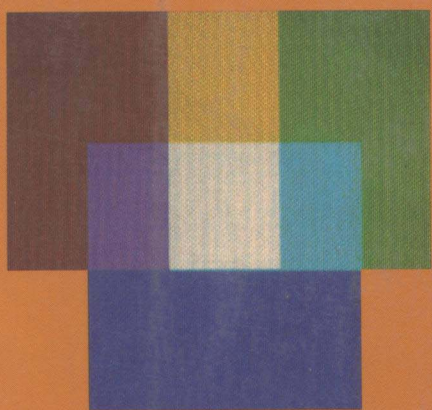


Using the IBM Personal Computer: EasyWriterTM



Ada W. Finifter

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**Using the IBM
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To Libby and Victor

Preface

The purpose of this book is to teach you the use of the IBM EasyWriter word processing program. EasyWriter is a versatile word processor used for business and professional purposes as well as home and personal applications. It runs on all IBM personal computers: the PCjr with a disk drive, the PC, and the XT. The book introduces EasyWriter with a series of exercises to familiarize you with basic word processing techniques. Later chapters build on these exercises to show you how to use EasyWriter for more advanced applications, including technical manuscripts and long documents such as books. It won't take you long to learn how to use EasyWriter for all your personal word processing needs.

When the IBM Personal Computer was introduced in August, 1981, the only word processing program available for it was EasyWriter. Now there are more than 200 word processing programs that will run on this extremely popular microcomputer, but EasyWriter remains an extremely good choice. It combines access to many powerful word processing techniques with simple operation. EasyWriter is well suited to all but the most specialized business and technical needs.

Now EasyWriter is the first full-featured word processor for the PCjr. It is ideal for home and personal use. But EasyWriter is not merely a “home” word processor. As you see in our Table of Contents, you’re not limited to short, uncomplicated documents. EasyWriter’s features let you prepare complex technical tables and book-length manuscripts. Because of this home and business versatility, it’s especially good if you’re using an IBM personal computer (or one of the “compatibles”) at work and another one at home. Running EasyWriter in both locations, you would not have to learn two different word processing programs. And EasyWriter is both easy enough for “homework” and capable enough for professional applications.

On the PC and XT, EasyWriter will run with either the “monochrome display card” or the “color/graphics display card.” With the PCjr, any standard 80 column display screen can be used, but EasyWriter cannot be used with a television set. Most TV screens can only display 40 text columns per line. As a full featured word processor, EasyWriter is designed to use a full 80 column screen display. (But it isn’t limited to this size; you can display and print virtually as wide a document as you like.)

This book explains the procedures for using EasyWriter with all IBM personal microcomputer systems. EasyWriter will also run on many of the IBM PC “compatible” microcomputers. However, since there are so many of these, each with different operating procedures and a different degree of “compatibility” with the IBM, no specific directions are given for any other model machine.

Teaching is my usual occupation; that probably came through in many different ways as I wrote this book. For example, I give quite detailed explanations of EasyWriter’s commands and instructions, and try to show you how they can be used for many different situations and purposes. I also devote attention to how EasyWriter can be used in other microcomputer applications. I’ve gone into some detail about using the Disk Operating System (DOS) in combination with EasyWriter to make word processing file management easier and more efficient. You’ll also find a chapter on EasyWriter’s use in transmitting files between your microcomputer and a “host” main-frame computer, or a commercial data base or information utility.

In general, my approach is to explain *why* things operate the way they do, rather than just telling you how to perform a particular operation. While this approach is, of course, longer and more involved than a simple “Do this . . .” or “Do that . . .,” I hope it has some long-term benefits—not only in helping you understand EasyWriter, but also as you explore other microcomputer uses. If you’re new to EasyWriter, or to microcomputing in general, you’ll be learning much about EasyWriter and about word processing in general—but you’ll also learn at least some about IBM’s PC-DOS and microcomputing *per se*. I hope that even old hands at EasyWriter will also pick up some new ideas and tricks.

EasyWriter 1.0 was the first version of IBM’s EasyWriter, made available at the time the company introduced its Personal Computer. Users discovered some problems and difficulties with that first version, and in the summer of 1982, IBM made available EasyWriter 1.1. This corrected the deficiencies in the first release, making EasyWriter a truly easy and powerful program that was also a pleasure to use. This version was made available as a free upgrade to all who had bought EasyWriter 1.0. The free trade-in period extended through the end of 1982, and most EasyWriter users, of course,

took advantage of the offer. Since EasyWriter 1.0 was discontinued when version 1.1 came out, it's not discussed here.

Good microcomputer software is continually being updated. As of this writing, IBM has released yet another version of EasyWriter, designated EasyWriter 1.15. EasyWriter 1.15 was made available as a free update to those who had bought or upgraded to EasyWriter 1.1. This latest version is only slightly different from EasyWriter 1.1; most changes are not visible to program users. They include better support for a variety of different printers and other hardware configurations, the ability to begin page numbering with any number (1.1 can begin with numbers up to 256), and other minor changes most users will not notice. Still, those with the earlier EasyWriter will probably want to contact their dealers for the Version 1.15 upgrade, even though chances are they won't notice any differences in the new program operation. Those buying the program since Summer, 1983 probably already have the later version. You can tell by reading the version number displayed on the first "screen" when EasyWriter is loaded in your computer.

Since many people are still using version 1.1, this book is about both EasyWriter 1.1 and 1.15. For most parts of the program, the explanations would be the same, since there are no differences in the ways these two versions operate. Any time there are differences, I point them out. If you use EasyWriter 1.15, references to 1.1 can be ignored. (Readers should note that this book is *not* about EasyWriter II. EasyWriter II is *not* an upgrade of IBM's EasyWriter 1.1 or 1.15, but a completely separate and different word processing program.)

One of microcomputing's greatest pleasures has been the large number of new friends and colleagues it has given me. Among these, I want to give special thanks to Richard W. Wiggins for many interesting and stimulating conversations about computing in general, and for his always good advice and suggestions. I have also appreciated the interest and encouragement of Alan Margolies. Bernard M. Finifter was always willing to install whatever new memory chips, disk drives, communications devices, or other gadgets I had just obtained and couldn't wait to put into operation. We jointly discovered the marvels of the computer's chips, boards, and cables. My parents, Isaac and Stella Weintraub, helped in assorted ways, including with construction of the Index. Friends and colleagues I met through IBM PC User Groups were always generous in sharing their ideas and knowledge. But most especially, I thank Elizabeth and Victor Douvan, to whom this work is dedicated, for being the very special friends they are, and for sharing innumerable marvelous dinners while we discussed the wonders of the IBM PC.

Ada W. Finifter
East Lansing, Michigan

**Using the IBM
Personal Computer:
EasyWriter™**

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1

Introduction to Word Processing with EasyWriter

If you've never before worked with a word processor, you're about to enter a new world of almost effortless writing. You'll also be learning some new computer and word processing jargon—that is, the specialized vocabulary of computer professionals. To begin with, since a microcomputer is not a typewriter, we won't really be talking about typing even though we'll sometimes use that word. Instead, the process of placing the contents of any written material into a microcomputer's memory is usually called *text entry* or *editing*. Written materials, whether they're letters, contracts, manuscripts, or any other types of papers, are usually called *documents*.

Compared with typing, even on the most advanced typewriter, EasyWriter used with an IBM microcomputer will surely surprise you with its ease of text entry. But, even more, it will *astonish* you with how quickly you will be able to revise text already entered.

The ability to change text easily until it's just right makes word processing enjoyable and even makes the work seem easier. One reason seems to be that it enables people to do their best more easily, and to produce work in which they take pride. Recently,

a writer friend of mine—who had replaced his typewriter with a new microcomputer several weeks earlier, and was becoming adept at word processing—complained to me that his work was not going as quickly with the word processor as he had hoped. I didn't realize he was baiting me; I fell into his trap, asking him in all seriousness what the problem was, and whether I could help. He replied that revision was now so much easier and more enjoyable that he had begun to strive for the "perfect" article—rather than one with which he was merely satisfied. And writing the "perfect" article was taking just a little bit longer than he thought it would—even using a word processor!

My colleague was only half-joking; but word processing *is* easy and it *is* enjoyable for most people. And because changes are so easy, work is frequently more satisfying because it's easier to produce things that fit people's *own* definitions of "perfect." At the same time, most people work much faster and produce much more with word processing equipment than they can with a typewriter. And the combination of efficiency and work satisfaction is impressive.

In the next few years, psychologists will probably spend a great deal of research time and money trying to find out why adults and children, professionals and non-professionals, students and teachers, secretaries and executives, doctors, lawyers, and even English professors are all enjoying a task never before defined as fun. Eventually, they'll probably discover that most people enjoy word processing because it permits a great deal of flexibility and change as the work proceeds; the end result is a creation in which people take pride. A document can be changed again and again. An author can exercise his or her imagination freely, and try out different ways of expressing and ordering ideas. All this experimentation can be done quickly enough so that one doesn't forget why the change might be good. Seeing one's ideas take shape quickly as words are changed and juggled around can be very exhilarating.

Perhaps an adult working on a word processor is in some ways analogous to a young child playing with an Erector set or Lego (or, more obviously, a computer game). Children find it interesting and fun trying out different shapes and forms to see which are more esthetically pleasing or which best accomplish a task. In some ways, the microcomputer used by an adult for word processing (as well as other tasks) combines the experimentation of play with the rigors of work; as a result, it introduces an element of fun into the normal adult work world.

Even if you're typing someone else's work rather than writing your own, you'll probably find that you enjoy word processing a great deal more than typing. Mastering the IBM Personal Computer and the EasyWriter word processing software will give you a great deal of personal satisfaction because it will exercise your *brain* a great deal more than typing on a typewriter. Word processing is more interesting than typing because there are *more* tasks you can accomplish. You'll be able to change things around, move sections of text from one place to another, insert words, phrases, or sentences left out by mistake, and delete words, phrases, or sentences put in by mistake. What used to be a rote job—typing—will become more intellectually challenging and stimulating.

You'll also find that you don't fear errors, even major ones, as much as when you used the typewriter. Thus, an element of tension will be removed from your work. Your

reaction to discovering an error, no matter how major, will more likely be: "No problem, just a couple of minutes and it'll be fixed," instead of, "Oh, no, I'll have to retype the whole letter to fit in that paragraph!" Thus, the word processor makes your job more enjoyable; it gives you more control over your work and reduces the tension caused by problems difficult or impossible to correct using a typewriter.

If you've never used a word processor or a microcomputer before, you may be apprehensive about the difficulty in learning its use, rather than thinking how much you'll enjoy it. You may be concerned that you're in for more tension rather than less! You'll find, however, that learning EasyWriter really will be easy, and you'll soon be having some of the fun I've been talking about.

MAJOR TASKS IN WORD PROCESSING

As mentioned previously, materials typed into the computer are generally called *documents*. Documents may be letters, memos, articles, manuscripts, or any other written material (including, of course, those formal papers for which we generally reserve the word "document" in everyday life). Each document is stored in a computer *file* on a diskette, just as a real document might be stored in a file folder. Each file is given a distinct name you'll use when you want to get the file for further review, editing, or printing.

In preparing your documents, three main tasks will concern you:

1. Entering (that is, "typing") the document itself and revising it if necessary (*text entry and editing*);
2. Storing, organizing, and safeguarding documents as computer *files* (usually referred to as *file management*); and
3. *Printing* the document.

To accomplish these tasks, you'll command the EasyWriter program to let you do different things: enter text into a file; insert, delete, and move around text within the file; *save* and *revise* files; print files; and other tasks you'll want to accomplish. The commands you'll give to EasyWriter are presented as choices available to you on three different "menus." Learning the program consists largely of learning what these choices are, then using them appropriately and correctly. Since these choices represent program capabilities, once you understand which choices are available and how to use them, you are well on your way to mastery of EasyWriter word processing.

THE EASYWRITER MENUS

I suggested previously that EasyWriter's commands are available on "menus." The word *menu* in computer jargon has much the same meaning as in everyday life. A menu in a computer program is just like a restaurant menu: a list of available choices from which we select what we want. In EasyWriter, when a choice is selected from a menu, a *command* is given to the program to carry out a specific operation or procedure. Once the choice is made, a command is executed *immediately*.

The EasyWriter program is organized around a system of three different menus:

1. the EasyWriter File System Menu;
2. the EasyWriter Help Menu; and
3. the Additional Commands Menu.

The EasyWriter File System Menu is used for *file management*. Through this menu you'll be able to perform such tasks as saving and revising your text files, deleting old files you no longer need, combining files, arranging files for printing in a particular order, and similar "housekeeping" tasks.

The EasyWriter Help Menu and the Additional Commands Menu are both used while *editing* your documents. Commands available through these menus assist you in inserting and deleting text and formatting the document (i.e., setting it up on the printed page) in any way you wish.

EasyWriter's three menus present almost all the choices available in accomplishing the first two of the three main word processing tasks: editing documents and managing the files in which documents are stored. The third task, printing, is also accomplished with a command available on the menu system. But printing also has many other options and possibilities not listed on the menus that you may exercise *if you wish*.

If you have special needs for the way you want your document to appear in print, you can give EasyWriter specific *instructions* about them *before* issuing a Print command. For example, you might want to number the pages of a document, print it with double or triple spacing, have special phrases printed at the top or bottom of every page, or add other special touches that give documents a professional look. Such special features don't appear on any menu, but they may be "ordered" by inserting printing *instructions* directly into a document. These instructions are carried out *when the document is printed*. Printing instructions don't have to be constant for an entire document; for example, you might want double spacing in some sections of a document and single spacing in others. By inserting new printing instructions wherever you want a change, a document's format can be specified exactly as you want it.

EASYWRITER FEATURES

All word processors allow you to insert and delete text, of course, but beyond that each one has different capabilities. EasyWriter has certain features I have found especially valuable. They include:

It's very easy to "get in and out" of EasyWriter. You can load the program, enter a letter or memo, and print it faster with EasyWriter than with any other word processor program I've seen. If you don't want a permanent diskette copy of the document, you don't have to make one.

If you prefer, EasyWriter will give you a completely blank screen for entering your text. If you want the Help menu on the screen to remind you of its commands, you can keep it there. But if you want a screen devoted entirely to *your* document, and not to word processing and program information, it's yours.

Almost all other word processors take up some part of the screen with *their* words, instead of yours.

EasyWriter has the ability to “undelete” text that was deleted by mistake. Sometimes one’s fingers move too fast! It’s great to be able to recover from an “Oh, no, I didn’t mean to delete that!” type of mistake.

It’s virtually impossible to commit a “fatal” error in EasyWriter. You’re always asked for confirmation before EasyWriter carries out a command to delete text files, and you always have the option of inserting a new disk if you write something too long for the current disk.

EasyWriter is a “what you see is what you get” type of word processing program. What you see on the screen is virtually identical to what you’ll see on the printed page. As long as you can make your document look the way you want it on the screen, you’ll be able to print it that way. Some other word processors do almost all their set-up, margin alignment, and formatting only at the printing stage, and it’s sometimes difficult to be sure, before printing, that the document will come out with the look you want.

EasyWriter permits you to preview a document’s finished look by *printing to the screen* before you print on paper. You’ll be able to see where the pages change, the position of headers and footers, how pages are numbered, and other formatting information, because most printing instructions are actually carried out on the screen as they will be on paper. If you see something you don’t like, you can change it *before* you print.

It’s very easy to print using EasyWriter; no complicated set-up is necessary. You can print a document in memory merely by pressing one key to give the print command.

In this introductory chapter, I have only attempted to describe generally how word processing can facilitate your work, as well as some of EasyWriter’s organization. I’ve talked generally about the relationship of word processing to your work, the organization of the EasyWriter program into menus, and the difference between commands and instructions. We’ll be discussing these in much greater detail throughout the book.

Before we go into any more detail, however, you should actually *use* EasyWriter to prepare a few documents. We’ll do just a bit of preparatory work in Chapter 2 to make a back-up copy of the EasyWriter program diskette and prepare a few diskettes for your text storage. Then we’ll be ready to start. In Chapters 3 and 4, we’ll do some practice exercises. You’ll see how easy it really is to use EasyWriter and you’ll have some experience with its three menus. Then in Chapter 5, we’ll come back to a more detailed explanation of the program organization and an overview of the tasks that can be accomplished with each menu. Chapters 6, 7, and 8 are reference chapters that explain in detail each command on each menu.

In later chapters, specific tasks and applications are discussed in greater detail. Chapter 9 reviews “electronic cutting and pasting”—or *block moves*, as it’s known in word processing jargon. Chapters 10 through 15 are concerned with various aspects of printing: Chapters 10 and 11 review the use of the special printing instructions mentioned earlier to set up headers and footers, page numbers, and margins. Chapter 12

reviews ways to set up letters and memos, and Chapter 13 does the same for manuscripts, tables, and charts. Chapters 14 and 15 consider more advanced topics in printing: using capabilities of your printer such as underlining, boldface printing, or special typefaces; and creating “template” files to automatically repeat special printing instructions you use all the time. Appendix I gives additional information about some specific printers.

Chapters 16 and 17 discuss the “care and feeding” of diskettes and files: making backup copies, combining files when working with very long documents, and other file management procedures. Finally, Chapter 18 discusses using EasyWriter if you “upload” and “download” files to and from other computer systems.

ABOUT THE INSTRUCTIONS IN THIS BOOK

The instructions in the next chapter and throughout the book will tell you to type certain commands and then to press the *Enter* key. On the PC and XT, the Enter key is the large key with the bent arrow (↵) between the main keyboard and the *numeric keypad* on the right. On the PCjr, the Enter key is the very large key to the right of the main keyboard. When you’re asked to *enter* something, that means typing the letters or words indicated, then pressing the Enter key. At the beginning, I’ll remind you to press the Enter key. After a while, the instructions will just say *enter*. If you make a mistake in typing the letters or commands before pressing Enter, use the backspace key to back up and delete the mistake. (The backspace key has the left-pointing straight arrow. It’s at the top of the keyboard, just to the right of the + and = key.) Retype the command and press the Enter key.

Depending on the procedure, the computer will sometimes respond as soon as a letter or number key is pressed, without your having to press the Enter key. If a procedure does not require that the Enter key be pressed, I won’t use the word “enter.” I’ll just tell you to *press* or *type* a particular key.

When making the EasyWriter program backup copy, you’ll be told to remove the *write-protect* tab from the EasyWriter diskette and then to replace it. The write-protect tab is the little adhesive-backed paper tab fitting over the cut-out notch on the side of the floppy diskette. On 5¼" diskettes, the write-protect tab prevents the computer from writing on the diskette. When you’re writing documents in EasyWriter, you should *not* have a write-protect tab on the *storage* diskette or EasyWriter will not be able to write your files on the diskette.

We’ve used different typefaces in this book to differentiate (1) the regular text of the book; (2) commands that you’ll be entering that won’t be shown on the display screen; (3) what you should type that will show on the screen; and (4) what the computer will display on the screen on its own or as a response to something you’ve entered.

A boldface version of the regular typeface is used to call attention to keys that you will press to enter commands. For example, you would be instructed to press the **Del** key to delete a character. The characters “Del” are shown in a bold version of the regular typeface to call attention to the fact that you must press that key. The action you have commanded will be carried out but the word “Del” will not show on the screen; this refers only to a key press.