Your Company File

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Chapter 1

Your Company File Overview

An important task in the course of your regular work in MYOB Accounting Plus is managing the information, or data, you enter in the MYOB system. Your business's financial records will remain accurate and useful to you only if you take a few moments occasionally to be sure you're properly working with your Accounting Plus data.

This overview explains the concepts you should know to work with your Accounting Plus data, including information about *company files*, which are the methods by which Accounting Plus stores your data.

Creating and changing company files

When you make entries in MYOB Accounting Plus, that information is stored within one file, called a *company file*. This file allows you to work with your company's financial information without expending a lot of time and effort with your computer's file storage system.

If you track accounting for more than one company, you must use more than one company file.

You can use Accounting Plus to keep accounting records for more than one company. If you do so, one company file will exist for each company. A company file is created immediately when you create a new company; if you've already begun using Accounting Plus, you might remember that you created a company file for your company using the New Company File Assistant.

Creating company files

Before you can begin using MYOB Accounting Plus, you must create a company file to store your company's business information. When you create a new company file, you'll use the Accounting Plus New Company

File Assistant to simplify the process. The New Company File Assistant asks you a few important questions about your company and creates your company file.

After you've created a new company file, you can use the Accounting Plus Easy Setup Assistant, which will assist you in entering the beginning financial information for your company.

See the following step-by-step procedure:

"To create a company file while Accounting Plus is running" on page 691

"To create a company file when Accounting Plus isn't running" on page 692

Changing the names of company files

You can change the names of company files at any time.

> ## Warning: Changing the name of a company file may cause problems for other users
>
> If you're using Accounting Plus on a network, don't forget that other users might need to access the company file whose name you plan to change. With this in mind, there are two things you should remember:
>
> If others are using the company file, you should wait until they've closed the company file before you attempt to rename it. Renaming a company file while others are using it could damage the company file.
>
> If necessary, remember to inform other users of the company file's name change. They'll need to know the new name of the company file if they want to open it in the future.

See the following step-by-step procedure:

"To change the name of your company file" on page 693

Changing the location of company files on your computer

You can move your MYOB Accounting Plus company file to another location on your network at any time.

> ## Warning: Moving a company file might cause problems for other users
>
> If you're using Accounting Plus on a network, don't forget that other users might need to access the company file you plan to move. You may need to change access and sharing settings for the new location to ensure that all your coworkers can continue to work with your company file.
>
> Also, if you move a company file, the custom reports and forms that you've created for the company file will no longer be available unless you also move the reports to the new location. We suggest that you copy the current CUSTOM and FORMS folder that exists in the location where the company file is currently stored and paste the folder into the new location.

See the following step-by-step procedure:

Backing up company files

As reliable as computers are these days, they can't be fully trusted to provide you with trouble-free recordkeeping. As is the case with all machines, computers are capable of failure. In addition, interruptions in your power supply can seriously damage the hardware and software you use to keep track of your business. In short, you need to ensure the information you enter using your computer is safe; without this security, all the information you've ever entered could disappear in a moment, never to be recovered.

As a result, we strongly recommend that you preserve your Accounting Plus information in another location regularly—and very often. The process of preserving your information in another location is called *making a backup*. The "other location" where you preserve your information is a file called a *backup*.

You can use the MYOB Accounting Plus Backup command to automatically create a backup of your company file, and the Restore command to use a backup file you previously created.

Some facts about backups

- A backup typically takes the form of a disk, removable hard disk or tape backup system, depending upon the size of the information that's being preserved. You can get information about these systems from most computer manuals, as well as the person who sold you your MYOB package.

- If your company file is less than 1.4 megabytes (MB) in size, it can be easily backed up onto a high-density diskette. The backup program included with Accounting Plus will allow you to create a backup that spans two or more diskettes. Be sure to have an adequate number of formatted diskettes before beginning your backup if you choose this option.

- If your company file is too large to fit on a diskette, additional hardware and software packages exist on the market today that will help you store large amounts of data.

See the following step-by-step procedure:

"To make a backup" on page 695

Some facts about *making* backups

- The process of making a backup of your MYOB Accounting Plus company file is usually as easy as copying the company file to another location—a standard task that's quickly performed on any computer.

- The time you spend making backups of your company file pales in comparison to the amount of time you may need to spend reentering data lost as a result of a damaged company file.

- If you use the Backup command, you'll back up your company file **only**. Any custom forms, reports, spreadsheets and letter templates you've created won't be backed up because they aren't stored in your company file. You don't have to back up custom information as often as your company file, but you should keep a copy of your FORMS, CUSTOM, SPREDSHT, GRAPHICS and LETTERS folders in another location. These folders are in the location where you installed Accounting Plus.

- A location for your backup is displayed automatically in the dialog box that appears when you choose the Backup command. You can change the location, if you wish.

    Make a note of the name and location of the backup so that it will be easy for you to find the file if you want to restore it at a later time using MYOB

Accounting Plus

- If you don't want to use the Accounting Plus Backup and Restore commands, other software programs are available that automate the entire process of making backups—not only for your Accounting Plus company file, but for your entire hard disk, as well. If you don't want to take the time to make backups yourself, consider purchasing such a product.

   (If you decide to use another software program for making backups, be sure to use the MYOB Accounting Plus data verification feature to ensure your company file isn't damaged before you back it up. If you use a backup program other than the Accounting Plus backup program, you won't receive automatic reminders to verify your data, so it's very important that you remember to perform this important task regularly. See "Verifying company files" on page 689 to learn more about using the data verification feature.).

- The MYOB Accounting Plus Backup command creates a backup of the company file you're currently using, and compresses it to a smaller, more manageable size.

- Making a backup requires single-user access to the company file; in other words, only one person can use this company file when this task is being performed. If other people are using the company file, they must close the company file -- either by exiting Accounting Plus or by opening a different company file -- before you can continue. To see which users currently have the company file open, choose Active Workstations from the File menu.

We also recommend that you make multiple backups of your Accounting Plus company file -- that is, more than one copy of your company file -- and store them at different locations. The purpose of multiple backups is simple: Backups can fail as easily as computers can. If you've made one backup of your company file and a computer problem damages the company file on your hard disk, your sole insurance is the backed-up file. If the diskette containing the backed-up file is damaged, as well, you're in just as much trouble as you would be without any backup at all.

> ### Warning: We usually can't help if you don't have a backup
>
> Not everyone makes backups of their Accounting Plus company file, and we at MYOB often hear from these people as they attempt to recover from damaged company files. As much as we'd like to help, the most common way to regain lost data—if a backup doesn't exist—is to reenter the lost data, which may take hours, days or even weeks. Since you don't have time to waste, we suggest that you strongly consider making a commitment to making regular backups of your company file.

See the following step-by-step procedure:

"To make a backup" on page 695

Following a system of making backups

It's important that you follow a system of making and storing your backups properly so you're always covered in event of an emergency. Here are some suggestions for making backups:

- Make a backup each time you exit MYOB Accounting Plus. To make this easy to remember, mark the Prompt for Data Backup When Closing selection in the Security section of the Preferences window. Then, each time you exit Accounting Plus, an alert message will appear, asking whether you want to create a backup of your company file.

- Store your backups in places other than the hard disk where your company's company file exists. If that hard disk is damaged, a backup file could become as damaged as any other file on that computer. We recommend that as soon as you make a backup, copy that backup to a diskette or to a network location.

- Keep more than one backup from different time periods, such as days or weeks. Say, for example, you use Accounting Plus every day; you might keep five backup disks—one for each business day of the week. At the end of each day, you'd copy your backup onto the appropriate day's diskette. The next week, you'd copy Monday's backup onto the diskette that contained the previous Monday's backup, and so on for the rest of the week. (Be sure to delete the previous week's backup from the diskette first.)

  You might decide to follow another routine—say, keeping 10 backup disks

and reusing them every other week, instead of every week. The important thing is to develop a regular routine and to follow through with it. This will ensure that you'll always have a reliable backup from a recent time period.

• After you've made all entries for an accounting period—which typically happens a few days into the next accounting period—make an official "end-of-the-month" backup and store it in a safe place. We suggest you label this backup clearly with the name of the month. At the end of the 12-month financial year, you should have 12 monthly backups.

• We recommend that you periodically restore a backup you've made and open the backed-up company file as a safety measure to ensure that the backups you're creating will be usable if you ever need them. Backups can and sometimes do fail when they're restored. These failures can be traced to problems with the backup media (disks, tape cartridges and the like), including exposure to magnetism, excessive heat or moisture. Problems with your computer's hard disk can damage Accounting Plus itself so that the Restore program no longer works properly; this is a rare occurrence, but it can happen. In addition, restoring a backup can help you to identify errors you may have made in the backup process and fix them.

See the following step-by-step procedure:

"To make a backup" on page 695

Restoring company files

The MYOB Accounting Plus Restore command closes the company file you're currently using, decompresses an Accounting Plus backup file so you can use it, and opens the decompressed file.

If you want, you can use other software programs, such as PKUNZIP, to decompress a backup instead of the Restore command. Many other popular decompression programs will restore your backup files, as well.

Restoring backed-up company files requires single-user access to the company file; in other words, only one person can use this company file when this task is being performed. If other people are using the company file, they must close the company file -- either by exiting Accounting Plus or by opening a different company file -- before you can continue. To see which users currently have the company file open, choose Active Workstations from the File menu.

See the following step-by-step procedure:

Optimising company files

Over time, your MYOB Accounting Plus company file will grow considerably in size. As you enter transactions, then remove or purge them, the file will have unused areas that once contained the transactions you've gotten rid of. These unused areas can affect the efficiency with which Accounting Plus works with the company file, and they consume space on your hard disk that can be used for other purposes. We recommend that you use the MYOB Accounting Plus Optimisation Assistant to remove the unused areas in the company file and keep your accounting software running in top form.

The Optimisation Assistant should be used whenever you remove many transactions or other records from your company file. In particular, it should be used *after* you complete any of these tasks:

• Starting a new financial year

• Starting a new payroll year

• Purging sales, purchases and journal entries

In addition, you may want to use the Optimisation Assistant on a regular basis if the transactions you enter are changeable and you make frequent changes to transactions after they've been entered.

See the following step-by-step procedure:

Verifying company files

As often mentioned, one of the most proactive things you can do for your business is to spend a few minutes each day to create a daily backup of your company's company file. By doing so, you'll keep yourself out of trouble if an unexpected calamity occurs, such as total computer failure or a damaging lightning storm.

Another tool you can use to keep your accounting information safe is the MYOB Accounting Plus data verification feature. By checking your company file for errors, data verification can catch minor inconsistencies in your company's company file before they cause serious problems.

Note: What errors does the data verification feature look for?

Generally speaking, the Accounting Plus data verification feature scans everything inside your company file—from the transaction entries you've made into the MYOB system to the computer code that makes up the basic foundation of any MYOB Accounting Plus company file.

You can verify your company file at any time. To make data verification a daily routine, the verification process can also occur at the same time as the process of making a backup.

Idea: Use the Optimisation Assistant to keep your company file in top form

You may want to use the MYOB Accounting Plus Optimisation Assistant on a regular basis to keep your company file operating at its peak. The Optimisation Assistant can ensure that the file is operating efficiently, and it may resolve minor problems with the company file, as well. For more information about using the Optimisation Assistant, see "To optimise a company file" on page 702.

See the following step-by-step procedures:

"To verify your company file" on page 700

"To verify your company file during the backup process" on page 700

Chapter 2

Creating and changing company files

Creating company files

▸ ### To create a company file while Accounting Plus is running

> ### Note: If you haven't created your first company file yet
>
> If you haven't created your first company file yet, you need to complete the Accounting Plus setup process. The following instructions assume that you have created your first company file already; if you haven't created your first company file yet, please refer your Getting Started manual for information about creating your first company file.

If you haven't already read the Your Company File Overview, see "Creating company files" on page 682 for more information.

An MYOB Accounting Plus company file should be open.

1. Choose New from the File menu.

2. An alert message may appear, asking you whether you want to back up the current company file. Make the choice you want; if you choose Yes, Accounting Plus begins the backup process. (For more information about backing up company files, see "Backing up company files" on page 684.)

3. After you've responded to this message, the current company file will close and the first step in the Accounting Plus New Company File Assistant appears.

4. Follow the steps that appear on your computer screen. If you need additional information about the answers you'll enter while using the New Company File Assistant, be sure to click the Help button at the bottom of each window in the Assistant.

5. When you've completed all the steps in the New Company File Assistant, your new company file will be created, and you'll be ready to set up your company's records in the company file.

   Click the Setup Assistant button if you're ready to set up your company's records now. You can use the Easy Setup Assistant to walk you through the major setup tasks you need to perform.

   Click Finish if you wish to set up your records at a later time.

▶ To create a company file when Accounting Plus isn't running

If you haven't already read the Your Company File Overview, see "Creating company files" on page 682 for more information.

1. Locate the MYOB Accounting Plus icon on your computer.

   The icon you're looking for is named MYOB Accounting Plus, and it's located in the folder that was created in the Windows Programs folder on your Start menu when you installed MYOB Accounting Plus.

   If you chose all the suggested options during the installation process, your MYOB Accounting Plus system will be installed in the MYOB Accounting Plus folder and will contain a number of icons.

2. Once you've located the MYOB Accounting Plus icon, open it. The Welcome to MYOB window appears.

3. Click the **Create A New MYOB Accounting Plus Company File** button. The first step in the MYOB Accounting Plus New Company File Assistant appears.

4. Follow the steps that appear on your computer screen. If you need additional information about the answers you'll enter during the New Company File Assistant, be sure to click the Help button at the bottom of each window in the Assistant.

5. When you've completed all the steps in the New Company File Assistant, your new company file will be created, and you'll be ready to set up your company's records in the company file.

    Click the Setup Assistant button if you're ready to set up your company's records now. You can use the Easy Setup Assistant to walk you through the major setup tasks you need to perform.

    Click Finish if you wish to set up your records at a later time.

Changing the names of company files

▶ To change the name of your company file

If you haven't already read the Your Company File Overview, see "Changing the names of company files" on page 683 for more information.

> ### Warning: Changing the name of a company file may cause problems for other users
>
> If you're using MYOB Accounting Plus on a network, don't forget that other users might need to access the company file whose name you plan to change. With this in mind, there are two things you should remember:
>
> If others are using the company file, you should wait until they've closed the company file before you attempt to rename it. Renaming a company file while others are using it could damage the company file.
>
> If necessary, remember to inform other users of the company file's name change. They'll need to know the new name of the company file if they want to open it in the future.

1. Exit MYOB Accounting Plus.

2. Using Windows Explorer, click once on the company file you want to rename.

3. Select Rename from the File menu.

4. Enter the new name you want to use for the file and then press ENTER. The new name is assigned to the file.

Changing the location of company files on your computer

▶ ## To move a company file

If you haven't already read the Your Company File Overview, See "Changing the location of company files on your computer" on page 684 for more information.

Warning: Moving a company file might cause problems for other users

If you're using MYOB Accounting Plus on a network, don't forget that other users might need to access the company file you plan to move. You may need to change access and sharing settings for the new location to ensure that all your coworkers can continue to work with your company file.

Also, if you move a company file, the custom reports and forms that you've created for the company file will no longer be available unless you also move the reports to the new location. We suggest that you copy the current CUSTOM and FORMS folders that exists in the location where the company file is currently stored and paste the folder into the new location.

When exiting Accounting Plus in the first step of this procedure, be sure no other users are currently working with the company file you wish to move.

---

1. Exit MYOB Accounting Plus.

2. Open Windows Explorer.

3. Open the folder containing the file you want to move (probably the MYOB Accounting Plus folder). A list of the files in that folder appears.

4. Drag the icon of the company file you want to move to the folder you want to move it to. Your company file is placed in that folder.

Chapter 3

Backing up and restoring company files

Backing up company files

▶ To make a backup

If you haven't already read the Your Company File Overview, see "Backing up company files" on page 684 for more information.

The company file you wish to back up should be open.

1. Be sure you've made all the accounting entries you want to include in the backup.

2. Choose Backup from the File menu.

    If you've chosen to check your company file for errors during the backup process, continue to step 3. If you've chosen not to check your company file for errors, skip to step 4.

    Note: If the backup process doesn't work
    When you installed Accounting Plus, special software used for the backup process was also installed. If an alert message appears when you try to use the Backup command, this software may have been removed from the location where it needs to exist. You'll need to reinstall Accounting Plus. To learn how, see "To reinstall MYOB Accounting Plus" on page 64.
    ---

3. If you've chosen to check your company file for errors during the backup process, a message will appear, describing the data verification process. Click OK in the message to begin the process of checking your company file for errors. (For more information about the Accounting Plus data verification feature, see "Verifying company files" on page 689.)

Note: Data verification will take some time
The process of checking your company file for errors is complex and time-consuming. Depending upon the size of your company file, the process may take several minutes.

When the data verification process is complete, a message will appear, describing the results of the test. If the process was successful, continue to step 4.

If the process discovered errors in your company file, we recommend that you optimise the damaged file using the MYOB Optimisation Assistant. Although the Optimisation Assistant is designed to make your company file more efficient, it also is capable of fixing certain types of data errors that can occur in company files. See "Optimising company files" on page 689 to learn more about optimising your company file.

Once you've optimised the file, perform the data verification procedure again to determine whether the data errors have been repaired. If errors continue to be discovered, you should strongly consider restoring the most recent backup of your company file and using that company file instead. (We recommend that you check *that* company file for errors, as well.)

4. A dialog box appears, allowing you to enter a name and select a location for the backup file you're about to create.

5. Enter the name you want to assign to the backup, or accept the default name (which includes the date), and select the location you want to create the backup.

IMPORTANT! Make a note of the name and location of the backup so that it will be easy for you to find the file if you want to restore it at a later time using MYOB Accounting Plus.

> ## Warning: Select the correct location for your backup
>
> A location for your backup is automatically displayed in the dialog box. If the location that appears automatically isn't the location where you want to save the backup, select a different location.
>
> For example, if you want to store the backup on a removable disk or in another location, be sure to select that location.
>
> Use the Drives list to choose the drive (typically D: for removable disk drives) where you want the backup to be located. If you want to store the backup in a folder on the drive, choose the folder you want from the Folders window.

6.   Click OK to create the backup.

See also:

"To verify your company file" on page 700

"To verify your company file during the backup process" on page 700

"To optimise a company file" on page 702

Restoring backed-up company files

▶ To restore a backup

If you haven't already read the Your Company File Overview, see "Restoring company files" on page 688 for more information.

 Please note that this task requires single-user access. See "Single-user file locking" on page 763 for more information.

> ## Note: You can use other programs to restore backups
>
> If you want, you can use other software programs , such as PKUNZIP, to decompress a backup instead of the Restore command. Many other popular decompression programs will restore your backup files, as well.

An MYOB software company file should be open.

1. Be sure you've made all the accounting entries you want to include in the company file you're currently using.

2. Choose Restore from the File menu.

    If you marked the Prompt for Data Backup When Closing selection in the Preferences window, an alert message appears, asking you whether you want to back up the company file you're currently using. Make the choice you want.

> ## Note: If the restore process doesn't work
>
> When you installed MYOB Accounting Plus, special software used for the backup process was also installed. If an alert message appears when you try to use the Restore command, this software may have been removed from the location where it needs to exist. You'll need to reinstall Accounting Plus. To learn how, see "To reinstall MYOB Accounting Plus" on page 64.

3. A dialog box appears. In this box, locate the backup you want to restore. When you've found the backup, click OK.

4. Another dialog box appears, allowing you to select the location where the backed-up company file will be restored. Select a location from the drop-down list and click OK.

5. An alert message appears, showing you what the decompressed file will be named and where it will be located after it's decompressed. Click OK to decompress the backup. When the restore process is done, Accounting Plus will reappear, and the company file you've just restored will be opened automatically.

See also:

Chapter 4

Verifying company files

Verifying company files

▶ To verify your company file during the backup process

If you haven't already read the Your Company File Overview, see "Verifying company files" on page 689 for more information.

An MYOB Accounting Plus company file should be open. The Preferences window should be displayed.

1. Click the Security tab.

2. Mark the box labeled Check Company File for Errors Before the Backup Process, then click OK.

3. The next time you begin to back up your company file, the data verification process will begin. For a detailed description of how the data verification feature works, see "Verifying company files" on page 689.

See also:

"To make a backup" on page 695

"To verify your company file" on page 700

▶ To verify your company file

If you haven't already read the Your Company File Overview, see "Verifying company files" on page 689 for more information.

An MYOB Accounting Plus company file should be open.

Please note that this task requires single-user access. See "Single-user file locking" on page 763 for more information.

1. From the File menu at the top of your computer screen, choose Verify Company File. A message will appear, describing the data verification process. Click OK in the message to begin the process of checking your company file for errors.

> ### Note: Data verification will take some time
> The process of checking your company file for errors is complex and time-consuming. Depending upon the size of your company file, the process may take several minutes.

2. When the data verification process is complete, a message will appear, describing the results of the test. If the process was successful, congratulations! Click the OK button to end the data verification process.

   If the process discovered errors in your company file, we recommend that you optimise the damaged file using the MYOB Accounting Plus Optimisation Assistant. Although the Optimisation Assistant is designed to make your company file more efficient, it also is capable of fixing certain types of data errors that can occur in company files. See "Optimising company files" on page 689 to learn more about optimising your company file.

   Once you've optimised the file, perform the data verification procedure again to determine whether the data errors have been repaired. If errors continue to be discovered, you should strongly consider restoring the most recent backup of your company file and using that company file instead. (We recommend that you check *that* company file for errors, as well.)

   See also:

   "To verify your company file during the backup process" on page 700

Chapter 5

Optimising company files

Optimising company files

▸ To optimise a company file

If you haven't already read the Your Company File Overview, see "Optimising company files" on page 689 for more information.

Please note that this task requires single-user access. See "Single-user file locking" on page 763 for more information.

If you know the name of the company file and its location on your network, you're ready to begin.

1. When you installed MYOB Accounting Plus, the Optimisation Assistant also was installed on your computer.

    The Optimisation Assistant appears as an icon in the Accounting Plus folder in the Programs folder of your Start menu. Locate this icon, then select it to start the Data Optimisation Assistant.

2. In the Welcome to the MYOB Accounting Plus Optimisation Assistant window, click the Next button to begin.

3. In the window that appears next, click the Find File button. The Open File to Optimise dialog box appears.

    The Open File to Optimise dialog box works exactly like other Find File dialog boxes do. Use it to locate the company file you want, highlight the file's name and click OK.

4. Click Next.

5. A window will appear, explaining the optimisation process. Read the information carefully and click Next when you're ready to begin optimising your company file.

6. A window with the words "Optimisation Complete" in it will appear when your company file has been optimised. If you keep accounting records for more than one company and you wish to optimise another company file, click the Next button. Otherwise, click the Finish button to exit the Optimisation Assistant.

7. Verify the company file to ensure it's in proper working condition.

See also:

"To verify your company file" on page 700

"To restore a backup" on page 697