Hands-On Computing Using Lotus 1-2-3®, WordPerfect® 5.0, and dBase IV®

R. Dale Hobart
Sharon Octernaud
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Hands-On Computing

Using Lotus 1-2-3, WordPerfect 5.0, and dBASE IV

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Seagate: Figure 1-8
The Source: Figure 9-4
Texas Instruments: Figure 3-1

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Preface

Introduction

Microcomputers are becoming an accepted part of American life. They are found in homes, in schools, in businesses, and in industry. The $1,000 microcomputer system of today has the computing power of a $1,000,000 mainframe computer of twnety years ago. And the revolution has just begun!

This book is designed to assist people in learning how to use the microcomputer as a tool. The concept and materials were developed by the authors as a result of numerous "hands-on" computer literacy workshops given to the faculty and staff of Ferris State University.

The Philosophy of the Book

Many technical computer science and data processing books have been written. Their emphasis lies in describing how a computer works and in teaching the use of a computer language. This book describes **how to use** a microcomputer. Step-by-step exercises illustrate spreadsheet, word processing, data management, and telecommunication tasks.

This book is not designed to be read from cover to cover. Beginning with Chapter 2, the learner is expected to be an active participant working through the tutorial exercises at an IBM or compatible microcomputer.

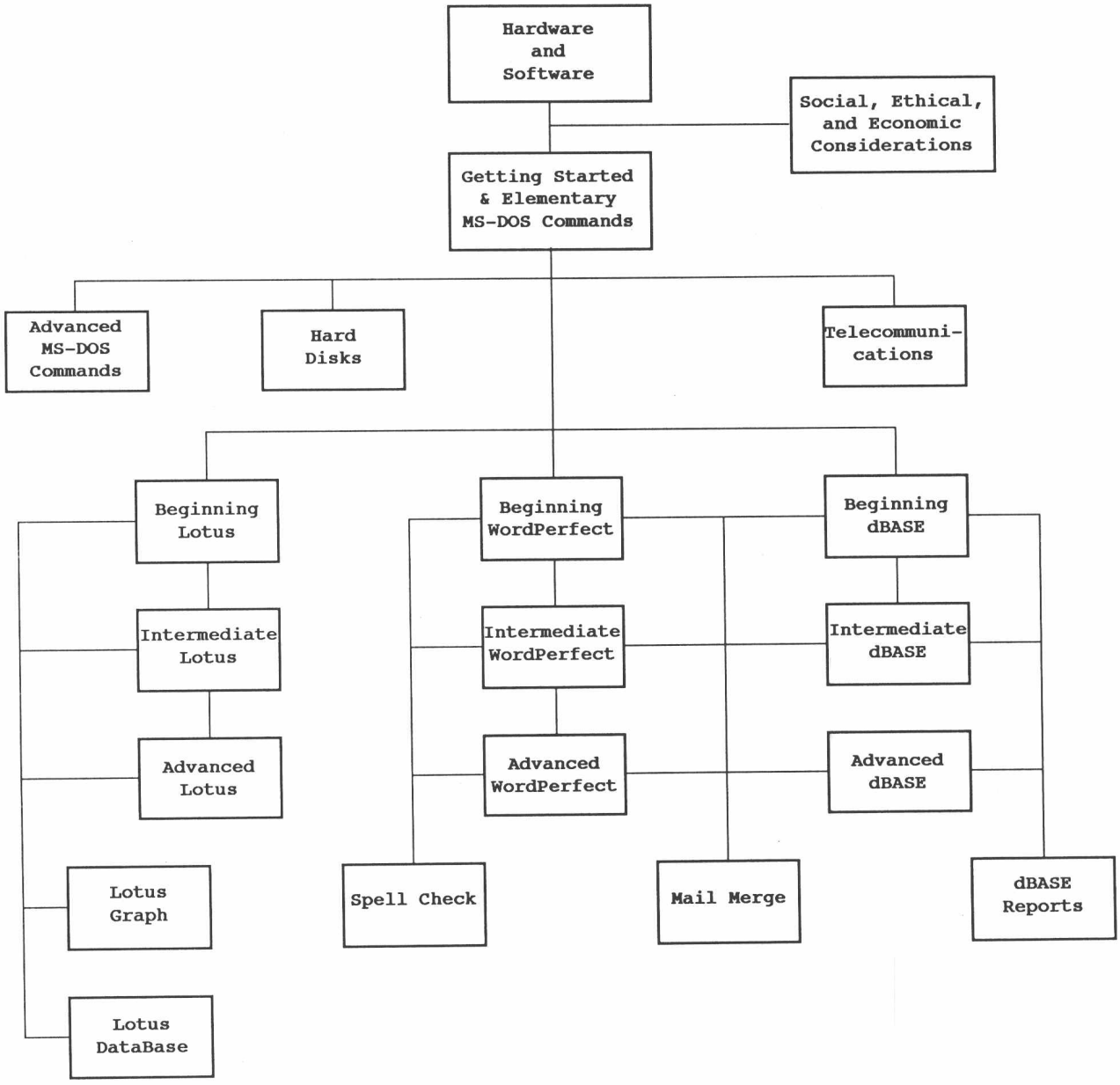
The Software Used in this Book

Four widely-used software packages are explained in the book. The word processing program, **WordPerfect 5.0**, is the most popular full-featured word processor today. The electronic spreadsheet program, **Lotus 2.1**, has has been the spreasheet of choice in the business world since it was first introduced. The data file management program, **dBASE IV**, is designed for professionals and is easy to use. The **Qmodem 2.3** communications program is fast and simple to set up.

Organization of the Book

This book is organized in a modular fashion. Each chapter can be studied independently with a minimum amount of introductory material. The software can be explored at a beginning, intermediate, or advanced level. A diagram of possible instructional sequences appears on the next page.

Instructional Sequence Flow Chart



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Equipment and Set Up Requirements

To use the programs in this book, the following equipment is needed:

IBM-PC or compatible with
one floppy disk drive and one hard disk
640K RAM
a monitor
a printer

To do the telecommunications exercise, a modem is required.

To use dBASE IV, a file named CONFIG.SYS must reside in the root directory of the disk used to boot the computer. This file must contain the command **FILES=20** or greater.

The versions of the software used in the exercises are:

Lotus 2.1
WordPerfect 5.0
dBASE IV 1.0
Qmodem 2.3

This text assumes that the software was installed using the default settings of the setup programs provided with the software

Using the Exercise Disk

To reduce student typing time, several data files have been created for use with the intermediate and advanced exercises of this book. If any of these files are needed to complete a lesson, the introductory paragraphs of the exercises specify the names of the required files. These files should be copied onto another formatted diskette to insure that the files on the *Exercise Disk* remain unchanged.

In some cases, files created by the user in a beginning or intermediate exercise are used in future lessons. Users should make backup copies of their working data diskettes to permit ready access to these files.

About the Authors

The authors work at Ferris State University in Big Rapids, Michigan. They are actively involved in creating and teaching microcomputer applications workshops and classes for the campus, business professionals, and educators around the state.

Dale Hobart is an attorney and former Program Director of the Paralegal Program at Ferris. In his role as Coordinator of Academic Computing, he specializes in solving computer-related problems of a technical nature and in teaching microcomputer applications to working adults.

Sharon Octernaud is a foreign language teacher and has worked with adults in providing instructional support for the blind. Currently she is the college Microcomputer Software Trainer and develops computer-related training materials for workshops.

Sid Sytsma is an engineer, formerly the Coordinator of Academic Computing, and currently the Assistant Vice-President for Academic Affairs at Ferris. Previously, he taught statistics in the Department of Computer Information Systems and received the *Distinguished Teacher of the Year Award.*

Table of Contents

PREFACE

Introduction *iii*
The Philosophy of this Book *iii*
The Software used in this Book *iii*
Organization of this Book *iii*
Instructional Sequence Flow Chart *iv*
Equipment and Set Up Requirements *v*
Using the Exercise Disk *v*
About the Authors *vi*

CHAPTER 1 - Microcomputer Hardware and Software 1

Objectives for Chapter 1 1
Computer Literacy 2
The Microcomputer System 2
Computer Hardware Components 3
- Central Processing Unit 4
- Control Section 4
- Primary Storage 5
- Secondary Storage 5
- Input Devices 7
- Output Devices 9

Computer Software 11
- Operating System Software 11
- Application Software 12
- Computer Languages 12
- Creating a Simple Computer Program 13
- Classification of Software 13

Projects for Microcomputer Hardware and Software 15

CHAPTER 2 - Getting Started 17

Objectives for Chapter 2 17
The Operating Systems and Its Functions 19
- Loading the Operating System into the Computer 20

File Naming 20
Giving Commands to a Microcomputer 21
- Resident Commands 22
  - DIR Command (Directory) 22
  - Wild Cards 24
  - COPY Command 25
  - Copy Command Shortcuts 25
  - DEL Command (Delete) 26
  - TYPE Command 27
  - RENAME Command 27
  - DATE Command 27
  - TIME Command 27

PRINT SCREEN Key (PrtSc Key) 27
Transient Commands 28
FORMAT Command 28
DISKCOPY Command 29
Backing Up Diskettes 30
Repeating the Last Command 30
The Care and Handling of Floppy Diskettes 30
The Microcomputer Keyboard 31
Standard Typewriter Keys 32
Special Computer Keys 32

Getting Started Exercise **34**
Objectives for the Getting Started Exercise 34
Scope of the Exercise 35
Booting the System 35
Displaying a Directory 36
Changing the Logged Disk Drive 37
Formatting a Disk 38
Formatting a Disk with the System 39
Backing Up Programs and Data 40
Erasing files 41
Entering the Date 43
Entering the Time 43
Conclusion 43
Projects for the Getting Started Exercise 44

CHAPTER 3 - Electronic Spreadsheets **45**

Objectives for Chapter 3 45
Defining Spreadsheets 46

Lotus 1-2-3 2.1 Beginning Exercise **49**
Objectives for the Lotus 1-2-3 Beginning Exercise 49
Scope of the Exercise 50
Starting the Lesson 50
Loading Lotus 1-2-3 51
Cursor Movement 51
Accessing the Lotus 1-2-3 Help Screens 52
Entering Text 54
Entering Values (Numbers) 56
Column-Width Commands 56
Changing Column Display 57
Entering Formulas 59
Copy Commands 61
Verifying the Calculations 62
Recalculating the Spreadsheet 62
Save Command 63
Print Command 63
Erase Command 65
Retrieve Commands 65
Quit Command 66
Conclusion 66
Projects for the Lotus 1-2-3 Beginning Exercise 67

Lotus 1-2-3 2.1 Intermediate Exercise **68**
Objectives for the Lotus 1-2-3 Intermediate Exercise 68
Scope of the Exercise 69
Starting the Lesson 69
Starting Lotus 1-2-3 and Loading GDBOOK.WK1 File 69
Viewing the Displayed Grade Sheet 70
Range-Erase Command 71
Worksheet-Global Command 72
Understanding the Formulas Used in the Gradebook 72
Average Function 72
Standard Deviation Function 73
Maximum Function 73
Minimum Function 73
Lookup Functions 74
IF Function 74
Data-Sort Command 76
Worksheet-Titles Command 78
Print Options 79
Exiting Lotus 1-2-3 81
Conclusion 82
Projects for the Lotus 1-2-3 Intermediate Exercise 83

Lotus 1-2-3 2.1 Advanced Exercise **84**
Objectives for the Lotus 1-2-3 Advanced Exercise 84
Scope of the Exercise 85
Starting the Lesson 85
Loading the Lotus 1-2-3 Menu 86
Internal Menu Commands 87
Translating Data Files from dBase IV to Lotus 1-2-3 87
Financial Functions 92
Net Present Value Function 92
Payment Function 93
Mathematical Functions 94
@SIN Function 94
@LOG Function 95
@SQRT Function 95
Other Mathematical Functions 95
Managing Dates in Lotus 1-2-3 96
Exiting the Program 98
Conclusion 98
Projects for the Lotus 1-2-3 Advanced Exercise 99

Lotus 1-2-3 2.1 Graphing Exercise **100**
Objectives for the Lotus 1-2-3 Graphing Exercise 100
Scope of the Exercise 101
Starting the Lesson 101
Loading Lotus 1-2-3 and the GDBOOK.WK1 File 101
Creating a Graph 103
Viewing a Graph 106
Saving a Graph 106
Exiting the Spreadsheet 107
Printing Graphs with PrintGraph 108
Exiting the PrintGraph and Lotus 1-2-3 Program 110
Conclusion 111
Projects for the Lotus 1-2-3 Graphing Exercise 112

Lotus 1-2-3 2.1 Data Base Exercise 113
Objectives for the Lotus 1-2-3 Data Base Exercise 113
Scope of the Exercise 114
Starting the Lesson 114
Starting Lotus 1-2-3 and Loading the NAMELIS.WK1 File 114
Using Lotus 1-2-3 as a Data Base 116
Naming a Range 116
Finding a Record Meeting Specified Citerion 117
Extracting Rows Meeting Specific Criteria 119
Computing Statistics for Records Meeting Specified Criteria 120
Exiting Lotus 1-2-3 122
Conclusion 122
Projects for the Lotus 1-2-3 Data Base Exercise 123

CHAPTER 4 - Word Processing 125

Objectives for Chapter 4 125
Defining Word Processing 126
Creating a Document 126
Editing a Document 126
Formatting and Printing a Document 126
Word Processing Applications 127
Spelling Checkers and Thesauruses 127

WordPerfect 5.0 Beginning Exercise 129
Objectives for the WordPerfect Beginning Exercise 129
Scope of the Exercise 130
Starting the Lesson 130
Loading WordPerfect 130
Entering Text 131
Accessing the Help Screens 132
Moving Around the Screen 133
Revising Text 133
Deleting Text 134
Inserting Text 134
Marking, Moving, and Copying Text 135
Copy Text 135
Move Text 136
Deleting a Text Block 137
Restoring a Text Block 137
Finding and Replacing Text 138
Changing Type Styles 139
Saving a Document 140
Printing a Document 140
Exiting WordPerfect 141
Conclusion 142
Projects for the WordPerfect Beginning Exercise 143

WordPerfect 5.0 Intermediate Exercise 144
Objectives for the WordPerfect Intermediate Exercise 144
Scope of the Exercise 145
Starting the Lesson 145
Loading WordPerfect 145

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Margins and the Format Command 146
Centering Text 147
Format Command and Tabs 148
Using Tabs and Indents 151
Joining Files 153
The Format Command and Print Options 154
Line Spacing 154
Header and Footer Lines 155
Page Numbers 156
Pagination 158
Global Find and Replace 159
Deleting and Undeleting 160
Exiting WordPerfect 161
Conclusion 162
Projects for the WordPerfect Intermediate Exercise 163

WordPerfect 5.0 Advanced Exercise 164
Objectives for the WordPerfect Advanced Exercise 164
Scope of the Exercise 165
Starting the Lesson 165
Loading WordPerfect 165
Font Types Revisited 166
Text Format Codes 169
Master Documents 171
Footnotes 175
Indexing 176
Windows 180
Saving a Document and Exiting WordPerfect 182
Conclusion 184
Projects for the WordPerfect Advanced Exercise 185

WordPerfect 5.0 Spell Checking and Thesaurus Exercise 186
Objectives for the Spell Checking and Thesaurus Exercise 186
Scope of the Exercise 187
Starting the Lesson 187
Loading WordPerfect 187
Spell Checking a Document 188
Using the Thesaurus 190
Exiting WordPerfect 192
Conclusion 192

CHAPTER 5 - Data Base Management 193

Objectives for Chapter 5 193
What is a Computer Data Base 194
Functions of a Data Base Management System 194
Data Base Definition 194
Data Entry 194
Data Modification 195
Data Indexing 195
Data Sorting 195
Data Searching 195
Report Generation 195

Data Base Management System Types 195
Data Base Applications 196

dBASE IV 1.0 Beginning Exercise 198
Objectives for the dBASE IV Beginning Exercise 198
Scope of the Exercise 199
Starting the Lesson 199
Loading dBASE IV 199
Creating a Data Base 202
Entering New Records 211
Examining the Data Base 216
Designing a View 220
Sorting the Data Base 224
Printing the View 230
Exiting dBASE IV 231
Conclusion 231
Projects for the dBASE IV Beginning Exercise 232

dBASE IV 1.0 Intermediate Exercise 234
Objectives for the dBASE IV Intermediate Exercise 234
Scope of the Exercise 235
Starting the Lesson 235
Loading dBASE IV 235
Searching the Data Base 238
Finding an Exact Match 239
Finding Based on Sound 240
Scanning a Field for a Match 242
Modifying a Record 245
Deleting a Record 247
Creating an Index 251
Printing Labels 258
Conclusion 267
Projects for the dBASE IV Intermediate Exercise 268

dBASE IV 1.0 Advanced Exercise 269
Objectives for the dBASE IV Advanced Exercise 269
Scope of the Exercise 270
Starting the Lesson 270
Loading dBASE IV 270
Data Base Searches Revisited 273
Modifying a Data Base 280
Filling in the New Fields 283
Creating Forms 285
Placing Text and Fields 285
Fields with Default Values 291
Moving Misplaced Text and Fields 294
Creating a Calculated Field 296
Drawing Boxes and Adding Titles 299
Saving a Form 301
Using a Form 301
Exiting from dBASE 303
Conclusion 303
Projects for the dBASE IV Advanced Exercise 304

dBASE IV 1.0 Report Exercise **305**
Objectives for the dBASE IV Report Exercise 305
Scope of the Exercise 306
Starting the Lesson 306
Loading dBASE IV 306
Using the Report Feature 310
Creating a New Index 312
The Basic Report Setup 314
Adding the Group Band 326
Printing a Saving a Report 331
Exiting from dBASE 334
Conclusion 334
Projects for the dBASE IV Report Exercise 335

CHAPTER 6 - Mail Merge 337

Objectives for Chapter 6 337

Mail Merge Exercise **340**
Objectives for the Mail Merge Exercise 340
Scope of the Exercise 341
Starting the Lesson 341
The Mail Merge Process 341
Loading dBASE IV 342
Creating the Data File 345
Converting Files to a WordPerfect Format 349
Loading the Convert Program 349
Converting the File 350
Loading WordPerfect 351
Creating a Document for Mail Merging 352
The Secondary File 352
The Primary File 353
Merging the Secondary File with the Letter 358
Printing the Merged Document 360
Ending the Lesson 362
Conclusion 362
Projects for the Mail Merge Exercise 363

CHAPTER 7 - MS-DOS Revisited 365

Objectives for Chapter 7 365
What Happens When the Power is Turned On 366
Batch Files 366
ECHO Command 366
PAUSE Command 367
CLS Command 367
Sample Batch Files 367
AUTOEXEC.BAT File 368
CONFIG.SYS File 369
BUFFERS Command 369
FILES Command 370
DEVICE Command 370
CHKDSK Command 371

SYS Command 373
Input/Output Devices 373
Filters 374
CTRL C and CTRL BREAK Commands 374
Conclusion 374
Projects for MS-DOS Revisited 375

CHAPTER 8 - Using a Hard Disk System 377

Objectives for Chapter 8 377
Introduction 379
Organizing a Hard Disk 379
Partitioning a Hard Disk 379
Dividing a Hard Disk Using Subdirectories 380
Subdirectory Tree Structure 380
Paths 380
Making Subdirectories 380
Changing the Active Directory 381
Copying Files to a Subdirectory 382
Creating a Subdirectory Structure 383
Creating a Subdirectory within a Subdirectory 383
Copying Files between Subdirectories 384
Referring to Files within Subdirectories 384
Deleting Subdirectories from the Tree Structure 385
The Prompt Command 385
The Backup Command 386
The Ship (Park) Command 386
Conclusion 387

Hard Disk Exercise 388
Objectives for the Hard Disk Exercise 388
Scope of the Exercise 389
Starting the Lesson 389
Creating a System Prompt to Indicate the Active Directory 389
Creating a Subdirectory 390
Changing Directories 391
Creating Subdirectories within Subdirectories 391
Copying Files from a Floppy Disk to a Subdirectory 392
Copying Files from One Subdirectory to Another 393
Removing a Subdirectory from the Tree Structure 394
Conclusion 396
Projects for the Hard Disk Exercise 397

CHAPTER 9 - Telecommunications 399

Objectives for Chapter 9 399
What is Telecommunications? 400
The Elements of Telecommunications 400
Modems 401
Communications Software 401
Terminal Emulation 402
Automatic Dialing 402
Data Communications Parameters 402

Transmission Protocol 403
File Transmission and Reception 403
Screen Capture 403
Compressing and Joining Files for Transmission 403
File Compression 403
File Libraries 404
Archiving Software 404
Microcomputer Bulletin Boards 404
Bulletin Board Telephone Numbers 405
Commercial Data Base Services 405
Reference Data Bases 405
Specialized Data Bases 405
Information Utilities 405
Using a Commercial Data Base Service 405

Qmodem Exercise 407
Objectives for Qmodem Exercise 407
Data Communications Using Qmodem 408
Starting the Program 408
Getting a Little Help 409
Dialing the Telephone 409
Logging On 412
Recording the Session 413
Typing at the Keyboard 413
Noise on the Telephone Line 414
Downloading Files 414
Uploading Files 417
Ending a Session 417
Configuring Qmodem 419
Submenu Descriptions 420
Screen and Menu Colors 420
Window Placement 420
Communication Parameters 420
Dial, Redial, and Modem Parameters 420
File and Path Name Parameters 421
Miscellaneous Part 1 421
Miscellaneous Part 2 421
Conclusion 421
Projects for Qmodem Exercise 422

CHAPTER 10 - Social, Ethical, and Economic Considerations 423

Objectives for Chapter 10 423
Social and Economic Effects of the Computer Revolution 424
Computers and Education 424
Computers and Business 426
Computers and the Home 427
Ethical Considerations in Computing 428
Privacy of Information 428
The Proprietary Nature of Software 429
Computers as Decision Makers 430
Conclusion 430
Projects for Chapter 10 431

GLOSSARY 433

INDEX 447

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