Getting Started

This document is a printable version of the Getting Started section of the integrated online Help file. We recommend that you read and fully understand this document before you begin to use Diamond Discovery Prelude Professional Accounts.

Prelude

Diamond Discovery Prelude Professional Accounts is the ideal software package to help the start-up or micro business manage its finances and business processes.

As your business grows and you demand more from your business software, Prelude offers a seamless upgrade through the wider range of Diamond Discovery software products which offer many front-office business process modules and further valuable management information.

Please contact us directly or visit our web site to explore the opportunities to enhance your business software experience with Diamond Discovery Prelude through our Accounts, Business and Commercial Editions.

As your business grows so can your chosen Diamond Discovery business software solution.

Diamond Discovery Software - **Brilliant Business Solutions**

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Getting Started

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Installing the System

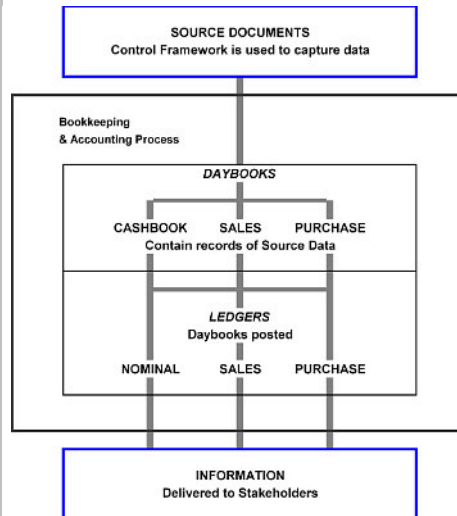|	
System Requirements	**To run Prelude Professional Accounts we recommend the following configuration:** • A Personal Computer with a processor running at 500 MHz or 1.2GHz for Vista • 512MB RAM or 1GB RAM for Vista • Up to 100MB disk space for installation. Additional space will be required for your data. • SVGA monitor with minimum 800x600 resolution • CD/DVD • Windows 2000/2003/XP/Vista The system may work on lesser hardware and software configurations but performance cannot be guaranteed.

Installation	1. Ensure all other users are off the system.
	 2. Close all other programs.
	 3. Insert the Prelude CD into the CD or DVD drive.
	 4. If the CD does not autorun:
	    a) Left Click Start > Run and enter X:\SETUP into the dialog box, where X is the drive letter of your CD or DVD drive;
	    b) Left Click OK.
	 5. The Setup Wizard will appear. Follow the instructions displayed. You can Left Click Cancel to close the Wizard without installing the program.
	 6. Left Click Next to select the Directory into which the program will be installed (**the Target or Root Directory**). **Either:**
	    a) Left Click Next to install the program into the default directory shown - recommended for first-time users, **or;**
	    b) browse and select the Target Directory and then Left Click Next to install into this directory and open the next screen.
	 7. Confirm the Installation Type from the drop-down box:
	    a) 'Full - Single P.C. or Server' for the first time;
	    b) 'Upgrade - Single P.C. or Server' if you are upgrading your existing system.
	    c) 'Workstation' for non-server installation on a network – see <u>Select Directory Form</u>
	 8. Left Click Next to continue the installation and open the next screen to select which Start Menu folder will contain program shortcuts. **Either:**
	    a) Left Click Next to use the default folder shown - recommended for first-time users, **or;**
	    b) browse and select a folder and then Left Click Next to open the next screen.
	 9. Select required Icon display options from those displayed and Left Click Next to open the next screen.
	 10. This will display a summary of all the options that you have selected, so giving you an opportunity to change any selections you have made up to this time. If you want to change any selection, Left Click Back to navigate to the screen you require. Make any changes, and Left Click Next to move through the screens.
	 11. Once you are satisfied with your selections, Left Click Install to being installation.
	 12. The system will then install itself and will display progress on the screen.
	 13. Once installation is complete, the Wizard will confirm this on screen. Left Click Finish to close the Wizard.
	 14. Start using the System - see <u>Opening the Program</u>

Technical Notes

Directory Structure and Files	The installation folder specified (usually C:\Program Files\'Root Directory') contains the main program, supplemental applications and some support files (RESOURCE.DAT, etc.). Sub-directories are then created for each company using the naming convention DATA.0XX, where XX is the company number. Company 00 is considered the main company and cannot be deleted. Within each company sub-directory are the databases and indexes which make up the company's accounts. The system requires these files to be in specific locations relative to the Root Directory and does not expect any other files to be there. The Root Directory itself, however, can usually be used to store files but with one important condition: you MUST NOT put a database or an index in the Root Directory that has the same name as one of the company databases. The situation is different for the sub-directories. DO NOT put any other files in these sub-directories and DO NOT create directories within them. If either of these rules is not followed you will at least lose these "alien" files and automatic updates will not work properly.
System Capacities & File Sizes	Please allow 100 MB of disk space for an initial installation. The maximum regarding the number of accounts and transactions that the system can reach currently exceeds other practical limitations e.g. hardware.
Backing Up Your Data	It is essential, as with any computer system, that you make regular backups of your data. This means that you copy the data holding your system information as a precaution against the data on your hard disk becoming corrupted or lost, or your hard disk or computer becoming damaged - not such an unlikely event as you may think. Also remember that back-up media themselves can become corrupt or get lost so the more backups you have, the safer you are. The actual procedure for taking backups depends on your particular hardware configuration and operating system. Your supplier should be able to install a simple to use back-up procedure for your system. Remember to store a copy of a backup in a safe place, preferably away from your workplace. For more on backing up your data see Back Up & Restore Company Data.

A Rough Guide to Double-Entry Bookkeeping

Background	Prelude is an integrated accounts program which operates in real time. The system incorporates sophisticated controls which ensure that each transaction is processed correctly and completely, to ensure the system remains in balance and as up to date with the most recently posted transactions. That being said, there will be occasions when you will need to make adjustments to posted transactions. The text in this section has been included as a reference to the main principles behind the design of the system. We recommend that you read this before using the system for the first time.
Double Entry System	Prelude uses the **Double Entry** (or **Double Entry Bookkeeping**) System, a standard system used by businesses and other organisations to record financial transactions. First codified in a 15th Century Mathematics Textbook, its premise is that a business's (or other organisation's) financial condition and results of operations are best represented by several variables, called **Accounts**, each of which reflects a particular aspect of the business as a monetary value. Every transaction is recorded by entries in at least two Accounts. The total of the **Debit** values must equal the total value of the **Credit** values. The premise for this is that any monetary transaction must logically affect two aspects of a company. The Double Entry system forms the basis of the **Bookkeeping and Accounting Process** which operates within Prelude.

Bookkeeping and Accounting Process	1. In the normal course of business, a **Source Document** is produced each time a transaction occurs. As an example, when goods are despatched, Sales Invoices are produced and sent to Customers. The **Bookkeeping Process** starts with Source Documents being recorded into a **Book of Prime Entry** or **Daybook** - see Produce Sales Invoices for an example of how a Daybook works in Prelude.
	2. Daybook entries are then transferred to accounts in a **Ledger -** a Task called **Posting.** As an example, a Sales Invoice for goods despatched to a Customer will be recorded in that Customer's Account in the Sales Ledger, and also in the VAT and Revenue Account(s) in the Nominal Ledger - see Post Sales Invoices to the Ledger.
	3. Once all Transactions have been Posted, the entries in each Ledger Account are added up to give a total value which is the **Balance** on that Account.
	4. A **Trial Balance** can now be printed which lists all the Balances at the date of the Trial Balance (e.g. month end date) from all the Ledger Accounts in the Nominal Ledger. The amounts are copied to a two column list with Debit balance amounts recorded in the left column and Credit balance amounts recorded in the right column - see Print or Display a Trial Balance to display a Trial Balance.
	5. The **Accounting Process** begins with a review of the Trial Balance to ensure that Account Balances comply with accounting principles. Any necessary adjustments to Balances can be made using **Journal Entries -** see Make Nominal Ledger Adjustments. This process continues until the resulting figures are correct.
	6. Financial Statements can be prepared from the Trial Balance, which may include one or more of the following (not an exhaustive list):
	    a) A Profit and Loss Account, or simply P&L,
	    b) A Balance Sheet,
	    c) A Cash Flow Statement - if required,
	    d) Management Information as required.
	7. The Financial Statements are then available for use by one or more of the following (not an exhaustive list):
	    a) Management,
	    b) Banks, and other Lenders,
	    c) Suppliers - for assessing Credit Terms.
	
	The diagram below shows how Daybooks and Ledgers are linked in Prelude.

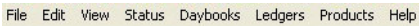| Design Structure	SOURCE DOCUMENTS Control Framework is used to capture data Bookkeeping & Accounting Process *DAYBOOKS* CASHBOOK SALES PURCHASE Contain records of Source Data *LEDGERS* Daybooks posted NOMINAL SALES PURCHASE INFORMATION Delivered to Stakeholders
Debits and Credits	The Double Entry system is governed by the **Accounting Equation;** this states that at any point in time, the following must hold true: **Assets + Expenses = Liabilities + Revenue** Put more simply, at any time, within Prelude's Data Tables: **Total Debits=Total Credits** and the system is in **Balance** For Ledger Accounts to remain in Balance, a change in one account must be matched with a change in another account. These changes are known as **Debits** and **Credits** and therefore each business transaction will comprise both a Debit and a matching Credit. Remember that Debits and Credits are neither positive nor negative values. Positive and negative values allow for mathematical calculations in software programs. The Balance on a Ledger Account is either a Debit or a Credit (not a positive or a negative value) and is the net total of all the Debit and Credit transactions Posted to that Account at the time it is Balanced. Prelude recognises this when updating and reporting data. On a Ledger Account, Debits are recorded on the left side and Credits on the right side for each account - see Customer Account Enquiry for an example of a Ledger Account.
Debit Balances...	...are normally found on (not an exhaustive list): • Asset Accounts - For example, the cost of Computer Equipment; • Trade Debtor Accounts - For example, a Sales Invoice posted to a Sales Ledger Account; • Cash Accounts; • Other amounts due from third parties but not yet received. One example might be an advance on an employee's salary; • Expense Accounts - examples are Fuel Costs, Stationery Costs or Rent Payable.
Credit Balances...	...are normally found on (not an exhaustive list): • Liability Accounts - For example Bank Loans; • Bank Overdrafts and other amounts owed to third parties but not yet paid such as the costs of Goods received but not Invoiced by a Supplier; • Trade Creditor Accounts - For example, a Purchase Invoice posted to a Purchase Ledger Account; • VAT and PAYE Accounts; • Revenue Accounts.
Invoices and Credit Notes	Throughout the Help file you will see references to Invoices and Credit Notes. It is useful to define these so that you can put such information into context. An **Invoice** is a commercial document in a form consistent with the trade identifying both buyer and seller, reflecting the price actually paid or payable, the terms of sale, the currency used for payment, the articles sold, and other specific information required for duty assessment purposes. A **Credit Note** is a monetary instrument issued by a seller that allows a buyer to purchase an item or service from that seller on a future date. Credit notes may be issued by a seller as a goodwill gesture to a buyer who wishes to return previously purchased merchandise (instead of cash repayment) in circumstances where the

original sales agreement did not include an explicit refund policy for returned items. In such circumstances, a credit note of value equal to the price of the returned item is usually issued allowing the buyer to exchange his purchase for other items available with the sale.

Opening the Program

Starting Up	1. **Either:**
	    a) Double Left Click on the Prelude Icon on your Desktop, **or;**
	    b) Left Click Start > All Programs > Prelude, **or;**
	    c) Left Click on the Prelude Icon on the Start Menu.
	2. While the software is loading you will see a form displaying copyright and user information.
	3. When you start Prelude for the first time you will see the Getting Started - Prompt. This invites you to open the Getting Started Wizard to set up a new Company for your business.
	4. Then you are requested to choose a Company by selecting from a list displayed on a **Form -** see Change Companies.
	5. **Company Password** - if the Company has been assigned a password you will be asked to enter it here - see Parameters Form.
	6. The program comes with 2 Companies already created:
	    a) Company 00 - the main company from which all others can be created - see Create New Companies;
	    b) Company 99 - contains dummy data which once copied, can be used to experiment or for training other users.
	7. Note that as you create more companies you will be able to select any one of these when you open the program.
	8. **Enter Accounting Date** - this is the Default Transaction date used for all parts of the system and is completely independent of the computer's system date. It will appear by default whenever you are required to enter a date, for example when creating an invoice - see Change Default Transaction Date.
	9. Left Click OK to open the **Workspace**.

Menus	The **Toolbar** on the top left hand side of Workspace contains both the **Main Menu...** File Edit View Status Daybooks Ledgers Products Help
Buttons	...and the **Control Buttons** see Control Buttons for a detailed description of each.

First-Time Use

Customers and Suppliers	Enter the names and addresses etc. of your Customers into the Sales Ledger and the names and addresses etc. of your Suppliers into the Purchase Ledger - see Create & Edit Customer Accounts and Create and Edit Supplier Accounts. Enter the descriptions & details of any Products, Services or Descriptions you may wish to use - see Add & Edit Products or Services. If you have a large amount of Customer, Supplier, Products & Services data you may wish to Import it rather than Enter it. See Import Customer Data, Import Supplier Data, Import Products or Services Data.
Nominal Ledger	Decide if you need to change any of the Nominal Ledger accounts see Add & Edit Nominal Accounts.
Cashbook	Set up additional bank accounts - see Create Multiple Bank Accounts. Remember that you will need to create a Nominal Ledger account for any additional bank account before adding this to the additional bank account list.
System Configuration	Set up the general parameters and any security that you require • When using the System for the first time • When creating a new Company - see Create New Companies • When your business needs change – you may need to process data in a different way than before • When expanding and/or reorganising your business • When you need to restrict user access to Companies - create a password to be input each time the Company is selected
Preparation	• Ensure all other users are off the System. • Select the Source Company - see Change Companies. • If editing an existing Company ensure you have an up-to-date backup of the Company data both before and after making any changes - see Back Up & Restore Company Data.
Processing	Menus: View > Parameters to open Form - see Getting Started Wizard, Parameters Form.
Filing	Print the details entered and keep this in a secure place, noting the date on the printout. If you subsequently need to make changes to the details reprint and date the output. You may consider changing Company passwords - keep a note of what these are and the date on which they changed in a secure place.

Transferring Data into the System

Essential Reading	Before you move any data from your existing system(s) into Prelude, we recommend that you read all the Help topics shown in the Getting Started section of the Help file. This will give you an overview of Prelude.
Testing & Training	Prelude can contain up to 100 different Companies, numbered 00-99. Your system comes with two already created, 00 and 99. 99 is a demonstration company and the data can be copied to a newly created company to provide a safe workspace where you can familiarise yourself with the system. See Create New Companies. Number the new company '98' and label this Company 'Test & Training'.
Planning	Transferring balances from another system onto a company for the first time should be carefully planned to minimise disruption to your business. Some points you may wish to consider are listed below.
Preparation - Timing	Decide when you want to move data across. It is much better to do this after running Period or Year End.
Preparation - Sales & Purchase Ledgers	• Standing Data - is this up to date? - Consider sending a circular to customers and/or suppliers asking them to confirm their names addresses and contact details. • Do I need to transfer all accounts now? - Transfer only those accounts with live balances. Keep a record of all other accounts so that these can be created easily. • Transactional Data - is this clean? Review the ledgers for slow moving and credit and debit balances. Try to resolve as many outstanding issues as possible and adjust the ledgers accordingly. • Design an Account Code format and structure - Prelude allows 8 Alphanumeric characters for each Account Code, the more characters you use, the greater number of accounts can be create. The program will display these firstly in Alphabetic Order and then in Number Order within each letter. As an example - Discovery Wines demonstration company uses a three character alphanumeric account code for both Sales and Purchase ledger accounts. A customer whose name begins with 'A' could have, for example, the Code A07. Using this combination of letters and numbers can create up to 2600 (26 letters x 100 number each) accounts in total, with 100 for each letter of the alphabet. • Decide on a standard format for Standing Data (are you going to use upper, lower or proper case entries?). • Create the new Accounts in Prelude - see Create & Edit Customer Accounts, Create & Edit Supplier Accounts, Import Customer Data, Import Supplier Data.
Preparation - Products & Services	• Review product codes and descriptions for consistency and duplication and amend data. • Decide on Product Code format and structure - Prelude allows 16 alphanumeric characters for each Product Code. List out the Product Codes you will need. • Decide on the format to be used for Product and Service descriptions. • Decide whether slow moving or obsolete items need to be transferred. • Create Product Codes in Prelude - see Add & Edit Products or Services, Import Products or Services Data.
Preparation - Nominal Ledger	• Transactional Data - is this clean? Review the ledgers for unusual items. Try to resolve as many outstanding issues as possible and adjust the ledgers accordingly. • Decide how many Nominal Ledger Accounts you will need and map the existing Nominal codes to the new structure. You will then be able to see how many new accounts you need to create. Prelude uses a two-tier 4 character code. See Add & Edit Nominal Accounts for a description of this. • Decide on a standard format for Standing Data (are you going to use upper, lower or proper case entries?). • Ensure all control and bank accounts are fully reconciled and resolve any outstanding issues. • Run a Trial Balance as at the Transfer Date - account balances will form the basis of opening journals. • Create any additional Nominal Accounts - see Add & Edit Nominal Accounts. • Create Bank Accounts - see Create Multiple Bank Accounts.
Transferring Data	Once you have completed the preparation and you are satisfied that the data you will be transferring onto Prelude is completely up to date and correct, you can begin transferring data to the system. We recommend that this be done in the following order: **1.** Enter Company Standing Data - see Parameters Form. **2.** Enter Sales and Purchase Ledger Standing Data - see Create & Edit Customer Accounts, Create & Edit Supplier Accounts - to save time, you could do this before you use each Customer or Supplier Account for the first time. If you do this, it's a good idea to keep a note of which accounts have not yet been transferred. **3.** Enter the Opening Balances into the Ledger Accounts.

| Enter Opening Balances | We recommend that First Time Users read A Rough Guide to Double Entry Bookkeeping before posting Balances created on another system onto Prelude. This will give you a good overview of system design and structure and help put this task into context. |

Enter Opening Balances

We recommend that First Time Users read A Rough Guide to Double Entry Bookkeeping before posting Balances created on another system onto Prelude. This will give you a good overview of system design and structure and help put this task into context.

1. Select a Company - see Change Companies, Create New Companies.
2. Set up the Company - see First Time Use.
3. Left Click Menus > Ledgers > Nominal > Journals to open the Nominal Ledger Journal Entry Form.
4. Input Purchase Ledger balances as follows - Credit Ledger Accounts, Debit Suspense Nominal Accounts.
5. Post Sales Ledger balances as follows - Debit Ledger Accounts, Credit Suspense Account
6. OK to post the journal - this will create a debit entry in the Sales Ledger Control account on the balance sheet.

The graphic below illustrates posting Sales and Purchase Ledger balances transferred onto Prelude. As transactions are posted to Ledger Accounts, the program will automatically post a Debit or Credit entry for the same amount into the Nominal Ledger Control Accounts. Unless the above procedure is followed, the Control account entries will be duplicated and the total of all individual Ledger Account Balances will not equal the Balances on the relevant Control Accounts.

7. Post the remaining Balance sheet accounts to the relevant Nominal Code **apart from the Sales and Purchase Ledger Control Account Balances**.
8. Post the Ledger Control Account balances to the suspense account - the will be equal and opposite to the entries you posted when transferring the individual ledger account balances.

Using the System

Getting Help	The system contains a **Context Sensitive Help** function which is designed to show you how to get the most out of your system. Simply press the **F1** key when a **Form** is open to display the Help file section that relates to that Form. Alternatively, Left Click Help on the Main Menu to open the Help File and then Left Click on the required Topic. Note also that blue-underlined text in the Help file navigates the reader between areas with commonality and drills down into more detail. Left Click on a blue-underlined word or phrase to follow the link.
The Trading Cycle	All businesses create income through sales, profits through matching income and costs and realise those profits in the form of cash. This ongoing process whereby a sale is made, incurs costs and generates profits and cash is known as the **Trading Cycle** of a business.
Supporting Your Business	In order to efficiently maintain the Trading Cycle of your business, you will have designed your own methods and practices which are tailored to meet customer expectations and maximise returns in the form of profits and cash. The system is designed to support business method and practice by providing a comprehensive one-stop shop to help record and manage: • Multiple Companies - up to 100 companies can be operated concurrently; • Sales - Measure Customer turnover and profit, control customer credit and maintain a log of customer contacts; • Purchases - Measure Supplier turnover and monitor Supplier accounts to help you get value for money; • Cash - Manage more than one bank account, record cash sales and payments.
Control Framework	Any system, be it manual, semi-manual (e.g.: using spreadsheets), or a computer program can only reproduce accurate and complete data if the data input is accurate and complete. This is achieved using a **Control Framework** to ensure that all the data required to be input to the system is available when required, and is completely and accurately input. Put simply, what comes out of the system will only be as accurate as the input - see also Suggested Month End Procedures. The Control Framework consists of a series of ordered **Processes.** Each process is specific to a part of the Trading Cycle. Controls also exist within the program to ensure that data is processed correctly and completely and that once updated, records can only be amended by using processes designed for this purpose - see Editing Data Entry. The most important of these controls is the use of **Transaction Periods**. The ledgers operate in 12 monthly periods, period 1 representing the first month of your financial year and period 12 the last. You control when the transaction period changes by closing the Sales, Purchase and Nominal Ledgers individually each month using a standard process - see Period End Processing. Once a Transaction Period is closed, no further changes can be made to Transactional Data updated in that Period and hence the integrity of that data is maintained, and the Ledger is considered to be **Closed** for the Transaction Period. To operate this control we recommend that you process Period Ends for the Ledgers at the same time each month. One way of doing this is to agree and publish a month end timetable with Managers in your Company at the beginning of each Financial Year. This will then let everyone know when the Financial Periods will end in that year, and will help you organise your time each month.
The Period Rule	Running Period End Processing in each of the ledgers moves that ledger onto the next Transaction Period. Different ledgers can therefore be in different periods. When you run End of Period on any ledger it closes that period and no further entries can be made to it. As the system is real-time - making entries in the Sales or Purchase Ledgers always affects the Nominal Ledger for the same period - there must be control over which periods each ledger can be in at any time. This is governed by the **Period Rule**: this states that no ledger can be more than one period removed from any other ledger and the Nominal Ledger cannot go ahead of either the Sales or the Purchase Ledgers. The system automatically controls this and should you try to run End of Period when not permitted you will be prevented from doing so and a message will be displayed to that effect.
Processes	Sales - generate Sales Invoices that are sent out to your Customers, who then pay you. Sometimes, you need to change the value and/or amount of a good or service supplied and to do this you will need to issue a Credit Note. As part of the Sales process you will need to maintain records of the Products and Services that you sell in order to control profits.

Purchases - In order to generate Income, each business needs to obtain goods and/or services from third parties outside the business. The suppliers will invoice your business for these and will expect payment in return.

Cash - You could also pay amounts directly from your cashbook and make adjustments for items that are neither cash nor invoiced amounts, such as payroll costs, credit card payments, petty cash payments and so on. You may also receive bank interest, cash refunds etc. which have not been invoiced. You may even receive your sales in the form of cash.

System Control and Configuration - a series of utilities to allow you to create new Companies and reorganise your data or even redesign an existing Company to reflect changes in your business, as well as design your own stationery for printing on plain paper.

Nominal - using a single Journal to make changes to any combination of Sales, Purchase and Nominal Ledger Accounts.

Processes are broken down into an ordered sequence of **Tasks.** These are designed to ensure that data entry to the system is complete and correct and that the right people see the output. Whilst you don't have to use our suggested tasks, they represented a tried, tested and efficient method of getting the best from your system.

Tasks	Each Process comprises one or more of the following Tasks, which are shown in the order in which they should be completed. The Tasks are described in the Help file under headings corresponding to the six steps below. You will see that not all processes require all 6 tasks. The Tasks are:

1. **When and How Often – ...**do you do perform this Task?
2. **Preparation** - Collect together the source data (eg: Cheque books, Invoices, letters etc) that you need. Sort paperwork into a logical order.
3. **Processing:**
   a. **Left Click the Menu** to find the correct **Form -** see Tables, Records, Forms and Fields
   b. **Find the Record** that you want to update and/or Report **-** see Finding Records
   c. Open **Pages** as required and populate required **Input Fields**
   d. **Either:**
   Click 'OK' to accept the Data input and **Update Records**
   Or:
   Open the Edit menu to correct or amend your input
   e. Repeat **c** as required
4. **Balancing/Reconciliation -** How can I confirm that all the data has been processed accurately? Consider annotating source data to system generated references.
5. **Reporting -** Does the data look right? Who needs to see this?
6. **Filing -** Is there a clear trail to the source data? How should this be filed for easy access by other users?

Tables, Records, Forms and Fields

|	
Tables and Data	The system contains **data** that is grouped together in **Tables**. Each Table can contain **either:** • **Standing Data** - Customer, Supplier or Nominal ledger account details that generally are updated infrequently. Examples of this are: Customer names and addresses and Nominal Account descriptions, **or;** • **Transactional data -** As its names suggests, this could be payments, receipts, accounting adjustments, invoices, credit notes etc; in fact any item that produces an entry representing an event in Prelude or generates a report. Each transaction will vary in timing and amount. You may find it useful to think of a Table as an array of rows and columns - similar to a spreadsheet. Columns contain data with similar values; rows contain data that is related in some way. Each entry in a column is called a **Field**, and the collection of related Fields in a row is called a **Record**. Each Record is identified by a unique reference Field, known as a **Code**.
What is a Form?	You instruct the program to perform an operation by using a **Menu -** see Menus. The system will then request you as a user to supply the data it needs to complete your request. It does this by opening a **Form**. A Form is a graphical interface between the user and the system. Forms contain **Fields** from one or more Tables into which you will enter specific data in order to give the system the information it requires to carry out your instructions. The Forms that you will use have been designed to make data processing easy, intuitive and efficient - See Entering Data.
Sizing and Moving Forms	Once a Form has been opened, you can change its size and/or its position on the Workspace. This will enable you to customize the Workspace to suit your requirements by having more than one Form open at a time. You can then easily switch between common recurring tasks. To move Forms within the workspace - Left Click in the top section (Header) of the Form then, holding down the Left mouse button, drag the Form to a required location in the workspace. To resize Forms you use the buttons on the top right of the Form Header, as follows: **Minimize Button** - Left Click to minimise the Form and move it to the bottom left corner of the Workspace. The button changes to the Restore button - Left Click to restore the Form to its normal size in the same position in the Workspace as when it was minimised. Left Clicking anywhere on a minimised Form displays a menu with the following options: 1. **Restore** - Left Click to restore the Form to its normal size in the same position in the Workspace as when it was minimised. 2. **Move** - Left Click - a cross appears on the Form. Using the mouse, drag the Form to a new position in the Workspace and left Click to drop it in the new position. 3. **Maximize** - as Maximize button. 4. **Close** - Close the Form. **Maximize Button** - Left Click to enlarge the Form to fill the Workspace. The button changes to the Restore button - Left Click to restore the Form to its normal size in the same position in the Workspace as when it was maximised.
Types of Form	Forms can either be **Single Page** or **Multi-page** depending on how these are displayed. A Multi-page Form consists of a series of Single Page Forms which are grouped together by the program to appear as if they are in a card index box. Left Clicking the Tab on a 'card' will bring that Form to the front so that you can then enter data.

Menus

What are Menus?	**Menus** allow you to instruct the program to perform a series of operations. A menu displays a list of commands from which you select - similar to a restaurant menu. The **Main Menu** is shown at the top of the screen.
To use a Menu	1. Point to the required Menu with the Mouse. 2. Left Click - a list of options will appear. Options which are followed by the '>' symbol will open other menus when clicked. 3. Point to the required Option on the displayed list and Left Click to open a **Form** - see Tables, Records, Forms and Fields.
Using Forms	Using Forms you can **either**: 1. Create new or update existing records by entering data into Fields. Once you have accepted the data entries, the program will then write this data into the Table and store it (**Data Forms**) **or**; 2. Select Records that you wish to read to generate information in the form of reports – generally this does not require you to update those Records (**Print Forms**). The Help file includes comprehensive descriptions of Buttons and Fields to be found on both Print and Data Forms used for Processing. Once you have opened the Form you need you then need to find the Record(s) that you want to Read from or Write to, or create a new Record to add to a Table - see Finding Records.
Menu Structure	Menus follow a tree structure, with the Main Menu representing the whole tree and sub menus and menu items representing its branches. For reference, a summary of the menu structure is shown below.

Main Menu Name	Options	Sub Menu	Options
File (Alt+F) Instructs the system to create and maintain Companies and data	Change Date Change Company Reorganise Databases Unlock System Back Up & Restore Exit	**Company Utilities**	Copy Company - Erase Company - Data Cleardown
		Stationery Design	Copy Document Formats - Clear Report<=>Printer Tags
		Sub Menu	**Options**
		Sales Ledger & Daybook	Invoices - Credit Notes – Statements
		Cash Book	Remittance Advices
Edit (Alt+E) Edit data as it is entered	Edit - Undo - Cut - Copy - Paste - Clear - Select All – Find		
View (Alt+V) Instructs the system to use defined codes and switches when processing	Parameters - Configure Toolbar - System Information		
Status (Alt+t) Shows Company's liquidity and transaction periods	VAT Return Date - Period Numbers - At-a-Glance		
Daybooks (Alt+D) Instructs the system to create, process and report transactions		**Sales**	Produce Invoices - Produce Credit Notes - Post Invoices - Post Credit Notes - Daybook Listing
		Purchase	Post Invoices - Post Credit Notes - Daybook Listing
		Cashbook	Match SL Transactions - Match PL transactions - Cashbook Listing - Cash Sales Listing - Petty Cash Listing - Bank Reconciliation
		Sub Menu	**Options**
		Receipts	Sales Ledger - Cash Sales - Nominal Ledger - VAT

			Refund
		Payments	Purchase Ledger - Nominal Ledger - Petty Cash - VAT Payment
Ledgers (Alt+L) Instructs the system to maintain customer, supplier & nominal account standing data, adjust transaction records and produce Management Information	**Sales**		Account Maintenance - CSV Import - Account Enquiry - End of Period - History Cleardown
		Sub Menu	**Options**
		Reports	Statements - Ledger cards - Aged Debtors - Nominal Analysis - List of Accounts - Debtors Letters Output
		Sales Analysis	Product Sales - Customer Analysis - Customer Turnover
	Purchase		Account Maintenance - CSV Import - Account Enquiry - End of Period - History Cleardown
		Sub Menu	**Options**
		Reports	Ledger Cards - Aged Creditors - Supplier Analysis - Supplier Turnover - List of Accounts - Nominal Analysis
	Nominal		End of Period - Account Maintenance - Account Enquiry - Ledger Enquiry – Journals
		Sub Menu	**Options**
		Standard Reports	Audit Trail - List of Accounts - Trial Balance - Ledger Printout – VAT Summary - Input/Output Analysis
		Management Reports	Profit & Loss - Balance Sheet
Products (Alt+s) Instructs the system to maintain and report product standing data	Create/Amend Products - Create/Amend Services - Create/Amend Descriptions - CSV Import - Product File List - Price List		
Help (Alt+H) Reference data and licence activation	Contents - Getting Started - Support - Activation - Upgrade - About		

Control Buttons

What are Control Buttons?	Control Buttons, like Menus, are used to instruct the program. Left Clicking on a Control Button will open a Form without prompting you to use a Menu - in effect, they are shortcuts to Menu items. Control Buttons are displayed below the Main Menu Options on the Toolbar.

Types of Control Button	There are two types of Control Button:
	
	1. **System Defined** - buttons which are always displayed on the left hand side of the Toolbar whenever you are using the program. These are:
	
	    a) Choose Company Button `00` - Left Click to select the Company in which you wish to work from the list displayed - see [Change Companies](#)
	
	    b) Accounting date Button `Sun 04 Feb` - Left Click to change the Default Transaction Date - see [Change Default Transaction Date](#)
	
	    c) Company At-a-Glance Button - Left Click to display the most recent Trade Debtors and Creditors, Bank Account and VAT balances, transactions and listings for the working company - see [Review Bank, Debtors, Creditors and VAT Commitments](#)
	
	2. **User Defined** - Buttons which are shortcuts to frequently used Menu options. You can choose Control Buttons which are then displayed on the Toolbar, allowing you to modify the workspace to suit your way of working. You can change which Buttons are displayed at any time.

How do I Display a Control Button on the Toolbar?	1. On the Main Menu Left Click View > Configure Toolbar. 2. The Configure Toolbar Form appears listing a number of Processes, each of which is accompanied by a Check Box. 3. Check the box to choose a process from the list. 4. When you have completed your selection, Left Click Apply. 5. Control Button shortcuts on the Toolbar will appear to allow you to go directly to those processes which you selected. The screenshot illustrates this: Customer, Supplier and Nominal Enquiry were selected. Control Buttons for these Processes can be seen on the Toolbar to the right of the At-a-Glance Control Button.

First, Find the Record....

Why is this Important?	Data is stored as Records in the system, each Record is identified by its own unique Code - see Tables, Records, Forms and Fields. The system works by either updating or reporting a particular Record or series of Records - see Using the System. For processing to be both accurate and complete, users must be able to select specific Records, either as ranges or individually, to update and/or report. The first or very early Task within a Process will generally require you to find the required Record in the required Company that you wish to Process. The text below explains how this is done.
Find the Company you need	1. Select the Company into which you want to enter data - see Change Companies. 2. Left Click on a menu selection - see Menus. 3. Left Click on the required option to open the required Form - see Tables, Records, Forms and Fields.
Search for the Record you want to update or . . .	You will see a Drop Down & Search Combo Box at the top left hand side of the Form: Account no: [ ] 🔍 . 1. Left Click the 🔍 button to open the Search Form. 2. This will list the records in the Table in which the Form fields are held. 3. In the **Search For** field enter as much of the name as you can remember. The more text you enter, the more specific the search. The search is not case-sensitive and will find that text anywhere within an account name or product description. For example entering "sons" as search text will find "John Smith & Sons", "DEBSONS BUILDERS" but not "Allison Smith". 4. Left Click **Find Now** button to start the search. 5. The results of the search will then appear in the Search Window. 6. Left Click on the required Record. 7. Left Click on the OK button on the Search Form. 8. The code will appear in the Code Number Field and that Record's Standing Data will appear on the Form.
. . . scroll through to find the Record you want to update	1. Left Click on the scroll arrows to the right of the Account Number field to move through the list of Codes. 2. The Code will be displayed in the input box as will the name of the Account or Product alongside the input box. 3. The system scrolls through the appropriate files in alphanumeric order. 4. Left Click OK to accept the Code you require.
Next steps	Once you have found the correct Record you can start Entering Data.

...and now Enter Data

Entering Data	After you have found the right Record, you can update it by entering Transactional Data or entering or amending Standing Data - see Tables, Records, Forms and Fields for a definition of each. Form Fields are labeled so it is generally clear what the system requires to be input. Generally, Fields in Forms are populated using numbers and letters typed in from the keyboard or similar input device. Some Fields require Data to be of a particular type and format, or require you to select options from displayed lists. A description of the types of Field that can be found on Forms is given below. At any time until you Left Click OK to accept data input to a Form, the program allows you to make any changes to your input, e.g. for errors made, using standard Windows editing tools. Once a Record is updated by Left Clicking OK you can change the data you have input only by posting a correcting entry - See Editing Data Entry.
Navigating a Form	As you enter data you will need to move between Fields on a Form. To do this you can: • Use the Tab key – you will move from Field to Field in a specific order – the content of each Field will be highlighted. Note that you will not move to the next Page of a Form or the next Line of input until you press return or Left Click. • Left Click on a Field - the content of that Field will be highlighted. • Use the Return Key - you will move between Fields in a specific order – the content of each Field will be highlighted. The list below shows the types of Field used on Forms.

Field Type	Description
Check Box	Normally, check boxes are shown on the screen as a square box that can contain white space (for false) or a tick mark or X (for true). Adjacent to the check box is normally shown a caption describing the meaning of the check box. Inverting the state of a check box is done by Left Clicking the box. For example – you can check a box on a Customer's account if you want a statement to be produced for that Customer.
Radio Button	A radio button allows the user to choose one of a predefined set of options. Radio buttons are arranged in groups of two or more and displayed on screen as, for example, a list of circular holes that can contain white space (for unselected) or a dot (for selected). Adjacent to each radio button is normally shown a caption describing the choice that this radio button represents. When the user selects a radio button, any previously selected radio button in the same group becomes deselected. Left Click the mouse on a Radio Button to select an option - unlike Check Boxes, only one option can be selected at a time.
Manual Entry Fields	Generally, input Fields require you to type in text in a specific format – if you type any other format the Field remains blank. The maximum number of characters that can be entered varies with each Field and is controlled by the system – once the limit is reached, the Field will not accept any further input. The Field Name shown on the Form will be a good indication of the type of data to be entered, this will be one of three types: • Alpha – accept letters only • Alphanumeric – accepts combinations of letters and numbers • Numeric – accepts numbers only. Usually displayed as zeroes to required number of decimal places To enter Data: 1. Left Click in a Field or Press Tab to move to a Field 2. Type in Text 3. Press Return to accept and move to the Next Field 4. Note that some Fields will default to Upper Case when the input is accepted

Date Fields	To enter a Transaction Date **either:**
	1. Formatted as DD/MM/YY. Type over the parts of the date you wish to change. The system will skip over the "/" characters itself. If the date you enter is invalid, the cursor will return to the start of the date and await a valid entry, **or;**
	2. Right Click in the Date Field - a menu will appear - Left Click on an Option. The options are explained below:
	    a) Calendar - Left Click to open the **Calendar Form** - see Calendar Form - and select the Transaction Date
	    b) Today - Left Click to enter Default Transaction Date, populate the Field and close the Menu
	    c) Day+ - Left Click to enter Default Transaction Date plus one day, populate the Field and close the Menu
	    d) Day- - Left Click to enter Default Transaction Date less one day, populate the Field and close the Menu
	    e) Week+ - Left Click to enter Default Transaction Date plus 7 days, populate the Field and close the Menu
	    f) Week- - Left Click to enter Default Transaction Date less 7 days, populate the Field and close the Menu
	    g) End of Last month - Left Click to enter the last day of the month before the Default Transaction Date, populate the Field an close the Menu
	    h) Beginning of This Month - Left Click to enter the first day of the month in which the Default Transaction Date

	falls, populate the Field and close the Menu
Drop-Down Box	Also called a drop-down menu, this is a menu of commands or options that appears when you Left Click on an arrow icon. To use a Drop-Down Box: 1. Left Click on the Down Arrow on the right hand side of the Field. 2. A list of items will be displayed. 3. Scroll through the list. 4. Left Click on an item. 5. The item will now appear in the Field. 6. Press Return to accept and move to the Next Field.
Calculated Display	These Fields are the result of calculations or display data on Forms which can then be printed. You cannot enter data into these Fields.

Editing Data Entry

When do I use this?	You can use standard Windows tools to edit data being entered on a Form - see <u>...and now Enter Data</u>. Remember that once you have updated the Record this data cannot be changed using the Edit menu. After this you can make adjustments only by using Journal Entries - see <u>Make Nominal Ledger Adjustments</u>.

Using Editing Tools	1. Left Click a Field - this will highlight the Text - it will appear as white on a blue background
	2. **Either:** Left Click Menus > Edit
	    a) Left Click on Option to Edit Text, **or;**
	3. Right Click to display the Edit menu, then
	    a) Left Click on the required Option to Edit Text
	
	Options available are listed below:

Edit Option	Keyboard Shortcut
Undo	Control+ Z - clears the latest entry
Cut	Control+ X
Copy	Control+ C - For example use this to copy the results of a calculation from the Calculator screen to a Field on a Form.
Paste	Control+ V - Use with Copy and Cut above
Clear	Delete
Select all	Control+ A

Printing Reports

How do I do this?	The same basic steps are used to run reports and print documents within the system.
	 To print a report or document:
	 1. Select the required Company - see Change Companies.
	 2. **Either:**
	     a) Produce a Document - for an example see Produce Sales Invoices , **or;**
	     b) Select a Record or a range of Records to be reported - for an example see Print Customer Statements.
	 3. Left Click OK to accept the data.
	 4. Choose the required output medium.

Choose your Output	1. Left Clicking to accept input will open the Select Output Form.
	 2. Pick how the output should be presented - you can:
	     a) Print the report to a designated printer, or;
	     b) Display the report on the screen and then either view or print the display, or;
	     c) Save the report as a file by selecting a format form a drop-down list – you could then incorporate this file into a report or email it to your colleagues, Customers or Suppliers. The file you create will be stored in the same folder as the rest of the current Company's data unless you specify a different location.
	 3. If using a printer, set this up as you require - see Print Setup Form.

Period-End Processing

When and How Often?	Monthly - Prelude Ledgers accumulate transactions and produce reports in 12 discrete Transaction Periods within a financial year - see Using the System. Each of the Sales, Purchase and Nominal ledgers has its own routine that must be run separately. The Period end routines: • Close the current period and so prevent any further transactions being created or adjusted in that Transaction Period in the ledger; • Advance the Ledger period by 1 into the next period; • Clear down all matched transactions into history. Subject to the Period Rule (see Using the System), Prelude will allow ledgers to close at varying times. Retail businesses, for example, usually close Sales Ledgers on Day 1 of the Period End, whilst the Purchase and Nominal Ledgers may remain open for several days more. You can check to see which Transaction Period is open for each Ledger at any time - see Check Ledger Periods. See also Suggested Month End Procedures. This is a useful sequential checklist of Month End tasks.
Preparation	• Ensure all the current Transaction Period's data has been processed. • Ensure all other users are off the System until Period End is completed. • Ensure Sales & Purchase Daybooks have been printed - see Print Sales or Purchase Daybook Listings. • Ensure VAT reports have been printed - see Print a VAT Summary. • Process Sales and Purchase Ledger Period Ends before processing Nominal Ledger Period End.
Processing	1. Left Click Menus > Ledgers > Sales > End of Period to open Form - see Sales Ledger End of Period Form. 2. Left Click OK to process Period End. 3. Warning Message will appear if Daybook has not been printed, Left Click Yes to continue, No to stop process - see Print Sales or Purchase Daybook Listings. 4. Left Click Menus > Ledgers > Purchases > End of Period to open Form - see Purchase Ledger End of Period Form. 5. Left Click OK to process Period End. 6. Warning Message will appear if Daybook has not been printed, Left Click Yes to continue, No to stop process - see Print Sales or Purchase Daybook Listings. 7. Left Click Menus > Ledgers > Nominal > End of Period to open Form - see Nominal Ledger End of Period Form. 8. Warning Message appears if Cashbook listing has not been printed - see List Cashbook Transactions. 9. Left Click OK to process Period End. After processing Period 12 the **Year End Routine** will run. This will: • Clear down all transactions in the Nominal Ledger; • Reset all Profit & Loss type account balances to zero; • Transfer the net profit or loss for the year to the P&L Revenue Reserves Control Account as defined in the VAT and Nominal Codes Page of the Parameters Form.
Reporting	Tell other users when processing is complete and distribute reports as required.

Suggested Month-End Procedures

Overview	You can use the information here as part of the system Control Framework - see Using the System. It is a sequential checklist of tasks required to be completed in order to close one Transaction Period and open the next.
Post Sales and Purchase Daybook Transactions	• Post all monthly invoices, receipts & payments transactions • Match Sales and Purchase Ledger entries as required. • Reconcile Supplier Statements to Ledger Accounts and make any adjustments required.
Run Sales Reports	• Sales Daybook Listing • Sales Activity Reports (if required) • Aged Debtors (detailed preferred) • Customer Statements
Run Purchase Reports	• Purchase Daybook Listing • Supplier Turnover (if required) • Aged Creditors (detailed preferred) • Ledger Cards (if required)
Run Sales and Purchase Ledger Period Ends	See Period End Processing
Post Nominal Transactions	• Post all receipts & payments not related to the Sales or Purchase Ledgers through the Cashbook. Remember that VAT payments and refunds have a separate option in the Cashbook. Complete posting any cash sales and petty cash payments for the month. This could be standing orders, direct debits, bank charges and interest, rent payments etc. • Journal all other transactions through the Nominal Ledger journal menu. These could include such things as standing orders, direct debits, rates, and bank charges etc. Examples are accruals, prepayments and depreciation. • Enter Payroll transactions - see Post Payroll.
Reconcile Accounts	Reconcile Control Account Balances to Ledger Accounts and/or source data as required.
Print Nominal and Cashbook Reports	• Cashbook listing • Petty cash listing • Cash sales listing • Audit trail for the period • Trial balance (year to date) • VAT Summary • Input/Output Analysis Form • VAT Return Form (if required) • Ledger printout (optional)
Back Up your Data	Remember to store a copy of a backup in a safe place, preferably away from your workplace. See Back Up Company Data.
Run Nominal Ledger Period End	See Period End Processing
Produce Management Reports	See Produce Management Reports