



Welcome to *Checkbook for Microsoft Excel* (Version 1.0)

This program is freeware and can be distributed and used for free. However, please recognize it is freeware, not public domain software. You still must register the program and if you distribute or upload the program, it must be distributed in its complete unaltered form as the zip file CHKXL10.ZIP. Also, there is no warranty either expressed or implied and no liability will be assumed for any consequences which may result from its use. Use it at your own risk!

Introduction

Checkbook for Excel is an application written for Microsoft Excel that provides a user friendly but powerful spreadsheet/database for managing your checking account. A simple yet powerful interface provides all the necessary features for managing your account without all the excess baggage and overhead associated with the popular personal finance packages like ***Quicken*** and ***Microsoft Money***. This makes ***Checkbook for Excel*** faster and less complicated. Why burden yourself and your computer with expense tracking and budgeting features you'll never use? ***Checkbook for Excel*** provides exactly what you need; a simple, easy way to maintain and balance your checking account.

Checkbook for Excel was written using the Microsoft Excel 4.0 macro language. It is completely compatible and has been thoroughly tested with both Excel versions 4 and 5. It requires Windows 3.0 or higher and Excel 4.0 or higher. A minimum of a 386 processor and 4 MB of RAM are necessary. 6 MB of RAM is recommended for Excel version 5.

Installation

Checkbook for Excel is easy to install. Simply unzip the CHKXL10.ZIP file and copy the resulting CHKXL10.XLW Excel workbook to the directory of your choice. Documentation is provided in a Windows Write file - CHKXL10.WRI. The CHKXL10.XLW file is in the Excel 4 file format. If you are using Excel 5, you can continue to save it in that format or you can save it as an Excel 5 file.

Instructions

Checkbook for Excel is an Excel workbook that contains the main checkbook worksheet and a macro sheet. The main checkbook worksheet is primarily a checkbook ledger. Besides the ledger, there is also a report section for displaying various transaction reports and an account section for maintaining a list of frequently used payees or payers to choose from when entering transactions. There is no need to enter any information directly into the worksheet. All data entry is handled by easy-to-use dialog boxes.

The first time you open the ***Checkbook for Excel*** workbook, the welcome dialog box will be displayed. Please heed the advice in the dialog box and register the program. It will help provide useful ideas for future enhancements to the program, and registered users will be

provided with technical support. Click OK to continue. The account information dialog box will be displayed. Enter the account information and click OK. You are now ready to use the program.

The checking account ledger is displayed when you start the program. If you are using a standard 640 x 480 VGA display, it will occupy the total width of your screen. If you are using a higher resolution display, you will need to adjust the zoom setting so that the checking account ledger occupies the full width of your screen. Simply select Zoom from the Window menu (View menu in Excel 5) and enter a custom zoom value. You will need to experiment to find the correct setting. Usually 125% works well with an 800 x 600 resolution. Enter a higher number for higher resolutions.

Checkbook for Excel is very user friendly and operates entirely from the tool bar it adds to the top of the screen. You can get a brief description of each tool's function by clicking the question mark tool, then holding the mouse pointer over the tool you want described. (If you're using Excel 5, you do not have to click the question mark icon. Simply holding the mouse pointer over the tool will suffice.) A brief description will appear in the status bar in the lower left of the screen. Clicking the question mark tool again returns the mouse cursor to normal. Below is a detailed description of each tool's function.

Entering Transactions



The first group of four icons (shown above) on the tool bar is for entering transactions. From left to right they provide the following transactions: ATM, Check, Deposit, Withdrawal. Simply click on the appropriate icon and the Account Transaction dialog box will appear. The dialog box is identical for each transaction. However, the Check Number box is filled automatically, either with a symbol for the type of transaction or with the next check number if you are entering a check. You can change the check number by entering a different number in the field. You can change the transaction type by selecting a different option button. Today's date is displayed by default, change it if necessary. Enter the name of the payee/payer in the "Payment To / Deposit From" field or select a payee/payer from the drop down list. (The drop down list will be empty if you haven't yet entered any information on regular accounts into the program. See the section below for more information.) Fill in the memo field if you desire and enter the amount of the transaction. Click OK or hit enter once you've entered the appropriate information. You can also enter a transaction by clicking on the "Enter Transaction" button bar and selecting the type of transaction from one of the options buttons in the dialog box.

Editing Transactions



Editing transactions is as easy as moving the cursor to the cell you want to edit and typing in the new text. As with all Excel worksheets, the F2 function key invokes the edit mode for editing cell contents. To delete a transaction, move the cursor to a cell somewhere in the row of the transaction you want to delete and click the delete icon (shown above).

You will notice in the "Pay To / Deposit From" column that the name and memo fields are listed on two separate lines within the same cell. You can break a cell entry into two lines by holding down the "Alt" key and hitting Enter.

Balancing the Checkbook



The second group of three icons (shown above) is for balancing or reconciling your checking account with the bank statement. The first icon in the group starts the process rolling. A dialog box will prompt you for any monthly fees or interest, and also the date they were applied to your account. Enter the amounts or leave the fields blank if they do not apply. **You must enter a date even if you had no interest or fees for the month.**

After filling in the dialog box, the cursor will move to the first uncleared transaction in the ledger. If the transaction has cleared, click the check mark icon (second icon in the group). If it hasn't cleared, click the no check mark icon (third icon in the group). The cursor will then move to the next uncleared transaction. Continue this process until you've accounted for all your monthly transactions. At this point, the "Bank Balance" amount in the upper left portion of the ledger should be equal to the ending balance amount on your bank statement. If the two balances are not equal, you probably forgot to enter a transaction, incorrectly marked one as cleared or not cleared, or entered an incorrect amount somewhere.

You can also mark a transaction as cleared or uncleared by clicking on the check mark symbol at the top of the check mark column. This toggles the check mark on and off in the selected transaction. Unlike the check mark and no check mark icons, it doesn't automatically move the cursor to the next uncleared transaction.

Managing Transaction Accounts



Checkbook for Excel provides a database for storing information for recurring or frequently used transactions. I'll refer to this as a transaction account. This can be used to store information on items like utility bills, mortgages, ATM locations, paychecks, etc. You can then quickly select them from the drop down list in the Account Transaction dialog box. Two icons are provided for managing transaction accounts. The brown utility pole icon is for adding new transaction accounts to the database, while the red utility pole icon is for editing existing accounts in the database.

To add a transaction account to the database, click the brown utility pole icon. Enter the name of the payee/payer and who to make the check out to (These fields are often the same). Also, enter the information for the memo field, and the account number and amount if appropriate. Put an X in the tax deductible check box if you want to flag the account for tax purposes. Click OK or hit Enter when you're finished.

To edit an existing transaction account in the database, click the red utility pole icon. This displays a custom data entry form for editing records in the database. Excel data entry forms provide a host of functions for managing Excel databases. For more information on using custom data entry forms, click the Help button in the data form dialog box or see your Excel manuals. To edit a record, move to the record you want to edit and tab to the field you want to change and type in the new information. Always use TRUE or FALSE in the tax deductible field. You can also delete records or even add new records. However, it is easier to add new records using the function described in the paragraph above.

Automated Reports, Searches and Queries



Checkbook for Excel provides a very user friendly query and report generator as well as a search and find function. To find specific information or a specific transaction in the checking account ledger, click the magnifying glass icon (1st icon shown above). Excel's Find dialog box will be displayed. Simply type in the text or number you want to search for and click OK. There's

no need to change any of the other options in the dialog box. The cell cursor will move to the cell containing that text. You can then edit the cell if you desire. Hit F7 to find the next occurrence of the text.

Use the blue and gray striped report page icon (2nd icon shown above) to initiate a report query. The Account Transaction Query dialog box will appear. Enter the dates you want to include and select the types of transactions you want to include. Leave the date boxes blank if you want all dates included in the report. If you just want the report to show specific payees, enter the payee in the "Payment To // Deposit From" field. You can use partial text and wildcards (? *) in the fields. For example: If you wanted to see all transactions with the word "bank", you could enter *bank* in the field. You can also select a specific payee or payer by selecting one from the drop down list. To limit reports to transactions with specific memo text, enter the text in the "Memo" field. For instance, if you describe all your water bill payments with "Water bill" in the memo field, entering water* in the "Memo" field will produce a report of all your water bills.

You can limit your reports to show only specific transaction amounts by entering an amount in the "Amount" field. Less than < and greater than > signs can also be used. To see only debits greater than \$1,000, enter <-1000. To see all deposits greater than \$500, enter >500. To see all debits or withdrawals, enter <0, and conversely, to see all deposits, enter >0. If you have limited your report to checks only, you can limit the report further by entering a number in the "Check Number" field. Entering >100 will limit the report to check numbers above 100, etc. You can also produce reports of tax deductible transactions but selecting the appropriate option button.

Once you've finished entering information and selecting the query options, click OK to produce the report. The view will automatically be shifted to the report ledger. If the report ledger is empty, you probably entered text incorrectly into one of the fields in the dialog box or forgot to use the proper wildcard(s). Try generating the report again.

The "yellow and white striped ledger" icon (3rd icon shown above) automatically displays the checking account ledger, with the cell cursor in the last transaction. The "blue and white striped report" icon (4th icon shown above) automatically shifts the view to the report ledger.

Printing the Ledger or Report



Printing with **Checkbook for Excel** is completely automated. Simply click one of the print icons shown above. The yellow paged printer icon will print the checkbook ledger while the blue paged printer icon will print the report ledger.

Utility Functions



The icons above provide some useful shortcuts and functions. The disk icon (first icon shown above) automatically saves the **Checkbook for Excel** workbook, while the folder icon (second icon shown above) automatically closes the workbook. The label icon (third icon shown above) provides an easy way to change the account information at the top of the checkbook ledger. (Note: You cannot edit the starting balance or starting date in this dialog box, only the account name. To change the starting balance or starting date, you must edit the worksheet directly. It also lets you change whether or not Excel's standard tool bar is displayed when you are running **Checkbook for Excel**. The ledger page with a question mark icon (fourth icon shown above) displays the welcome dialog box.

The ledger page with a check mark icon (fifth icon shown above) automatically renews the checkbook by deleting all the cleared transactions. Before it does this, it saves the existing checkbook. After deleting the cleared transactions, it saves the checkbook again as CHECKNEW.XLW. This allows you to archive a copy of the old checkbook and start a new ledger. You may want to do this every year, or whenever the ledger gets full. The correct balance and all the uncleared transactions are automatically carried forward to the new checkbook ledger. You can rename the new checkbook whatever you like.

The question mark pointer icon (sixth icon shown above) turns the cursor into a question mark which, when passed over an icon, displays a description of the icon's function in the status bar at the bottom left of the page. (This icon is not necessary in Excel 5 since the description will be displayed in the status bar just by passing the normal mouse pointer over the icons.)

General Information

Checkbook for Excel maintains the checkbook ledger using Excel's database functions. All the data entry functions are completely automated using custom dynamic dialog boxes. While there are no problems entering and editing data directly into the worksheet, it is best to use the automated functions as much as possible. Be careful not to delete any rows or columns from the worksheet as it may affect the operation of the program.

Checkbook for Excel automatically creates a backup copy of the existing file every time that you save it. If you accidentally save a mistake or if the file somehow becomes corrupted, you can find a file of the same name with a .BAK extension.

You can rename the **Checkbook for Excel** workbook but do not change the name of the Checkbook worksheet. There is macro code that refers specifically to this worksheet by name. You will receive macro errors that make the program inoperable if you change the name of the Checkbook worksheet.

The **Checkbook for Excel** macro sheet appears to be empty when you view it. The sheet is not empty, the formulas are just hidden. **Do not enter anything into the macro sheet. You will overwrite the macro code and the program will no longer run.**

Troubleshooting and Technical Support

Checkbook for Excel has been thoroughly tested with both versions 4 and 5 of Excel and found to run error free in both environments. However, since I was the only beta-tester, you may run across an unforeseen error. If you receive a macro error message, write down the exact wording of the message including the cell address that caused the error.

If you receive a macro error after renaming the "Checkbook" worksheet, rename the worksheet back to "Checkbook" You cannot rename the Checkbook worksheet.

If you have any problems or need assistance with the use of this program, you can contact me on America On-Line (DannyI) or on the Internet (DANNYI@AOL.COM). You can also write me at the address on the registration form below.

Dedication

This program, as well as everything else I do, is dedicated to my loving wife Linda and our wonderful son Kevin. If only we could recapture the joy and innocence that shines in the eyes of our children.

