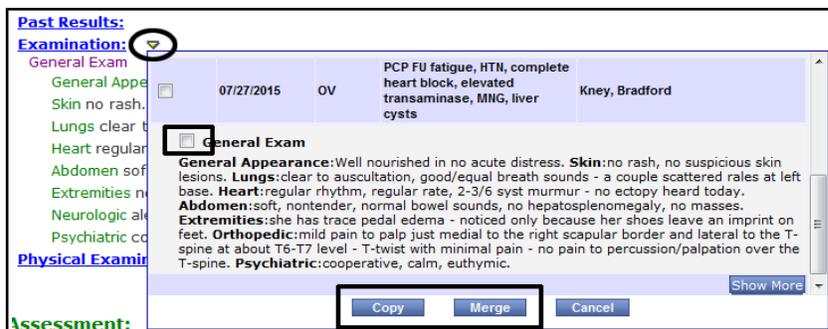


ECW How To

Entry Options for the Physical Exam

Importing Prior Examinations into the Current Note

One of the simplest ways to quickly enter a physical exam is to simply copy or merge an exam from a prior visit by clicking on the nabla (upside down triangle). For certain types of follow-up visits, this is quite useful. You can either “Merge” it into the current exam, or “Copy” it (copy it over any existing exam). You can then modify it to fit



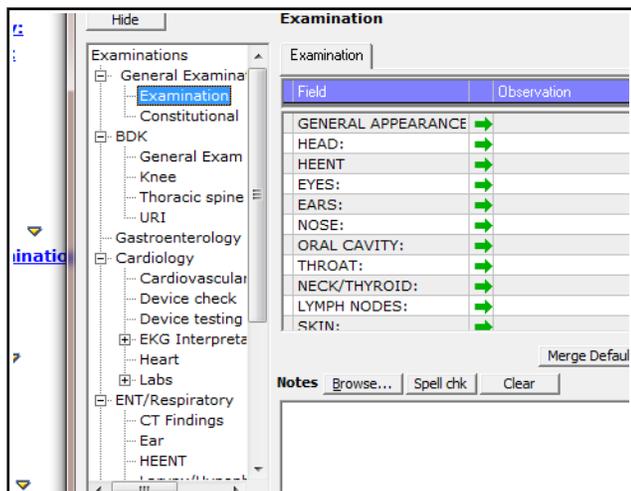
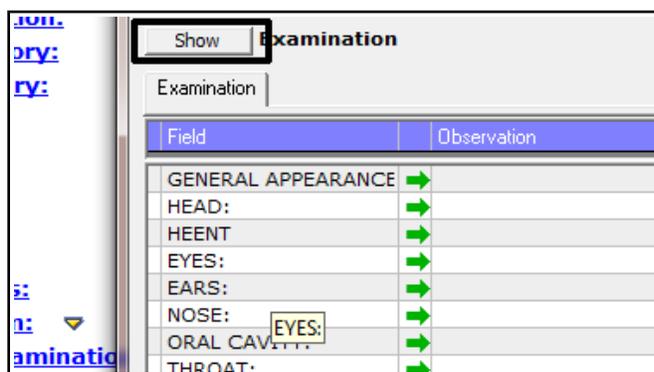
today's exam. If the exam today is quite similar to the exam in the past, the process can be very quick and easy. I was told that ECW keeps track of the last SIX entries. I have found that it shows you the past 2 exams by default, and the “Show More” button will show you only TWO more. But I do find this method to be useful at times. Just make sure you change the exam to reflect today's reality. Auditors don't look kindly on word for word copy and paste notes.

Setting up the Examination using a Visit Template

Visit templates are the most common way that default exams are set up. I have about 20 visit templates that I set up long ago. I use 2 of these templates for the vast majority of my visits. They include a default ROS and default exam.

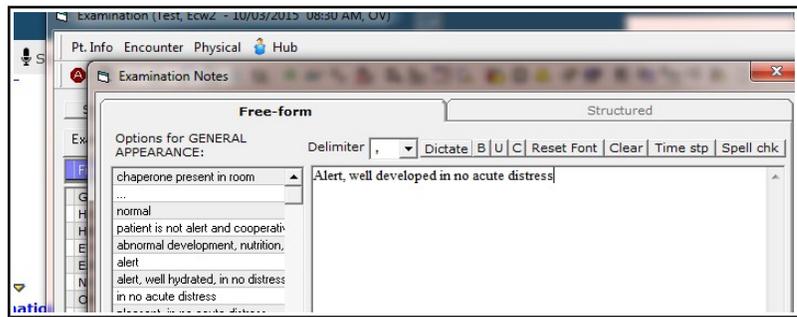
One simple way to make an exam template is to blank out a test patient's progress note - using a blank template. I set up a blank template in my own favorites long ago - on the first day I started using templates in ECW. If you don't have a blank template, you should make one. Just take an absolutely blank note and save it as “Blank” in your template list. When you “Copy” this over a note, it gets rid of everything.

Now click on “Examination”. You may get a screen like this. If you want to see more exam options, click on “Show”.

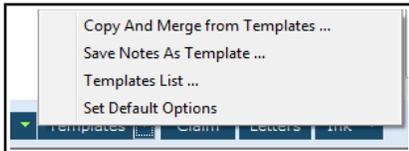


Now you can see other exam options to use in your template if you wish.

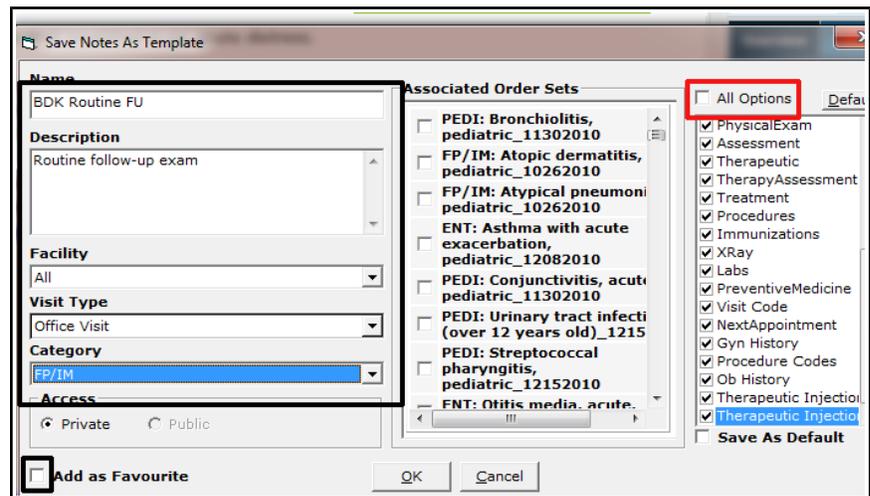
Now, just either pull in options from the left panel, or write in the text you want for this exam. You can set it up for your routine visit, or for your back pain visit, or your chest pain visit – whatever. Type in exactly what YOU want for this exam.



After entering everything you want for this particular exam, click the nabla (upside down triangle) next to “Templates” at the bottom of the page, and then click “Save Notes as Template”.



Now, name the template, choose the “Category” (in this case - “FP/IM”), add it as a favorite (lower left dark square), and choose which parts of the note to be included in the template. You can leave all options, or choose just “Examination” in this case. When you hit “OK”, it will ask if you want to view the template.



Now, when you go to choose a template for a visit, your new exam template comes up as a choice. If you make a mistake, you can update it or delete it from the template list.

You can certainly put other elements into a template, but this “How To” is focusing on ways to enter the physical exam into a note. My visit templates usually incorporate an HPI, ROS, and examination, but you can include CPT codes, Assessments, Treatments, and more. If you have templates that include ICD-9 codes, remember to update them come October 1, 2015.

Mini Physical Exam Templates

What if you are in your “Routine Follow-Up” template and a patient brings up a new problem – low back pain, headache, URI, or shoulder pain. This is a VERY common occurrence in primary care.

The Problem:

I need to add a low back pain exam to my general exam. Do I have to type or dictate the whole exam, or is there an easier way?

The Solution:

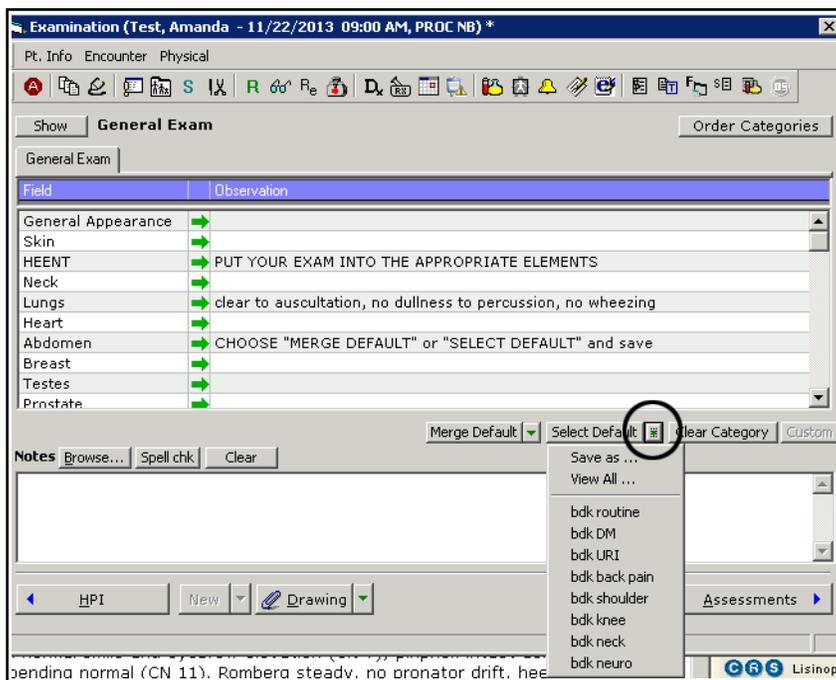
YES, there is an easier way.

First, you need to generate the mini-exam template.

Open an EMPTY exam in a test patient – like Amanda Test shown here.

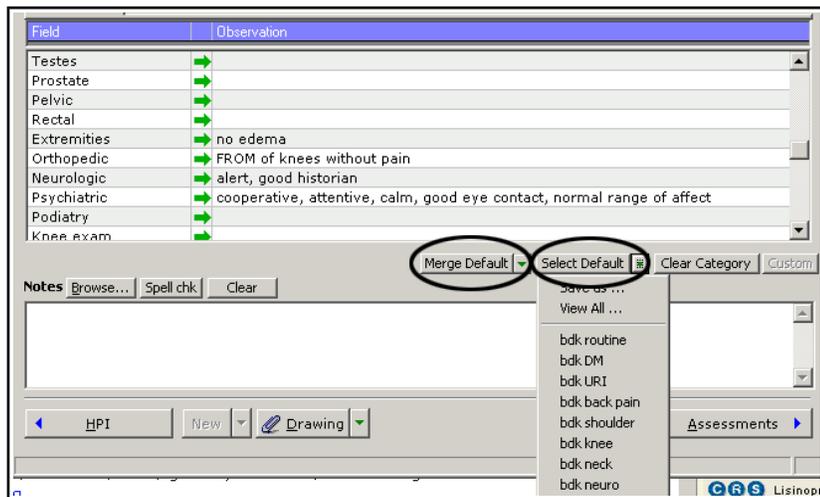
Generate the exam you want – by whatever means you usually use (type it, dictate it, pull it from the default choices).

Now save it by pulling down on the arrow next to “Select Default” or “Merge Default” and click “Save As” and give this exam a name. In the future, it will now show up as a drop-down choice under both “Merge Default” and “Select Default”.



Note that you can clear the exam and start over any time by clicking “Clear Category”. By clicking the “View All” button, you will open a screen that lets you delete an exam if you made an error, or decided it wasn't that useful after trying it out at a few visits.

In the patient visit example above, I wanted to add a typical low back exam to a general note.



To the left, you see a routine FU exam in the note.

Now, I can either MERGE the “bdb back pain” exam into the note – which will add to the ortho and neuro exam, or I can SELECT it (which is like the copy mode for full templates) and copy OVER the entire exam. In this example, I would click the nabla next to “Merge Default” and choose “bdb back pain”.

In ECW 9, the SELECT option did not wipe out the rest of the exam – only the exam elements included in the “bdb back pain” - neuro and ortho exams. In ECW 10, it wipes out everything except what is in “bdb back pain” (much less useful in my view). I have also noticed that in ECW 10, the “Merge” function does not work if there is any text in the section you are trying to alter. This appears to be a bug which I will bring to the attention of the ECW programmers in hopes that they can fix it. In spite of these quirks to this tool, I find it quite useful.

In this example, you can see that my low back pain mini-exam template pulled in an ortho and neuro exam. What I like to do is make adjustments to the exam in the box to the right – then spellcheck it to get rid of the line breaks (as you have probably seen in the past, spellcheck gets rid of any formatting in a note – in this case, this is useful – in other cases, it is a bit of a nuisance).

I purposely set up longer mini-template exams in this broken line-break way so it is easier to customize for the particular patient – it is just easier to see what needs to be altered to fit the actual patient exam. After you spellcheck, hit OK and the exam is done, and you saved yourself some time.

And there you have it. You can make as many of these little mini-exam templates as you want – they take no time at all to make. They are provider-specific – you don't need to worry about altering another provider's mini-exam templates – you can't!

Brad Kney, MD
updated 9/27/15

