

Peachtree[®]
FOR
DUMMIES[®]
3RD EDITION

by Elaine Marmel and Diane Koers



Wiley Publishing, Inc.

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About the Authors

Elaine Marmel is president of Marmel Enterprises, LLC, an organization that specializes in technical writing and software training. Elaine has an MBA from Cornell University and has worked on projects to build financial management systems for New York City and Washington, D.C. This prior experience provided the foundation for Marmel Enterprises, LLC, to help small businesses implement computerized accounting systems.

Elaine spends most of her time writing; she has authored and coauthored more than 50 books about software products, including Quicken for Windows, Quicken for DOS, Peachtree, QuickBooks, Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Project, Microsoft Word for Windows, Microsoft Word for the Mac, 1-2-3 for Windows, and Lotus Notes. For 12 years, she was a contributing editor to monthly magazines that described ways to use Peachtree and QuickBooks.

Elaine left her native Chicago for the warmer climes of Arizona (by way of Cincinnati, Ohio; Jerusalem, Israel; Ithaca, New York; Washington, D.C.; and Tampa, Florida), where she cherishes her small piece of the desert with her human family (brother Jim and sister-in-law Mariann) and her animal family (Josh the dog and Cato, Watson, and Buddy, the cats) and sings barbershop harmony with the International Champion Scottsdale Chorus.

Diane Koers owns and operates All Business Service, a software training and consulting business formed in 1988 that services the central Indiana area. Her area of expertise has long been in the word processing, spreadsheet, and graphics area of computing as well as in providing training and support for Peachtree Accounting Software. Diane's authoring experience includes more than 30 books on topics such as PC security, Microsoft Windows, Microsoft Office, Microsoft Works, WordPerfect, Paint Shop Pro, Lotus SmartSuite, Quicken, Microsoft Money, and Peachtree Accounting. Many of her books have been translated into other languages such as Dutch, Bulgarian, Spanish, and Greek. She has also developed and written numerous training manuals for her clients.

Diane and her husband enjoy spending their free time traveling and playing with her grandsons and her Yorkshire terriers.

Dedication

Elaine's dedication: To my brother and sister-in-law: It's good to be sharing a city with you again.

Diane's dedication: To Tresee and Trina: my daughters.

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Introduction

You're not a dummy, even if you think you are. But accounting by itself can be a challenge — and then, when you add the computer part to it . . . well, the whole thing can seem so overwhelming that you avoid it. (What? Never crossed your mind?)

Okay, now that you're looking at this book, you probably decided that you've avoided it long enough, and now you're going to do it — bite the bullet and computerize your accounting with Peachtree. We want to help you get the job done as quickly as possible with the least amount of pain. You've got other things to do, after all.

About This Book

Accounting isn't exactly a fun subject — unless, of course, you're an accountant . . . and even then it might not really be all that much fun. Some people think that going to the dentist is more fun than playing with accounting software. We're here to help you get past the ugly part so that you can start enjoying the benefits quickly.

What benefits? Well, computerizing your accounting can save you time and effort — and can actually be easier than doing it by hand and cheaper than paying somebody else to do it. Oh, we don't mean that you don't need your accountant, because you do. But you can save money by doing daily stuff for yourself — and spend money paying your accountant for advice on making your business more profitable.

Peachtree For Dummies, 3rd Edition, shows you how to set up your company in Peachtree and then use Peachtree to pay bills, invoice customers, pay employees, produce reports about your financial picture, and more. But it's also a real-life-situation kind of book. We show you how to work in Peachtree by using everyday, real-life situations as examples. You know, the stuff you run into in the so-called real world that you need to figure out how to handle.

What You Can Safely Ignore

Throughout the book, we include Accounting Stuff tips — you can probably ignore those unless you're interested in that kind of stuff.

Oh, and the gray boxes that you see throughout the book? Those are sidebars, and they contain extra information that you really don't *have* to know but that we thought you might find useful and interesting. So feel free to skip the sidebars as well.

Foolish Assumptions

We'll be honest — we had to assume some things about you to write this book. So, here's what we assume about you:

- ✔ You already know a little something about the day-to-day stuff that you need to do financially to run your business — you know, write checks, bill customers, pay employees, and so on. We *don't* assume that you know how to do all that on a computer.
- ✔ You have a personal computer (that you know how to turn on) with Microsoft Windows 2000, Windows XP, or Windows Vista. We wrote this book by using Windows Vista.
- ✔ You bought Peachtree and installed it on your computer.



A free trial of Peachtree is available from www.peachtree.com/trial.

The Flavors of Peachtree

Peachtree comes in five versions, listed here from basic to advanced:

- ✔ Peachtree First Accounting
- ✔ Peachtree Pro Accounting
- ✔ Peachtree Complete Accounting
- ✔ Peachtree Premium Accounting
- ✔ Peachtree Quantum Accounting

In addition, Peachtree Premium is available in manufacturing, distribution, construction, non-profit, and accounting industry-specific versions. In this book, we cover Peachtree Premium Accounting.

Peachtree Quantum has all the features you find in all other versions of the software; it uses a slightly more advanced database and allows for larger file

sizes. In addition, in a network environment, ten users can use Peachtree Quantum simultaneously, whereas Peachtree Premium and Peachtree Complete allow for five simultaneous users. You can't use other versions of Peachtree in a network environment.

Here are some of the other differences between the five flavors:

- ✓ Peachtree Premium contains all the features in Peachtree First Accounting, Peachtree Pro Accounting, and Peachtree Complete Accounting, plus a few additional features, such as the capability to store unlimited budget information instead of the two years available in the other products.
- ✓ Peachtree Premium and Peachtree Complete include a Time & Billing feature that you don't find in Peachtree First Accounting or Peachtree Pro Accounting.
- ✓ Peachtree Premium Accounting, Peachtree Complete Accounting, and Peachtree Pro Accounting allow you to customize reports and forms and prepare payroll, but Peachtree First Accounting does not.
- ✓ Peachtree Quantum, Peachtree Premium, and Peachtree Complete contain a job-costing feature, but you find only a *job-tracking* feature in Peachtree First Accounting and Peachtree Pro Accounting. (If you don't know the difference between job costing and job tracking, you probably don't need either one.)



Peachtree Quantum and two of the industry-specific versions of Peachtree Premium — Peachtree Premium for Construction and Peachtree Premium for Distribution — contain more extensive job-costing features than Peachtree Premium, such as tracking Bill of Material revisions. Because we cover Peachtree Premium, we don't cover those extensive features in Chapter 12 where we discuss job costing, but we want you to know that they exist.

Throughout the book, when we refer to the product as *Peachtree*, we mean Peachtree Premium. If we talk about one of the other flavors, we give you the full product name.

How This Book Is Organized

Every great book needs a plan. We divided this book into four parts, each made up of two to eight chapters so that you can easily find the information that you need.

Part I: Getting Started

If you're new to Peachtree, you probably want to read this part. We explain how to get around in Peachtree, how to create a company in Peachtree, how to build an effective chart of accounts, and how to set up default information that saves you lots of time later.

Part II: The Daily Drudge

In this section, we cover the stuff that you do on a regular basis:

- ✓ Buy and pay for goods to sell to your customers. (Yep, we cover inventory.)
- ✓ Bill the customers and collect your money (or you won't be able to pay the employees and the vendors).
- ✓ Pay the employees (or they won't work!).

Stuff like that. We also cover paying for services that keep your business running, and we cover a couple of more esoteric topics, such as billing customers for time that you spend working and tracking project costs.

Part III: The Fancy Stuff

In this section, we cover a variety of topics that you typically don't do every day. First, we show you how to customize forms and produce and modify reports. After all, you put information *into* Peachtree, so you should be able to get it out and see the effects of your business habits. Then we cover reconciling the bank statement and the stuff that you do monthly, quarterly, or annually. We also show you how to easily keep your accounting information safe — a *very* important chapter. Why? Because you spend so much time putting stuff into Peachtree that it would be criminal to lose it just because your hard drive crashes or your office is robbed. And Chapter 19 presents ways to handle real-life situations in Peachtree, such as handling customer prepayments and paying for purchase orders using a credit card.

Part IV: The Part of Tens

If you've ever read a *For Dummies* book, you've seen the Part of Tens. This part contains a collection of ten-something lists. Our Part of Tens comprises the following:

- ✔ Ten common error messages that you might see — and what they mean
- ✔ Ten things that you can get from the Web — not just Peachtree stuff like support and additional information, but fun stuff, too, just in case you've had a bad day and need a laugh

The Peachtree For Dummies Web Site

This book's Web site, www.dummies.com/go/peachtreefd, features useful information that's not necessarily mainstream knowledge. You can find the following Bonus Chapters:

- ✔ Bonus Chapter 1, in which you find out how to tailor Peachtree to support how you work.
- ✔ Bonus Chapter 2, in which we discuss how to use the Peachtree money management tools to analyze your business and help you manage cash, receivables, and payables.
- ✔ Bonus Chapter 3, in which we describe how to set up Peachtree to work in a network environment.
- ✔ Bonus Chapter 4, in which we list as many companion products for Peachtree as we can find. These products can enhance how you work in Peachtree.
- ✔ Bonus Chapter 5, in which we discuss who's to blame for the whole debit/credit thing and also how debits and credits work.

Icons Used in This Book



Throughout the book are symbols in the margin. These symbols, or *icons*, mark important points.

This bull's-eye appears next to shortcuts and tips that make your work easier.



When you see this icon, something could go wrong, so make sure that you read the paragraph. This icon warns you of common mistakes and ways to avoid them.



This icon marks any point that you want to be sure to remember. You might want to reread paragraphs that are marked with this icon.



This icon identifies information related to accounting in general — not just Peachtree. You can skip this stuff if you don't care about accounting.



This icon relates to geeky computer stuff that might interest you, but really has little impact on your use of Peachtree. You can safely skip them.

Where to Go from Here

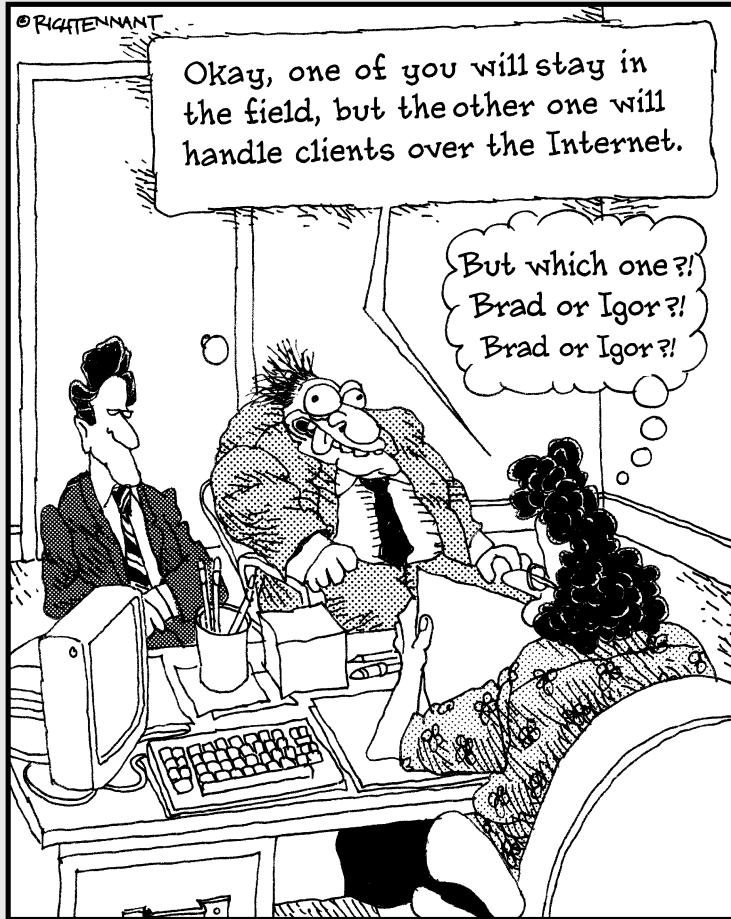
Just getting started with Peachtree? Turn the page. Do you have a specific topic of interest? Use the index or the Table of Contents to find the topic and turn to that page.

Part I

Getting Started

The 5th Wave

By Rich Tennant



In this part . . .

Every project has a beginning point. If you are just getting acquainted with Peachtree, this part is the place to start. In this part, you find out how to navigate through the Peachtree screens and how to set up your existing company records in Peachtree. If you've been using Peachtree for a while, you might want to review Chapters 3 and 4 in this part because they talk about designing the Chart of Accounts and setting up defaults to make using Peachtree easier.

Chapter 1

Mastering Peachtree Basics

In This Chapter

- ▶ Starting Peachtree
 - ▶ Opening an existing Peachtree company
 - ▶ Navigating the Peachtree screen
-

If you've been keeping your financial records by using manual methods, you know how time-consuming it can be. Keeping books manually also provides too many opportunities for human error. Using Peachtree saves you both time and money; in addition, you can know at any moment in time your complete financial status. We know you're eager to get started. Operating a business is a non stop process, but to computerize your accounting, you have to put first things first.

To work effectively, take some time to get comfortable with some of the features unique to Peachtree. In this chapter, you find out how to navigate in the software as well as open and close companies as needed. If you're ready, it's time to dig in.

Starting the Program

You have a choice: You can start Peachtree the easy way or the hard way. We prefer the easy way. When you installed Peachtree, it placed a Peachtree icon (with your permission) on your Windows desktop. Assuming (we know, we're not supposed to assume) that you haven't thrown that icon into the Recycle Bin, you can simply double-click the Peachtree icon (the one with the peachy little peach on it), and the program starts.



To make sure that Peachtree always starts in a full-sized (maximized) window, right-click the Peachtree icon and choose Properties. In the resulting dialog box, on the Shortcut tab, click the drop-down arrow in the Run box, choose Maximized, and then click OK to accept the changes.

If you did throw the icon away or you have so many icons on your desktop that you can't find it, okay, you can start Peachtree the hard way. Choose Start→All Programs and locate your Peachtree Accounting folder.

Choosing opening options

After you start Peachtree, what do you do with it? The Peachtree Start Screen appears as seen in Figure 1-1, beckoning you to do one of several things. You can select any of the following options:

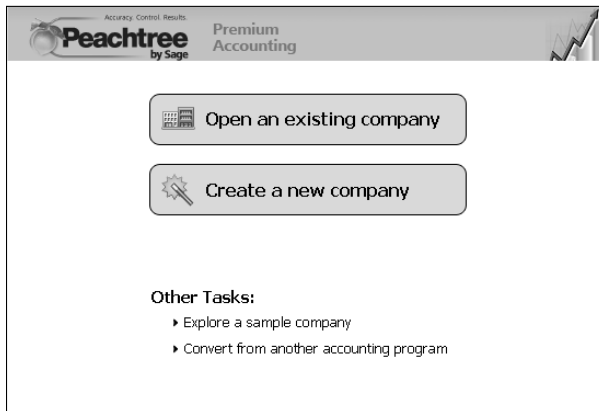


Figure 1-1:
Make a selection from the Start Screen.

- ✔ **Open an Existing Company:** Use this option to open a company already existing in Peachtree.
- ✔ **Create a New Company:** Select this option to set up your business with the New Company Setup Wizard. (Chapter 2 covers this wizard.)
- ✔ **Explore a Sample Company:** Use this option to explore one of several fictitious companies. One company, Bellwether Garden Supply, is a retail and service company that uses most of the features of Peachtree, including inventory and job costing. Depending on the Peachtree edition that you're using, you might have additional sample companies to investigate. You explore Bellwether Garden Supply in the steps in the following section.
- ✔ **Convert from Another Accounting Program:** If you've finally come to your senses and want to transfer to Peachtree from *that other software* (meaning QuickBooks or DacEasy), click this choice. Peachtree makes the conversion pretty painless.

Exploring a sample company

You can best explore Peachtree's features by opening the Bellwether Garden Supply sample company and finding out how to move around in Peachtree. To open a sample company, follow these steps:

- 1. Click Explore a Sample Company.**

If you're using Peachtree First Accounting or Peachtree Pro Accounting, Bellwether Garden Supply immediately opens.

If you're using Peachtree Complete Accounting or above, the Explore a Sample Company dialog box opens.

- 2. Select the radio button next to the sample company that you want to explore.**

For this example, select Bellwether Garden Supply.

- 3. Click OK.**

The name of the currently open company appears at the top of the window in the Peachtree title bar.

Getting around town

When you first open a company, it might appear a little bit intimidating. On the left side, Peachtree displays the Navigation Bar. You click a Navigation Bar topic as one method to get into the seven various Peachtree Navigation Centers such as the Business Status Center shown in Figure 1-2 or the Employees and Payroll Center. The Navigation Centers show the work flow of the selected center and quickly take you to a window where you can perform relevant tasks. Each Navigation Center also displays key information relative to the selected center. For example, in the Employees and Payroll Center you can see a list of employees and 1099 vendors as well as quick links to recently used employee reports while in the Customers and Sales Center, you can see a list of customers.

Under the Navigation Bar is the Shortcuts section. The Shortcuts section contains links you can click to quickly jump into Peachtree windows that you use in your business on a day-to-day basis. See Bonus Chapter 1 on this book's Web site, www.dummies.com/go/peachtreeefd, for instructions on customizing the Shortcuts so they include the features you use most often.

The large section on the right is where Peachtree displays the various Peachtree centers. By default, when you open your company, you see the Business Status Center. You can find out how to customize the Business Status Center in Bonus Chapter 2 on this book's Web site.

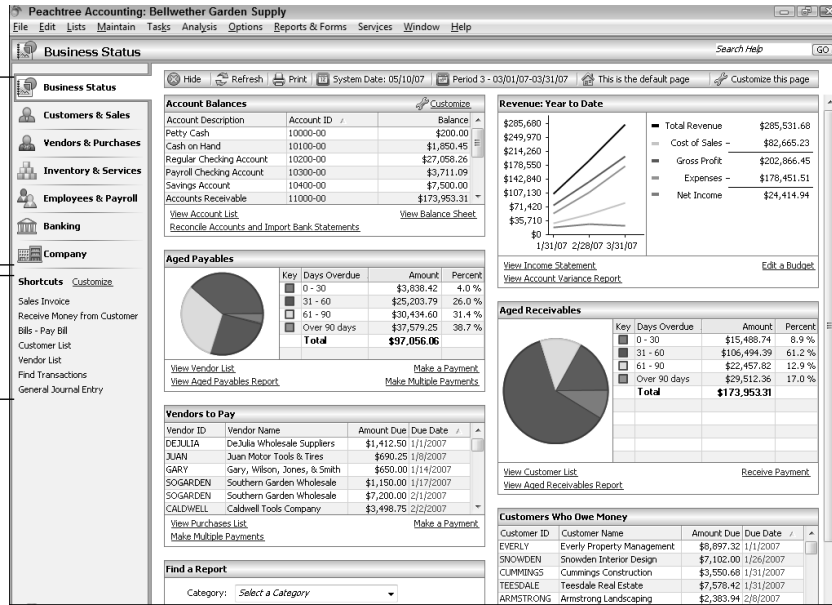


Figure 1-2: Selecting options by using the Navigation Bar.

Shortcuts section

Navigation bar

At the top of the open center you see the Button Control Bar that displays, among other things, the current system date and the current accounting period. (See Figure 1-3.)

Figure 1-3: The current accounting period appears on the Navigation Bar toolbar.



Like many applications today, Peachtree provides a variety of ways to use the software. You can perform your Peachtree duties by using the Button Control Bar, the Shortcuts section, or — a more traditional method — menu commands.

Choosing menu commands

The pull-down menus should be a familiar sight from your other Windows programs. Even though all the menu choices are important, you're likely to spend the majority of your time in Peachtree using the following four main menu choices:

- ✓ **Maintain:** Using the choices on this menu, you can set up and edit the information records that form the foundation for transactions in your Peachtree company. For example, you can store vendor, customer, inventory, and employee information, including names, addresses, and phone numbers.

A *record* is all the information about one person, product, event, and so on. Every record in a database contains the same fields. A *field* is one item of information in a record, such as an ID, a name, or a transaction number. To explore the kinds of information that you store in Peachtree, see the “Exploring fields and records” section, later in this chapter.

- ✓ **Lists:** This menu displays lists of . . . well, just about everything stored in Peachtree — customers, vendors, checks, journal entries, and so on. Any list can be sorted and customized (see Bonus Chapter 1 on this book's Web site) to better help you locate desired information. Figure 1-4 illustrates a list of Inventory Adjustments made during a specified period.



Item ID	Description/Name	Period	Date	Reference
BOOK-11020	BIGS Landscaping Techniques	3	3/1/2007	AD1301
EQUWT-15110	Garden Hose - 50 Ft	3	3/3/2007	AD1302
POTS-30210	Clay Flower Pot - 6 in.	3	3/5/2007	AD1303
AVRY-10050-LG-EFL	Prefabricated Birdhouse	3	3/14/2007	
AVRY-10050-LG-EFL	Prefabricated Birdhouse	3	3/15/2007	
AVRY-10050-SM-EFL	Prefabricated Birdhouse	3	3/15/2007	
AVRY-10050-SM-HTL	Prefabricated Birdhouse	3	3/15/2007	
AVRY-10050-SM-HTL	Prefabricated Birdhouse	3	3/15/2007	
AVRY-10050-SM-PYR	Prefabricated Birdhouse	3	3/15/2007	

Figure 1-4:
Displaying
a list of
transactions.

- ✓ **Tasks:** Use this menu to do your normal day-to-day work. You can bill your customers, buy materials, and pay your workers by using the Tasks menu.
- ✓ **Reports and Forms:** This menu is where it all comes together and you can see the results of all your hard work.

Opening a Company

Maybe you need to keep numbers for more than one business. Peachtree enables you to account for the financial information of more than one company. Although you can open only one company at a time, you can switch back and forth between companies very easily.

The steps to open a company differ, depending on whether you're opening a company while already in a Peachtree company or whether you're opening a company from the Peachtree Start Screen.

Opening a Peachtree company from within Peachtree

If you're already in a Peachtree company and want to open a different one, follow these steps:

1. Choose File⇨Open Company (or press Ctrl+O).

You get an annoying little message telling you that you're closing the current company. Peachtree allows only one open company at a time.

Select the Do Not Display This Message Again check box to permanently disable the message box.

2. Click OK to acknowledge the message.

The Open dialog box appears.

3. From the Open dialog box, click the company name and then click OK.

The newly opened company name appears at the top of the screen. No matter which company you open, the menu choices remain the same.



Opening a recently used Peachtree company

If you find yourself frequently switching back and forth between several companies, Peachtree provides an easier method, the Open Previous Company option. This option lists up to ten previously opened Peachtree company names from which you can select.

Choose File⇨Open Previous Company. From the list of previously opened companies that appears, choose the one you want to open. If the annoying