Windows Checkbook *Help Index*

New Features for Release 6.20-FIX

This is a 'Fix' update and corrects the following problems:

1. Copy function on Inquiry could corrupt display and would not always properly copy the current page to the clipboard.

2. Inquiry function would occasionally display erroneous data or would terminate the application.

-NOTE--NOTE--NOTE--NOTE--
3. Some menu items have changed in preparation for Version 7.0, the items which are dimmed and relate to Automatic Triggers are NOT implemented. but should cause no problems with this release.   If you initialize a set of new files, you will get two new files called auto.idt and auto0.iky, do not remove these files, however they will contain no data.

This update also has the following enhancements:

1.   Void dialog now displays static text items instead of disabled edit items making it easier to set the background to gray.   The dialog has also been rearranged for aesthetics.

2.   Clear dialog now displays static text items instead of disabled edit items making it easier to set the background to gray.   The dialog has also been rearranged for aesthetics.

System Description-Checkbook

This program is intended to be used to keep track of your personal financial records.   It is structured to be very similar to the check book you would use in every day banking transactions.   There are deposits, withdrawals, record clearing, voids and a lot of other transactions to help you record your day-to-day finances.   You may have mutiple accounts and keep track of each separately.   The program keeps separate 'areas' for deposits, withdrawals, checks and on-line (<u>EFTS</u>) banking transactions. It will assign its own numbers for deposits and certain withdrawals, but it does allow you to assign check numbers and EFTS numbers.   It will automatically fill in the next check number/EFTS number for you, but you can override the suggested number. The system will NOT print checks, there are too many formats and since most people write checks away from the computer, there is really no pressing need for this, at this time.

This program requires Windows 3.0 to run.   This implies a hard drive and some extra memory.   The more memory available, the more items the sorted inquiry lists can display.   You do not need a mouse, however I have not tested it without one.   If you find you cannot get to an item with the keyboard please send <u>me</u> an e-mail message and I will fix it for you.

You may have many activities going on at the same time.   In other words, you don't have to close a window to start up another one.   For example, if you are writing check and need to add a payee, you should just select the Update Payees menu item, leaving the withdrawals window open, add the payee, close the payee window and continue with the withdrawal.   The same goes for categories.   You must close all windows before selecting exit, or the program will not quit.

Installing the System

Installation is simple, after uploading and un-zipping the file, you should have four files DUMMY, CHKBOOK.EXE, CHKBOOK.HLP and WINISAM.DLL.   Copy CHKBOOK.EXE and CHKBOOK.HLP to a new directory (both into the same one). You may then remove DUMMY (It was added to help eliminate the corruption of the first file downloaded so the system would be functional, even it the first file gets corrupted).   Then copy WINISAM.DLL to the directory where WIndows 3.0 is installed The system must have ALL TRHEE files to begin properly.   You should then add CHKBOOK.EXE to an appropriate window in the program manager.   After that, all you need do is start the program.

After starting the program for the first time, you will see several messages appearing in the main window.   These messages are informational and are indicating the progress of the database initialization.   If these messages do not disappear, the program did not start up properly.   Most likely you did not have enough disk space to build the files.   If that is not the case, please write down the error message and contact <u>me</u> via Compuserve E-Mail.   If the initialize completes, you will have several more files in the directory you started the program from.   These will have .IDT (for data files) and .IKY (for key files) as suffixes.   If you have files from a previous version, they are completely compatible and the program will NOT reinitialize them.   It is important to backup these files regularly.   You can recover the Payee file at any time (You will lose addresses) and you could always type in the Categories, however the Check file cannot be recovered if you have removed or something has corrupted the .IDT file.   You can recover the .IKY files (see <u>Troubleshooting</u> for details). However, this is not something you want to do.

 To recap, after the first startup you would have the following files, all in the same directory:

        CHKBOOK.EXE
        CHKBOOK.HLP
        ACCNT.IDT
        ACCNT0.IKY
        PAYEES.IDT
        PAYEES0.IDT
        CATGY.IDT
        CATGY0.IKY
        CHECKS.IDT
        CHECKS0.IKY
        CHECKS1.IKY
        AUTO.IDT
        AUTO0.IKY

Your display will be blank except for a status line at the bottom which will tell you your running balance and the next suggested numbers for checks and EFTS transactions.   You should now be able to continue.   It is suggested that you first set up your Categories and then enter all of your continuing Payees.

General Maintenance

Initializing New Files

The four transactions involved in initializing empty files are the 'New' menu items: New Account Master, New Check Master, New Payee Master and New Category Master.   You should never have to use these unless you want to start a new set of files in an existing account.   The most dangerous one is the New Check Master item.   If you use this one, you will certainly lose all of your data unless you have backed up your files from a previous session.   In light of the severity of running these, a confirm message asking if you really want to do this is displayed. Upon selecting OK, the appropriate files will be initialized as follows:

Account Master - The account files are removed and new ones are created with a   default account of 0.

Check Master - Using the current working account, it removes all files with the name in the account master, creates new ones and sets the running balance to 0, the next suggested check to 100 and the Next OLB to 7000.

Payee Master - Using the current working account, it removes all files with the name in the account master, creates new ones and starts reading the check   master for the current account.   It will add a Payee with the name on any   record with a number less than 6000.   If the Payee exists, it will increment   the payee's balance by the amount of the check (unless voided). Note that you   could recover a lost payee file in this manner, however the only information   saved would be the Payee Name and his balance.

Category Master - Using the current working account, it removes all files with   the name in the account master, creates new ones and adds the following   categories:
      A - Debit Adjustment
      D - Deposit
      J - Credit Adjustment
      R - Perscription Refunds (WHY? You don't want to know)
      S - Service Charges
      W - Withdrawals

You should not remove this categories, or some of the standard transactions may complain about missing categories later on.
Armed with this knowlege, you can now use these transactions, but only if necessary, and I certainly recommend against arbitrary use of any of them.

Updating the Account Master

This transaction is used to set up separate accounts.   One restriction on accounts is that the default account (ID 0), reside in the same directory as the program and help files, and not be removed. (Note that it does not have to be used).   Any account that you add, can be on any disk in any **EXISTING** directory.   To add or change an account you enter the account code number and press <Enter> or click the 'Retrieve' button.   If the account exists, the button will change to 'Modify' and the existing data is displayed.   If it does not exist (a new account for example), the dialog is cleared and the button changes to 'Add'. The names you give to the files must be 6 or less characters and should be descriptive of the account.   If you do not fill in the path, it will default to the path you are running in.   The ending slash is not required in the path and will be placed there for you if you don't have one there.   You switch to the path using the Change Working Account menu item. When the program first starts, it will use the default account.
There is no provision for 'splitting' the file set across directories.   All of the files for any particular account must reside in the same directory on the same disk.   To delete an account you must check the Delete? checkbox and also click the Modify button.   This provides a safeguard by requiring two actions to delete an account.   If you change your mind, click the 'Cancel' button and the dialog will be set up for your next action.   You record the changes by clicking the 'Add' or 'Retrieve' button.   If the data is stored, the button will change back to 'Retrieve', ready for your next action.

Updating Payees

This is where you add change or delete payees.   The payee is used on checks to verify the payee name.   It also will place certain information into the check data automatically when recording checks.   To update a Payee you enter the name and then hit <Enter> or click the 'Retrieve' button.   If the Payee exists, the 'Retrieve' button changes to 'Modify' and the existing data is displayed.   If the payee is not on file, the button will change to 'Add' and the form will be blank.   After changing or entering data, you click on the 'Add' or 'Modify' button to record your changes.   If the data is stored, the button will change back to 'Retrieve', ready for your next action.   If you decide not to add or modify the data, click the 'Cancel' button and the dialog will be cleared and ready for your next action. The only required field on this dialog is the name. You should also fill out the description field (This field is placed into the memo field of a check).   To delete a payee you must check the delete check box AND press the delete button.   This gives a double check so I don't have to issue a confirmation message every time just to be safe.   The payee will not be deleted if it has checks written against it.   Do not give a payee a name starting with a '.' (period) or with any form of the word Miscelleanous (misc, Misc., etc). These payees are treated differently by the program and will cause problems later on if you add them as actal payees.   The Payee Balance is calculated by the program and cannot be changed except through the normal transaction process or with the 'Update Payee Balances' menu item.

Updating Categories

This is the transaction used to add, change or remove a category.   To modify a category, you enter the category code and press <Enter> or click 'Retireve'.   If the category exists, the data on file will be displayed and the 'Retrieve" button will change to 'Modify'.   If the category does not exist, the form will be blank and the 'Retrieve' button will change to 'Add'.   Note that the category is case sensitive. In other words upper case letters (E.G.   X) are NOT the same as a lower case letters (E.G. x).   This was done to allow a wider range of categories.   You can also use any special characters and numbers except '.'.   There is a set of standard categories added by the system which can be changed, but should not be deleted. These are: A, D, J, R, S and W.   The deposit/withdrawal process uses these for specific types of transactions (Adjustments, for example).   To delete a category, you must check the delete check box as well as pressing the modify button.   The system does not check to see if the category was used on any transactions. This may cause edit errors later on, however you can add the category back in if this occurs.

Changing the Working Account

To change the account you are using, you select the Change Working Account menu item.   This will display a dialog for you to choose the account you would like to use.   After selecting the account, the line at the bottom of the page will change to the information for the account you have chosen.   Also the title of the main window will reflect the new account title.   All transactions will now affect only the account you have selected.   To return to the original account, or to select a different account, you would use the Change Working Account menu item again.

Starting a new year

Most record keeping systems are based on some sort of annual calandar. This transaction will allow you to 'clean out' cleared records once a year to keep the file size down and to keep your records annulaized.   To use this transaction you should perform the following steps:
    1. Create a new account, such as Chk1989,Pay1989, etc for your OLD files.
    2. Exit to DOS or the Windows File Manager.
    3. Copy your files to these new names:(DOS Examples)
        copy Checks*.* Chk1989*.*
        copy Payees*.* Pay1989*.*
        copy Catgy*.*   Cat1989*.*
        copy Auto*.*   Aut1989*.*
        (Where the first name are the old names and
          the second names are the ones from step 1.)
    4. Return to the program (Make sure you DO NOT delete the old files)
    5. Run the 'Start a New Year' transaction.
    6. Run the 'Reorg Check Master' transaction.

You should now have files which have only open records from the old files.

Updating Payee Balances

Updating payee balances is a way to recalculate all of the balances for all of the payees in your system.   It reads the current check master, and reposts all of the transactions to the payee, effectively updating the payees balance. It does not affect any other information (addresses, names, etc).   It is a 'safe' transaction, however if you need to do this often because the balances are not being updated correctly, you should contact <u>me</u> to fix the problem for you.

Reorganizing the Check Master

Traditionally ISAM data file systems use key indexes to retrieve data. Normally the files are self maintaining and should not be fooled with. Occasionally the system may slow down when large amounts of data are added and/or deleted due to the method(s) used to calculate these indexes. The reorg transaction can be used to rebuild the key indexes to prevent the fragmenting of these indexes. It can also be used to recover lost or corrupted indexes, providing the main data file is still in tact.   If you feel that your indexes are corrupted or are sluggish, you should try to reorg your files (make sure you back up your files before running this, just in case).   I do not recommend using this, however it is provided for the brave and to help reconstruct a corrupted system.

Exiting the System

Selecting Exit from the File menu or double clicking the main system menu close box will end the program and return you to Windows.   You must have completed and closed all transactions or the program will not quit, telling you that you must quit all transactions first.

Deposits and Withdrawals

Deposits

The deposit transaction is an add to the running balance.   There are several options set up.   The number is automatically calculated, and the date will default to today, or the date used for the previous transaction before Exiting. To change the balance upwards, enter a deposit adjustment.   It will add to the running balance (NOT replace it) and will be marked as cleared.   The date, amount, memo and category can be changed at will.   Payee and Number are fixed and cannot be changed.   An error will place the cursor on the field in error and display a message telling you what is wrong.   Likewise a good transaction will be accepted and you will get a message saying so. The number is then increased by 1 for the next deposit or withdrawal.   If you have a withdrawal window open, the number that was displayed will be changed to a new one when that window is activated.   You can select a category at any time by using the select menu option.   It will list all existing categories and you can select the one you want.   The program will automatically fill in the dialog for you.   Adjustments can be marked as cleared when entered, just check/uncheck the adjustments box as appropriate.

Withdrawals

The withdrawal transaction is a subtraction from the running balance.   Again there are several options,   they all work the same way except for Check. When the Check radio button is selected, the Number and Payee fields are enabled and you can then enter them.   The number field also has a 'suggested' check number, which can be changed if it is not the one you want.   This suggested number is based on the last check entered.   If you wen back and used an old check number, this number may be incorrect. Just type over it to put in a new value. The other options will disable those fields.   For a Check, the payee must exist and the number must not exist. The payee field can contain some form of the word miscelleanous. This is a generic payee and the system will accept it as valid and not keep any other records in the payee file.   You can enter any combination of letters so long as it starts with misc.   The system will change it to '.MISC' when the record is accepted. Again, as in the deposit, an error will give an appropriate message and an accepted withdrawal will display an accepted message.   If you have a deposit window open, and you do a 'non-check', the number will be updated when that window is activated.   An adjustment will be marked as cleared.   This is how you would adjust the running balance downwards. You cannot currently 'print' a check.   You must hand write it and then record it appropriately.   You can select a payee (during check writing) or category at any time by using the select menu option.   It will list all existing data and you can select the one you want.   The program will automatically fill in the

dialog for you.   Adjustments and service charges can be marked as cleared when entered, just check/uncheck the adjustments box as appropriate.   Tax items are noted in the same manner.

Correcting Data Errors

Data Corrections
You can correct Dates, Categories and Memo data with this option.   You cannot correct amounts or payees.   You can also 'un-clear' a record.   To correct data, enter the number (it will either be a 6xxx type number or the check number).   The data will be brought up for you to type over. Editing is performed as if the data was totally new.   For example, if you got rid of a category, the record will display, but will not change until you add the category back.   To un-clear a record, just check the 'Un-clear' check box before updating.   This will put it back into the system as an active record and can be cleared or updated as usual.   You CAN update void or cleared records, however the void state is not changed, and the cleared state is only changed when you check the 'un-clear' box.

Voiding Checks
This transaction will void a check.   It is different in that it only works on checks (numbers below 6000).   It adds the amount of the check back into the balance and marks the record as void.   It does NOT remove the check number from the system and you cannot use that number again.   You can un-void a check like you can a cleared check.   When a check is 'un-voided' the amount is subtracted from the running balance, as if you had just written the check.

Balancing your Checkbook

Clearing Records
This option is the start of the balancing process.   It is where you clear your records.   The program will display only records which are not cleared. (Hence the delay before a dialog shows up, its searching for the first uncleared record). As a record is displayed, you can Clear it (by clicking Clear), not clear it (by clicking Skip) or exit the program.   If you accidentally clear a record, you can 'un-clear' it by using the data correction transaction. The records are presented in 'number' order.   Your checks will show up first, and then all of the other items, in the order they were entered.   This follows your bank statement format (generally).   After clearing all of your records, you should enter all of your service charges, missed items, etc and clear those items. Service charges are not automatically marked, unless specified, so you may have to go back and clear them also. After you have cleared your records you can then check your balance using the 'Balance Bank Statement' option.

Balancing
The system will ask you for the balance from your bank statement.   After entering it, the program will search through your records and calculate, from your open records, what your balance should be.   This is not the running balance, it is the running balance plus all your open deposits minus your open withdrawals.   This calculated number should match your bank's balance.   A report is printed showing all of your open items, and a spearate page showing the calculation and any discrepancy.   A discrepancy is usually a forgotten transaction (ATM's are notorious) or an adjustment which has been marked as cleared, but has not been processed by the bank (These can be un-cleared using the correction transaction).   After finding the error, you should correct your data by entering an adjustment for the amount you are out of balance, or clearing/unclearing the incorrect items.   Just to make sure, you should rebalance and make sure the discrepancy is 0.   Normally you would check the display box until the discrepancy is 0 (this puts the balance information on your screen instead of the printer). You can then print out the open (uncleared) items and the balance data for your records.

Inquiries and Reports

This transaction is used for inquiry and reporting.   It reads the check master and displays the data in the main window.   The order is selected by the menu item.   Totals for each group are included for the payee, category and DR/CR options.   The date and number options will be a flat lists with no breaks. You can print the displayed data be selecting the 'Print to Report' option. It will be formatted and printed for your printer with appropriate headings and totals.   The last menu item displays/prints your payee file in payee name order.   The payee name and check number options are FASTER than the others. No sort is necessary for those two options.   If you put more than 1500 items in the file, you can still do those two inquiries, as well as the payee list. The other options may cause failures in the system when there are more than 1500 items.
 The CCC fields in the report/inquiry are the Cleared, Credit/Debit and Category fields respectively.   A void check shows an * in the Cleared field. A 'Y' means the record has cleared and an 'N' measn it hasn't.   The Credit/Debit field shows whether a record increased (+) or decreased(-) the running balance.   The category is the category character.   For example *-X means a void check which subtracted from the balance and is in category X. Y+S is a cleared deposit in category S, etc.

Troubleshooting the System

Author: Bob Sigmon
 Compuserve ID: 76354,1427

EFTS - <u>E</u>lectronic <u>F</u>unds <u>T</u>ransfer

'Combo'-box - A Windows control which has an editable text area and a downward pointing arrow which will display some choices from which you can select the data you want.