This Week's Wisdom:

Importing GML files into MapInfo

Ordnance Survey data comes in a zipped GML (Geographic Markup Language) file. MapInfo can't read these files directly, and so they need to be translated into a file type that MapInfo can read.


^ *MapInfo's Universal Translator Tool*

^ *By Design's MapGML*

MapInfo comes with it's own translation tool - The Universal Translator. This tool can be found in your Tool Manager, and if loaded, an Import icon will appear on the dropdown Open menu. From there it's pretty straight forward, just select your GML file and Import. As you would expect, the .GML file is converted into a .MAP, .DAT, .TAB and a .ID file. The problem is, the Universal Translator only converts one file at a time. Once you've converted the first file, you'll need to manually import the second, then the third and so on. Now you have multiple MapInfo ready files with overlapping duplicate objects that need to be joined together. The Universal Translator does what it says on the box but as you can see from the map on the left, it does a pretty ugly job of it.
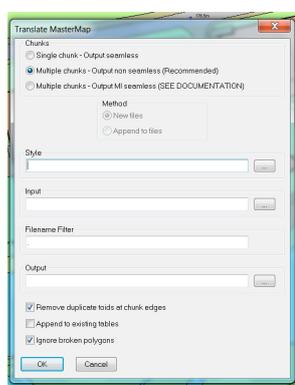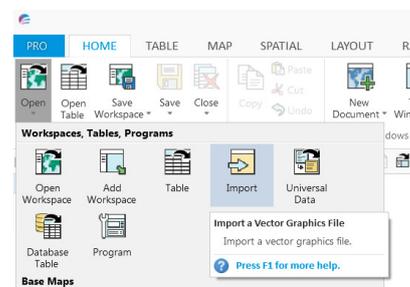
There is another way! To make a more professional looking map, you need to use one of the commercial GML translation tools. We really like By Design's MapGML - it's cheaper and faster than other tools and it's the only tool which translates the new OS Highways Network maps. It translates whole batches of .GZ files at the same time (no unzipping required!) and deletes duplicates as it goes. It also has a folder full of map styles for you to apply at time of translation. The one we've used on the right is the By Design default style, made to accurately reflect OS MasterMap styling.

MapGML costs £980 and can be purchased through CDR Group.
(MapGML is currently only available in 32-bit. A 64-bit version update is coming soon!)

TINY TIP: We use 7ZIP to unzip GZ files into GML files. This is a free download https://www.7-zip.org/

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