



[VCalc V2.5 Help and Information](#)

[General Information](#)

[Adding, Selecting, & Deleting Vehicles](#)

[Setup](#)

[Advanced Setup](#)

[Adjusting Column Widths](#)

[Entering Data](#)

[Sorting Tables](#)

[Statistics](#)

[Graphs](#)

[Trouble-Shooting & Technical Support](#)

[Registration](#)

[Removal](#)

[Distribution](#)

General Information:

VCalc, (for "Vehicle Calculator"), stores, calculates, and analyzes the cost and efficiency of your vehicles (including cars, aircraft, boats,...). Carefully designed and programmed, to be simple in use, yet sophisticated in features.

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CompuServe #74721,3027

Member of The Association of Shareware Professionals ([ASP](#))

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Version Changes..

VCalc3...

Credits...

Selecting, Adding, & Deleting Vehicles:

To add a new vehicle to the vehicle list, open the new vehicle form (from the vehicle list form), then fill in all of the blanks on the form. The vehicle's license number will become part of the filename of the files used to store its data. If your vehicle's license number is longer than seven digits, then merely enter the first seven digits of it. For the "Type" of vehicle, "Mileage Based" refers to vehicles like cars, trucks, and busses. "Hourly Based" refers to vehicles like boats, aircraft, and snowmobiles (which have hour meters, instead of odometers). Press "Enter New Vehicle" to complete the new vehicle addition.

To select a vehicle which has already been added to the vehicle list, open up the vehicle list form, and then either double-click on the vehicle of choice, or else highlight the vehicle to select (single-click with the mouse button), then press "Select". The vehicle should then be displayed in the line at the top of the form, showing it as the current vehicle.

To remove a vehicle from the vehicle list, open up the vehicle list form, highlight the vehicle to remove, then press "Remove". The vehicle should then be removed from the list, though any associated data files will still exist on the hard disk. To delete the data files, open up File Manager (or any other method of managing files), and delete all of the files which begin with the deleted vehicle's license plate. At most, there will be seven files, one ending in "1DT", one in "2DT", one in "3DT" up to "7DT". For example, if the license plate were "LPLATE1", then one of the data files would be named "LPLATE1.1DT".

To adjust the column widths in the vehicle list form: With some screen resolutions, the column widths of the vehicle list form may need to be adjusted to be in alignment with the titles. To do this, press Ctrl, then move the mouse pointer over the column line to be moved. The mouse pointer should then change to a double arrow. While still pressing Ctrl, Press the left mouse button to "grab" the line, drag it to where it should be, then release both the mouse button and Ctrl. Press the "Select" button to save the column positions as the default.

To import a VCalc V1.1 vehicle list, see the instructions under Advanced Setup

VCalc Setup:

This form sets what will be displayed each time that VCalc starts up.

If "Last `Save Data" is chosen for the default category, then VCalc will save the current category as the default, each time that "Save Data" is pressed.

Changing the "Category Titles" will affect what is displayed whenever a category is referred to (the buttons, the top of the main window, the graphs, the statistics,...).

When "Save" is pressed, not only are the current settings saved as the default, but also the "state" of VCalc's main window ("maximized" or "normal").

VCalc Advanced Setup:

These settings have been called "Advanced", because careless settings can cause problems with VCalc.

Maximum number of rows in each table:

Before registration, VCalc limits data input to 7 rows. After registration, the number may be anywhere from 7 to 2000. It may be desirable to set the number to less than 2000, because unless there are nearly 2000 rows of data entered, then the vertical scroll bar will operate more efficiently. But be careful when setting this, because if this is set to a number which is less than the number of rows of data which have already been entered, then the excess data will be lost.

Printer and screen fonts:

Experimentation is the best way to find the best results. Some settings will produce a real mess on the screen or printer, so, if it looks hopeless, then just press the "Restore `Factory' Defaults" button, to bring back the settings which seem to work well on most computer systems.

Importing V1.1 Files:

To import a V1.1 vehicle list, merely press the "Vehicle List" button. This will search the current working directory for the file "VCALC1VS.DAT" (where V1.1 vehicle lists are stored), load it into memory, modify it to the version 2 format, and then save it to disk again, as "VCALC2VS.DAT", overwriting any existing copy of that file. The same process may be done for column widths.

Adjusting Column Widths:

To Adjust Column Widths:

- 1) Press and hold the Ctrl key.
- 2) Move the mouse cursor over the vertical line to move. The cursor will change to a double arrow.
- 3) While still holding the Ctrl key, press and hold the left mouse button.
- 4) Move the line.
- 5) Release the mouse button and the Ctrl key.
- 6) To save the column configuration as the default layout, open the Setup form ("File > Setup"), and press "Save Column Widths".

Entering Data into the Tables:

To automatically enter the present date into a date column, select a date cell, then press "X".

Gasoline/Fuel: Fill in the left six columns, and the right three columns are calculated by VCalc. To automatically copy the ending mileage/hour of the previous line into the starting mileage/hour of the current line, press "X" after selecting the "Start Mileage" cell to receive the number.

Maintenance/Repairs: One thing worth noting here: Some expenses, like a service contract, which basically pays for all repairs over a long period, should be entered into the maintenance table as a monthly expense, rather than as one large, one-time expense. Doing this will produce more meaningful statistics and graphs. "Future" expenses (like insurance, when it's paid six months to a year in advance) may be entered freely, because the statistics and graphs allow the user to restrict the data used according to mileage and date.

Other expenses (insurance, licensing, purchase payments, wash jobs,...): As was described for maintenance, all of these expenses should be divided up into "per month" expenses, in order to produce more meaningful statistics and graphs. To help with this task, a feature called "Table Filler" has been included, which basically takes an expense, divides it up into any number of months, and then enters the monthly expenses into the table.

VCalc3:

Some of the features being considered for VCalc3:

- * A "Table Filler" for depreciation
- * A version for OS/2
- * A version for Windows `95
- * "Search", to find a particular vehicle (when a long list of vehicles has been entered)
- * Foreign language version(s)
- * User definable category type (for more than one "gasoline" or "maintenance" type of table)
- * User definable category quantity
- * A category for mileage logging (like business/personal miles).
- * The separation of maintenance from repairs.
- * A more integrated graphing form.
- * Improved print interface
- * Increased speed and decreased size
- * More stats and graphs

Credits:

Special thanks to James Sylvester, masters in computer programming, for his testing and evaluating of VCalc.

Version 2 Changes:

Version 2.X adds several new features not found in version 1.X:

- 1) Seven categories, instead of six.
- 2) Category titles may be modified by the user.
- 3) Can accommodate vehicles like boats, aircraft, snowmobiles,...., which use hours to track their operating duration, rather than miles.
- 4) When entering information into the gasoline table, the "start mileage" (or start hours) may be automatically transferred in from the previous "end mileage", simply by pressing "X".
- 5) The present date (as returned by the computer's internal clock) may be automatically inserted into the date cell, simply by pressing "X".
- 6) Graphing module includes one more graph, "Maintenance Timeline", to help visualize when a vehicle is starting to fall apart.
- 7) Many minor features and refinements.

Version 2.X removes one feature from Version 1.X:

The size and location of VCalc's main window is no longer saved, though its "state" (maximized or "normal") still is.

Version 2.5 fixes a "bug" in the graph of "all seven" (the first year was being left out).

V1.1 Registered Users may upgrade to V2.x at a reduced rate.

Table Sorter:

The Table Sorter reorganizes the currently selected table, based on the criteria which is chosen.

Sorting by Text Columns:

While this may seem ridiculous at first, it may be useful, depending on how it's used. For example, while in the maintenance section, if the category was sorted by "Mechanic", then all services done by a particular mechanic/service shop/dealer/... would be grouped together. Another example would be if "heavy load" were entered into the notes column of the gasoline/fuel category, each time that a heavy load was carried. Sorting would then help in determining the effect that a heavy load has on gasoline/fuel usage.

Statistics:

At the top of the Stats form is the start date, end date, start mileage (or hours), and end mileage (or hours). The start date and start mileage reflect what was entered when the vehicle was added to the vehicle list. The end date reflects the current date, as returned from the computer's internal clock. The end mileage reflects the highest mileage entered into the gasoline/fuel table. In some cases, it may be necessary to adjust these values, in order to produce more accurate statistics. In other cases, it may be desirable to adjust these values, in order to view the statistics from a different perspective. In any case, press "Recalculate" after adjusting them to reflect the changes in the stats.

Along the left side of two of the statistics areas are a column of check boxes. "Un-checking" one of these will eliminate that row from the sum-total at the bottom.

Graphs:

When "Graphs" is selected from the "Analyze" menu, the VCalc graphing program is started up. This is actually a complete, stand-alone program, though it is designed to function seamlessly with VCalc. It was written as a separate program in order to improve the speed of VCalc. When started up from VCalc, the current vehicle, screen color, and category titles are automatically transferred.

As with most all graphs, they aren't very useful until a significant amount of data has been entered. After a few years of entering data into VCalc, these graphs will become more and more informative about the vehicle's cost and efficiency.

At the top of the Graph Selection form is the Starting Date, Ending Date, Starting Mileage (or hours), and Ending Mileage (or hours), of the vehicle. These may be adjusted as necessary or desired. See Statistics for more information on this.

Note: When printing out the graphs, don't choose color printing unless a color printer is selected (and is set for color printing), or else whole lot of black ink or toner will be wasted.

Trouble-Shooting & Technical Support:

If you experience a problem with VCalc, first try to determine that the problem is actually within VCalc. Basically, if a similar problem happens with other programs, then the problem probably isn't within VCalc.

Basically, there are three "levels" of errors which can occur when using VCalc:

- 1) A user error, like entering "45/32/95" into a date column. VCalc displays a message describing the problem.
- 2) An error showing that something has gone wrong with the normal flow of the program. This can be caused by a variety of factors, like a hardware problem, a corrupted file, or a "bug" within VCalc. With these types of errors, VCalc should display a detailed error message, including an error code, describing what went wrong. If one occurs, take note of the entire message.
- 3) An error generated by the Windows operating system. This is the most serious type of error, one which has somehow escaped VCalc's error handling techniques.

If a "level 2" or "level 3" error occurs, and you can't fix the problem, then technical support will be needed from Hansen Software. Hansen Software's support policy is:

- 1) For unregistered users (during the trial period), support is supplied, though there may be a delay, as registered users are helped first.
- 2) After registration, support is supplied for a *minimum* of six months from the date of registration. After six months, support will be supplied at the discretion of Hansen Software. Support is supplied via E-Mail, or USPS mail. When writing, please include:
 - A) Your name, address, and password, as it's stated on your registration form.
 - B) Error messages which are displayed.
 - C) (optional) Other information which may be helpful in determining the problem:
 - a) The situation(s) under which the problem occurs.
 - b) Computer system description.
- 3) "Bugs", if any are found, will be fixed promptly, and will be distributed to registered users either by the mailing of floppy disks, or by the uploading and downloading through the following on-line services:
 - * **CompuServe** (GO > WINPROD (Windows Shareware Productivity Forum). Search the file area using filename "VCalc*.").
 - * **America On-Line** (Search the file system using keyword "VCalc")
 - * **Exec-PC BBS** (414-789-4360)
 - * **Channel 1 BBS** (617-354-8873)
 - * **Software Creations BBS** (508-368-7139)
 - * **The Nashville Exchange** (615-383-0727)

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Registration:

Before registration, VCalc limits data entry to 7 rows. After registration, the limit is 2000 rows (which, unless vehicles start lasting a *lot* longer than they do now, then 2000 should be more than enough).

To register VCalc:

- 1) Open up VCalc's registration form (File > Registration).
- 2) Fill in the "Registrant Information" section. In the "name" section, please use only personal names (no company names).
- 3) Print out the information. If a printer isn't available, then merely write down the "Registrant Information", including the "Copy Number", on an 8-1/2" x 11" sheet of paper.
- 4) Mail the printout, along with a check for the requested fee, to Hansen Software. V1.1 Registered users may upgrade at a reduced rate.
- 5) Within two weeks, the password will be delivered which will provide the full, unlimited use of this program, along with full technical support. You also will receive thanks for your patronage, and thanks for being a productive part of the shareware market.

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Distribution:

If VCalc is distributed to others, and it's hoped that it will be, then please follow these directions:

- 1) The best and easiest way, is to distribute VCalc in the original "package" that it was received in (floppy disk, "ZIP" file,...), assuming that it was received in its proper form.
- 2) If the original "package" isn't available, then first "un-register" the copy that will be distributed. The way to do this is to *not* distribute the file, "VCALC2RF.DAT" (The file which contains all of the registration information).
- 3) Please distribute these files *only*:
 - VCALC25.EXE** (VCalc program)
 - VCALC25.HLP** (Help file for VCalc)
 - VCALCG25.EXE** (VCalc's graphing program)
 - GSW.EXE** (A background program which handles the details of graphing)
 - THREED.VBX** (A companion file)
 - TRUEGRID.VBX** (A companion file)
 - CMDIALOG.VBX** (A companion file)
 - GRAPH.VBX** (A companion file to GSW.EXE)
 - MSAFINX.DLL** (A companion file)
 - COMMDLG.DLL** (A companion file)
 - GSWDLL.DLL** (A companion file to GSW.EXE)
 - INSTALLV.WRI** (A "Write" file to aid in installation)
 - FILE_ID.DIZ** (BBS program description)
- 4) While the file "**VBRUN300.DLL**" is required by VCalc, it does not need to be included when uploading to BBSs, as this file is usually available separately on most systems. When distributing VCalc using a floppy disk, you may want to include this file, just in case the person receiving it doesn't already have it.

Thank you for distributing VCalc.

VCalc V1.1 Registered Users:

V1.1 registered users may upgrade to V2.X for only \$5.00 (the price difference between the two versions). To do so, register V2.X as normal, but write your V1.1 registrant information and V1.1 password on the page, and include a check for only \$5.00.

The Association of Shareware Professionals

The Association of Shareware Professionals (ASP) is an organization of shareware professionals, dedicated to maintaining high standards of quality and service within the shareware market. To become a member, both authors and their programs must meet many standards of quality and service. The following statement is provided to you, the user of the program, from the ASP:

"Hansen Software is a member of the Association of Shareware Professionals (ASP). ASP wants to make sure that the shareware principle works for you. If you are unable to resolve a shareware-related problem with an ASP member by contacting the member directly, ASP may be able to help. The ASP Ombudsman can help you resolve a dispute or problem with an ASP member, but does not provide technical support for members' products. Please write to the ASP Ombudsman at 545 Grover Road, Muskegon, MI 49442-9427 USA, FAX 616-788-2765 or send a CompuServe message via CompuServe Mail to ASP Ombudsman 70007,3536"



Removal

To remove VCalc from your computer system:

- 1) Delete all of the files in the VCalc directory. For a list of the files, see "Distribution".
- 2) If you installed "VBRUN300.DLL" into your Windows "system" directory especially for VCalc, then it's probably best just to leave it there, because there are many other shareware programs which utilize this file as well. If the file already existed in that directory before you loaded VCalc, then *do not* delete it, because it's possible that the file is currently in use by some other program.
- 3) Delete the directory which was created for VCalc.
- 4) Remove the icon which was created for VCalc.
- 5) That should do it.

