It can also indicate a gated community. A barrio can also be a neighborhood.

Another example is '**UHAB**' which stands for 'Unidad habitacional' which are apartment buildings.

'Gran Usario' appears to be private businesses or government agencies with their own postal code.

File Layout:

The main file has a header record (except in the fixed-width format) followed by detail records. The field layout is as follows:

1. A 5-digit **Postal Code**. Note: this is similar to the U.S. zip codes and you want to keep them properly identified so that they aren't confused with each other.
2. A 2-digit **Sequence Number**. This is a code created by us to differentiate between the many place names within a postal code. One code can have many place names (as of this writing, one code has 72 places!).

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3. The **State Abbreviation** is next and can be from 2-4 characters long.
4. The **Type Code** follows and can be from 2-5 characters in length.
5. The **Place Name** is up to 60 characters long.
6. The **Municipality / Delegation Name** follows and can be up to 50 characters in length. This is a region within a state or a division in a large city. For instance, Mexico City has 16 delegations: Alvaro Obregon, Benito Juarez, etc.
7. The **Major City Name** is the last field in the base product. If this postal code is part of a main city, there will be an entry here. Rural areas will not have anything in this field. This can be up to 40 characters.
8. If you have a file with the **Latitude and Longitude** add-on, these are the next two fields. The latitude field is in the format of 99.999999 and the longitude is in the format of -999.999999. All of Mexico will have negative longitudes because it's in the Western Hemisphere. Lat/ long info for Mexico has been hard to create and maintain because of the lack of good source documents, along with multiple city names in the same state. For instance, we found about twenty 'Santa Maria' place names in one state and it was difficult to know which one belonged to a postal code.

Fixed-width Layout:

The field positions are as follows:

Field Name:	From:	To:
Postal Code	1	5
Sequence No.	6	7
State Abbreviation	8	11
Type Abbreviation	12	16
Place Name	17	76
Municipality Name	77	126
Major City Name	127	166
Latitude	167	175
Longitude	176	186

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Formatting a Mexican Address:

The format of a Mexican address with a Major City should be as follows:

Sample Address:	Explanation / Fields Used:
<i>Sr. Jose Gonzalez</i>	Recipient name (a company or individual)
<i>Calle Insurgentes No. 123</i>	Street name, followed by the house/building number. This may also be followed by a floor, apartment or suite#
<i>Col. Napoles</i>	Place name. Whether this is a Colonia or not, it appears that most addresses have the name preceded with 'Col.' Also, if the place name ends in 'Centro,' most addresses just have 'Col. Centro' rather than the full place name.
<i>Benito Juarez</i>	This is the Municipality/ Delegation name. We've seen addresses using 'Del.' Or 'Delegation' before the name (at least for Mexico City delegations), but it's optional.
<i>C.P. 03810, Mexico, DF</i>	Postal Code, Major City, State Abbreviation. Note: the 'C.P.' is forCodigo Postal (Postal Code) and is optional.
<i>MEXICO</i>	Use the country name (in all capital letters) if mailing from outside of Mexico.

The format of a Mexican address *without* a Major City should be as follows:

Sample Address:	Explanation / Fields Used:
<i>Dr. Jose Gonzalez</i>	Recipient name (a company or individual)
<i>Ave Insurgentes No. 1234</i>	Street name, followed by the house/building number. This may also be followed by a floor, apartment or suite#
<i>Col. Del Pacifico</i>	Place name. Whether this is a Colonia or not, it appears that most addresses have the name preceded with 'Col.' Also, if the place name ends in 'Centro,' most addresses just have 'Col. Centro' rather than the full place name.
<i>C.P. 28879, Manzanillo, COL</i>	Postal Code, Municipality / Delegation, State Abbreviation. Note: the 'C.P.' is forCodigo Postal (Postal Code) and is optional.
<i>MEXICO</i>	Use the country name (in all capital letters) if mailing from outside of Mexico.

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