

# ***VB Escort***

*Version 2.1*

## **User's Manual**

*Makes  
programming  
in Visual Basic  
faster,  
smarter  
and on  
schedule!*

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## ***VB Escort Version 2.1***

### **Introduction**

VB Escort is an essential tool for working in the Visual Basic programming environment. VB Escort will log your time that you spend on each project and create billing reports to submit to clients, supervisors or for personal record keeping. VB Escort has a multiple item clipboard function to make copying code from project to project or to various .Frm and .Bas files a snap. It has a user-defineable code library where you can save subroutines and short pieces of code for immediate access in future projects. Use VB Escort to back up all of a project's files including (optionally) .VBX files. VB Escort also includes instant access to frequently used menu commands from Visual Basic such as Save Project, Add File and more. And, two buttons not included with Visual Basic, a Save & Run button to insure that you always have the latest version saved and an Add VBX file button for instant access to hard to locate .VBX files. And much more....

### **New with Version 2.1**

Version 2.1 now has a new look that works well with Windows 95.

### ***New with Version 2.0***

Version 2.0 adds more code helpers such as a message box tool that creates the code for message boxes in addition to letting you preview how it will appear to the user. VB Escort version 2.0 also has a Remark Header Tool that helps you document your code and there is now a Revision History Tool that helps you keep a running history of any changes you make to any project. And VB Escort v2.0 now has a sleeker button bar while adding more quick access buttons than before.

### **VB Escort as Shareware**

VB Escort is SHAREWARE. This is "try before you buy" software. It is not free software. If you wish to continue using VB Escort for a period longer than thirty days, then you are obligated to send in a registration fee. When you run VB Escort, a brief message will appear notifying you that VB Escort is shareware and that you should consider registering the program with the author. The registration fee is only \$19.95. I can keep my price low because of several reasons... I do not have advertising cost. (Many shareware authors forget this and charge as much as commercial software. When you buy commercial software, much of your payment goes toward packaging and advertising.) I have kept VB Escort's advertising to a minimum. I don't have a middle man and pass those savings on to you!

What you do get for registering is:

- the latest version on disk
- a printed copy of the manual
- a registration DLL and accompanying source code. This DLL provides you with a safe and secure way to produce registration numbers from a person's name and a verification process to add to your own programs that you distribute. You may use this DLL royalty free.
- A special price on 4 popular Full Sail Software programs - only \$1 more per program.
- my thanks
- technical support
- notification of future upgrades
- anything else I can throw in ( I tend to collect other useful utilities and if there's room on the

disk ....

- personal satisfaction that you are part of the American way! Something else you will get is the offer to register any other Full Sail Software program for half price! See below for descriptions.

To order your copy of VB Escort, click on ORDER during the program load. Answer the question presented and print the order form when finished. Mail it along with the amount instructed in Cash, Check or Money Order, (Foreign orders, please use a Postal Money Order.) and mail it to the address posted on the order form. Mastercard and Visa can also be accepted.

### **What you will need to run VB Escort.**

You will need a computer running Microsoft Windows 3.1, Microsoft Visual Basic 2.0 or 3.0, a hard drive and VGA monitor. VB Escort was written with Microsoft's Visual Basic Version 2.0 and therefore you will need to have at least one copy of the file VBRUN200.DLL in a directory that is in your path.

### **Installation**

From the File Manager, run the program SETUP.EXE. It will ask you to confirm the source directory and destination directories. Once you have the required information entered, click on "Continue". The installation program will next ask you to enter the path to Visual Basic. Enter the full path and executable, usually "C:\VB\VB.EXE". Click on OK and the program will copy and install the files into the destination directory and create a new group in your Program Manager called VB ESCORT with VB Escort's icon in it. Double clicking on this icon will run VB Escort and load Visual Basic. If you are using a Program Manager replacement, you may get an error during installation but VB Escort's files have been installed on your hard drive and all you need to do is to follow your shell's instructions on how to add a program to it. The main executable program for VB Escort is VBESCORT.EXE.

***Attention Sheridan Software 3D Widgets Users.***

VB Escort was developed with Sheridan Software's 3D Widgets. The run time VBX files are included and copied to the directory where you installed VB Escort. If you are developing projects with Sheridan Software's 3D controls, when VB Escort loads, it will load the RUNtime VBX files into memory. When you load your project with the design time VBX files in it, your program will not run. To overcome this problem, delete the three SS3D.VBX files from the VB Escort directory (assuming the design SS3D.VBX files are located in your path and can be found by VB Escort.)

*PLEASE NOTE, if you have only purchased one or two of Sheridan Software's 3D VBX files, then only delete the CONFLICTING files.*

## Getting Started

To get started, click on the icon created during the installation in your Program Manager. If you provided a path to Visual Basic, it will be loaded with VB Escort. Click on the left most icon button and locate the project file (\*.MAK) you wish to work on. It will be loaded into Visual Basic and the time you spend working on the project will be logged automatically. Click on the various buttons to explore VB Escort's features.

## Configuring VB Escort

VB Escort requires a bit of setting up to run properly. Click on the CONFIGURE VB ESCORT button (eighth from the left) and VB Escort's configuration screen will be displayed. Here you can change your settings. The first box allows you to enter the path to Visual Basic or any other program that will in turn load Visual Basic. There are several shareware programs available that load and work with Visual Basic. This will allow you to continue to use your favorite add-on that also loads Visual Basic automatically.

The next entry is the hourly rate that you charge, wish you made or what you really get paid. Your choice. Enter the amount and VB Escort will use that figure to compute your billing statements. Use this rate to help you estimate program development cost. Since you will now know the cost of developing a program, you can get a better estimate on what your rate of return needs to be for program pricing and adjust the selling price accordingly.

The next entry allows you to enter the name of the log file for tracking your time. A default file will be used initially. You may enter a new file if wish. You may want to enter a new file each month, each year, or if you start a new major project.

There is an option button labeled "Always on Top". This may be toggled on or off. When checked on, VB Escort will always remain the top most window keeping it readily accesssible. If you prefer to not have VB Escort remain on top, click the feature to the off state.

One last item in the configuration, SAVE POSITION allows you to have VB Escort remember it's current position on your screen. Click on SAVE POSITION and VB Escort will always return to the saved position at start up. After clicking on SAVE POSITION, then a confirmation will be presented to let you know the positon was recorded.

These features will be saved when the SAVE button is clicked. If you decide not to change any settings or abort the changes you made, click on CANCEL.

## **The Buttons Left to Right:**

*Open a Project*  
*Toggle Clock*  
*Save & Run*  
*Make Exe*  
*Save Project*  
*Save File*  
*Save File As*  
*Save Project as Text*  
*Add VBX*  
*Configure VB Escort*  
*Time Reports*  
*Code Library*  
*Archiving Tool*  
*Form Sizing Tool*  
*Message Box Tool*  
*Remark Header Tool*  
*Revision History Tool*  
*View Clipboard*  
*Print Clipboard*  
*Exit*

### ***Open a Project***

Use VB Escort to log the time you spend on your projects by clicking on OPEN PROJECT to load a MAK file. Please note: if you use Visual Basic's FILE -OPEN dialog box, you're time will not be logged therefore create the habit of using VB Escort to open your projects. After opening your project the PAUSE CLOCK button is enabled. This let's you verify that the time is being logged. It is possible to log your time on one project and work on another. This is done by first using VB Escort to open a project and then use Visual Basic's FILE - OPEN to open another project. VB Escort is not informed when you change projects in this manner. This comes in handy when you need to copy code from one project and place it into another.

### **Toggle Clock**

#### *Pausing the Clock*

While logging time to a project, the TOGGLE CLOCK button will be enabled. If you find you need to pause the clock while you take a break or work on something else, then click on the TOGGLE CLOCK button. The timer will be closed and the button caption will change to UNPAUSE. When you return to work on your project, click on the clock button and the timer will be re-opened.

#### *Closing the Clock*

To stop timing a project, click on TOGGLE CLOCK as just described. You can "unpause" the clock by pressing again on the clock button. This button acts as a toggle. If you use VB Escort to open a different project, then a new log entry will be created and the time will then be credited to that project.

### **Save and Run**



A one click way to save and run your currently loaded project.

### ***Save Project***

A one click way to save the current project. Same as clicking on Visual Basic's {alt}-F V

### ***Save File***

A one-click way to save the current file. Same as clicking on Visual Basic's {alt}-F S

### ***Save File As***

A one-click way to save the current file under a different name. Same as clicking on Visual Basic's {alt}-F A

### ***Save Project as Text***

A one-click way to save the current project as text. Same as clicking on Visual Basic's {alt}-F T but does this for every form in your project automatically. Each file will be copied and given the .TXT extension.

### ***Add VBX***

A one-click way to add a VBX file to your project. The VBX files MUST be located in your \Windows\System dir for them to be located by VB Escort.

### ***Configure VB Escort***

(See description above)

### ***Make Executable***

A one-click way to make an executable file of your project. Same as clicking on Visual Basic's {alt}-F K.

### ***Time Reports***

VB Escort can print several time-related reports for yourself, supervisors or clients. Click on REPORTS and a control box will be presented. The FROM box contains the date for the first entry in your log file. The THROUGH box contains the date for the last entry in your log file. These may be changed to any date you choose. You use this feature to control the time reporting periods for you reports. Just below these text boxes are three buttons labeled THIS WEEK, THIS MONTH and THIS YEAR. These buttons give you quick access to frequently used reporting periods. THIS WEEK calculates the week as Sunday through Saturday.

Below these buttons is a combination text/list box that will list each project you have time logged to with the inclusion of ALL PROJECTS. If you select ALL PROJECTS (default value), then the report generated will include each project you have logged time to. If you select a single project, then the report will only include time from that project.

You can have VB Escort generate and send a billing statement directly to your printer or you can have VB Escort send it to the notepad. This will allow you to modify the text as you need, save it for later use and/or copy it to the clipboard for pasting into your own documents. Below is a sample of a billing statement. Please note that the hours are presented in tenths.

Also available are GENERAL REPORT and DETAILED REPORT. These reports are presented more for inhouse use although they could be included with a billing statement if your client or supervisor wanted to know the exact time you worked on a project or projects.

To view a General Report, first select the the project for the report or use ALL PROJECTS. Next click on GENERAL REPORT. A listing of the total time spent on you project(s) will be presented. To view a Detailed Report, first select the the project for the report or use ALL PROJECTS. Next click on DETAILED REPORT. A listing of the total time spent on your project(s) will be presented. While viewing either report, you can click on PRINT to send the report to the printer. To copy the report to the clipboard. This will allow to paste the report into any document you create or you can paste it to the notepad and save the report for later use. Clicking on EXIT closes the report view.

#### Sample Billing Statement

TIME REPORT  
04-26-1993 Through 07-05-1993

Billed to:  
Address :  
City, State Zip :

STARTXT.MAK	04-26-1993	00:10
VBESCORT.MAK	04-27-1993	01:10
VBESCORT.MAK	04-30-1993	02:00
VBESCORT.MAK	04-30-1993	00:14
VBESCORT.MAK	04-30-1993	00:43
VBESCORT.MAK	05-01-1993	00:10
VBESCORT.MAK	05-01-1993	00:00
VBESCORT.MAK	05-01-1993	00:41
VBESCORT.MAK	05-03-1993	00:32
VBESCORT.MAK	05-04-1993	00:08
SAA.MAK	05-13-1993	01:56
VBESCORT.MAK	06-23-1993	00:02
STARTXT.MAK	06-26-1993	00:13
VBESCORT.MAK	06-26-1993	03:01
VBESCORT.MAK	06-26-1993	00:31
VBESCORT.MAK	06-27-1993	00:02
STARTXT.MAK	07-04-1993	01:05
SAA.MAK	07-05-1993	00:39

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Total Time = 13.28 Hours

Billed at \$25.00 per hour = \$332.08

Tax \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Due \_\_\_\_\_

Payable to:

## Sample General Report

### GENERAL TIME REPORT

04-26-1993 Through 07-05-1993

STARTXT.MAK	1.47 Hours
VBESCORT.MAK	9.23 Hours
SAA.MAK	2.58 Hours

-----  
Total Time = 13.28 Hours

Billed at \$25.00 per hour = \$332.08

## Sample Detailed Report

### DETAILED TIME REPORT

04-26-1993 Through 07-05-1993

STARTXT.MAK	04-26-1993	14:58	15:08	00:10
VBESCORT.MAK	04-27-1993	20:14	21:11	01:10
VBESCORT.MAK	04-30-1993	19:12	21:12	02:00
VBESCORT.MAK	04-30-1993	21:12	21:26	00:14
VBESCORT.MAK	04-30-1993	21:26	22:09	00:43
VBESCORT.MAK	05-01-1993	08:36	08:46	00:10
VBESCORT.MAK	05-01-1993	08:47	08:47	00:00
VBESCORT.MAK	05-01-1993	08:50	21:54	00:41
VBESCORT.MAK	05-03-1993	17:08	17:40	00:32
VBESCORT.MAK	05-04-1993	20:14	20:22	00:08
SAA.MAK	05-13-1993	19:38	20:07	01:56
VBESCORT.MAK	06-23-1993	21:04	21:06	00:02
STARTXT.MAK	06-26-1993	09:41	09:54	00:13
VBESCORT.MAK	06-26-1993	07:00	10:01	03:01
VBESCORT.MAK	06-26-1993	14:55	14:26	00:31
VBESCORT.MAK	06-27-1993	22:06	22:08	00:02
STARTXT.MAK	07-04-1993	22:31	23:36	01:05
SAA.MAK	07-05-1993	20:27	21:06	00:39

-----  
Total Time (hrs.tenths) = 13.28

Billed at \$25.00 per hour = \$332.08

## ***The Code Library***

VB Escort can be used to create a library of subroutines, functions, or any clip of code you would like to save for later use. To use this feature, first highlight and copy to the clipboard any code segment in the standard method using Visual Basic's EDIT - COPY commands. Next, click on the CODE LIBRARY button. A new window will appear with your code listed in a text box. If you want to make any changes to the code, you may do so at this time. You may also add more code to the text box by clicking back on a Visual Basic form, copying more code, then click on the CODE LIBRARY again. Now you can use VB Escort's COPY, CUT and PASTE buttons to add, delete or change the code. The next step is to enter a description of your code segment in the Description box. Click on SAVE to save your code or CANCEL to abandon the operation.

To print the code that is in the text window, click on PRINT, confirm or cancel the print command, and your text will be sent to the printer.

## To Retrieve Your Code

To retrieve saved code segments, first click on CODE LIBRARY, then click on RETRIEVE. A list of the descriptions you have entered will be presented (listed in alphabetical order). Click on the item you want to use and it will be automatically copied to the clipboard. Click on Cancel to close the Code Library window and locate in your program where you want to place your code segment and use Visual Basic's EDIT commands to paste the code. If you want to verify that the code you wanted was retrieved, you can click on PASTE and the text will be copied to the text window.

## Retrieving API Constants and Declarations

When you need to declare a Windows API function or define an API Constant, use VB Escort for an easy method of retrieving the constants or declarations you need. To do this, first click on CODE LIBRARY, then either click on API CONSTANTS or API DECLARATIONS. A listing of the type chosen will be presented. From the list, click on as many declarations or constants you need. Then click on USE. This moves the items selected to an active list. Add as many as you need. Next, click on COPY. This copies the declarations or constants to the clipboard ready for pasting into your code. If you find you have "Used" the wrong items, you can click on the unwanted declaration or constant and click on REMOVE. This removes the unwanted items from the list. Again, if you want to verify that the code you wanted was retrieved, you can click on PASTE and the text will be copied to the text window.

## ***Archiving Projects***

VB Escort will back up your project files to any drive or directory you specify. Click on the ARCHIVE button. A Dialog box will appear. The Left side identifies the source Mak file. The right side identifies the destination directory. Use the left side's drive, directory and file boxes to locate the .Mak file of the project you wish to copy. Use the right side to locate a destination for your files. If you want to also backup your VBX files, then click on the INCLUDE VBX FILES option. Double clicking on the source's MAK file or clicking on the COPY button will cause VB Escort to copy ALL files that make up a project (and optionally, a project's VBX files) to the destination specified.

If you want VB Escort to create new directory, enter a directory name in the text box under MAKE DIRECTORY. The current location will be ready for you to append the directory name. Enter the eight character or less name, press Enter or click on CREATE and the directory will be created.

## ***Form Sizer***

The form sizing tool helps you determine how your forms will appear on different systems having different resolutions. Please realize that this is an approximation. If you work in High res mode, (1024x768) and size your forms to fill your screen, then they will amply overfill someone else's screen at 640x480. This tool helps you visualize how your program may appear on another system.

## ***Message Box Tool***

The message box tool lets you preview a message box and create the code to produce that message box. This tool lets you choose the way your box appears. Click on the icon you wish to use and choose the button style you want. Then type in the message box's title and caption. You can also choose which button gets the default focus. You may also choose the type of code you want produced, procedure or function, and if the box will be a System Modal dialog box. To preview how your message box will appear to the user, click on Show. Click on any button to continue. Then, click on Copy to Clipboard to have your code copied into the clipboard. Return to your program, place your cursor where you want the code inserted and press Shift-Ins.

## ***Remark Header Tool***

The Remark Header Tool helps to create a remark header to place into your code. This routine will produce a short remark section so that you can improve the documentation of your code. Enter your name, the date and time will automatically entered for you and finally you can enter any comment you'd like to add to your code. When finished, click on Copy to Clipboard and the remark header will be copied to the clipboard ready to paste into your code.

## ***Revision History Tool***

The Revision History Tool helps you document any change you make to your code. Open a project, make some changes then click on the history tool. You can enter your name and the time and date will be automatically filled in. Enter into the text box labeled "Changes Made this Revision", enter a description of any changes you made. Click on OK and your comments will be saved into a file. The next time you call the Revision History Tool, your comments will be listed in the lower text box. You can print the history by clicking on the Print button.

File Notes: The history will either be saved in a file called REVISION.HST if you have not loaded a project with VB Escort or in a file with the same name as the .MAK file you loaded but with an extension of .HIS. Both of these files will be located in VB Escorts working directory and are text files that you can load with any text file editor.

## ***Viewing the Clipboard***

To review the current contents of the clipboard (text only), click on VIEW CLIP. A window with the clipped code will be presented. There is a button to send the clipped code to the printer or exit which just closes the viewing window. You may also without closing the window select another clip by clicking on the down arrow. The new current clip will be copied to the view window.

## ***Printing the Clipped Code***

To print a routine or any other code segment, copy the code to the clipboard and then click on PRINT CLIP button. The code will be sent to the Print Manager for printing.

## ***Exiting the Program***

Click on the last button and you'll be given the choice to exit Visual Basic and VB Escort or exit VB Escort only.

## ***Using the Multiple Clipboard***

Everytime you copy text from your code (or anywhere else) VB Escort keeps a copy. At the bottom of VB Escort's button bar, there is a Combo Box that contains the first line of code identifying each clipped item. As an example of how to use this, let's say you want to copy several subroutines from another project into the current project. First load the original project, find the first routine you want to copy. Highlight the text and click on Visual Basic's EDIT then COPY menu buttons. The subroutine will be copied to the clipboard and automatically to VB Escort's list. Continue to copy each subroutine in this manner.

Next, reload the new project. Find the location where you want to insert the routine. Now click on the down arrow button on VB Escort and select the clipped routine. Place your cursor where you want to insert the routine, click on Visual Basic's EDIT then PASTE menu buttons.

Now click on the down arrow again to select the next routine. Find the location where it is to be placed, place your cursor there and paste the new code as before. Pasting the code can also be done using the keyboard with SHIFT-INS.



If you have any comments, suggestions or ideas for future versions,

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## **Pest Control**

If you encounter any bugs while using VB Escort, do not hesitate to write. We want to know about any bug that may be in the program so that it can be exterminated. If you find a bug, please write or call, we may already have fix or we will do our best to see that it is removed.

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***The Graph Assistant*** - A simple to use, very flexible, graphing program. Use it to create Line, Bar and Pie Charts. Produce Gantt charts and more. Features both 2D and 3D graphs. Simply enter your data in the spreadsheet type grid, select the options you want, then display your graph. Will also allow you to print the graphs, or copy them to the clipboard.

***The Help Assistant*** - A program that greatly simplifies the process of compiling and creating Help files.

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