

MICROPOWER SERIES

LOTUS 1-2-3™

for the IBM Personal Computer and XT

Edouard J. Desautels

- Easy-to-use, step-by-step instructions to help the novice utilize spreadsheets, graphics and information management
- Includes 54 worksheets



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Book/Diskette

LOTUS 1-2-3TM

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wcb

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Micropower Series

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PREFACE

This book is intended to show you how you can effectively use the 1-2-3 program from Lotus. It is designed so that you do not have to have had any previous experience with computers in order to use 1-2-3.

The first chapter sketches the kinds of situations in which 1-2-3 excels. The next chapter shows you how to start using the IBM Personal Computer. Then we begin looking at the specifics of using 1-2-3. Although it is easier to read the chapters in the order in which they appear, you can often skip ahead if you wish to look into some feature of special interest to you. A comprehensive index will help you find your way.

Many of the features of 1-2-3 are presented while solving a sequence of realistic problems, such as evaluating the accumulation in an IRA (Individual Retirement Account). Some of these problems are solved a second time, so that you can better appreciate the contrast of different approaches.

Almost everyone today has to come to grips with numbers--lots of them. 1-2-3 is such a powerful tool in helping you manage information that you should seriously consider equipping yourself with it. Perhaps this book will help you make such a decision.

Although the book contains detailed instructions on how you yourself can do everything that is shown, an optional diskette may be used to reduce the typing that would otherwise be required. (See the appendix for further information.) It is assumed that you have already purchased the appropriate version of the Lotus 1-2-3 software. If not, you may obtain it from your IBM Personal Computer supplier.

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Chapter 1

WHY USE LOTUS 1-2-3?

Why use Lotus 1-2-3? Perhaps we should first ask the question: What is Lotus 1-2-3? The simple answer is that it is a computer program which operates on the IBM Personal Computer (PC) and IBM XT and 100% IBM-compatible computers all of which are designed to help you be more productive. Some firms which specialize in computer software sales describe 1-2-3 as a "financial management program." The Lotus Development Corporation, the firm responsible for creating 1-2-3, describes the 1-2-3 program as one " ... which gives you information management (electronic filing), spreadsheet (electronic worksheet for analysis and forecasting), and a business graphics program (spreadsheet information displayed in graph form), all in one." (The italics are mine.)

I think the financial management description is too narrow (although 1-2-3 can help you do a superb job of financial management). The description provided by the creators of 1-2-3 is accurate, but even this description fails to convey the scope of its uses. The name 1-2-3 alludes to the ease with which you can get it to help you do a better job whenever you have to deal with information, whatever your specific occupation. It is my wish that this book will help you harness the full power provided by 1-2-3.

An article about the Lotus 1-2-3 program published in the Wall Street Journal late in 1982 was headed "New Program for Personal Computers Termed Most Significant Since VisiCalc." The story by Richard A. Shaffer was published on October 15 after Shaffer had previewed the 1-2-3 program a few months before its commercial distribution. Those not familiar with the history of the VisiCalc program may not appreciate the significance of being compared to it. When the first version of the VisiCalc program appeared in 1978, it became possible for ordinary people to begin very quickly to make productive use of the then relatively new tool known as the personal computer. Since then, VisiCalc has set a standard by which computer professionals measure new software packages. Now, it is fair to state that 1-2-3 has set the new standard against which others will be judged.

Why Use Spreadsheet Programs?

There are basically two ways of getting a computer to help you in whatever work you do. One is for you (or someone you hire) to construct a computer program. That means writing a series of instructions which, if they are meaningful to the computer, will cause the computer to solve the problem you had in mind. In most walks of life, a single computer program will not usually suffice to help you with the many different activities with which you have

to deal, so very quickly you find yourself needing many computer programs.

The other approach to using computers involves finding an existing program that either does what you need or that makes it easier to do what you need than would be the case if you had to write the program yourself. One well-known example is typified by word processing programs. These let you use your computer as if it were a very smart typewriter.

That is exactly the reason for using 1-2-3. You don't have to write a program to solve your problem when you use 1-2-3. First you key in the relevant data. Then you specify how the data items are related and what answers you want calculated. Some of the work you can do in a few minutes using 1-2-3 would take several weeks, even months, of effort if you had to write your own programs.

With 1-2-3, you begin by putting the numbers where they should be, just as if you were writing them on a ledger sheet. And you decide where the results should appear in relationship to the other numbers. If you change your mind, it is a simple matter to move things around painlessly. If you decide to change a number, you simply type in its new value. As soon as you change that number, all the other results that depend on that number immediately change.

Simple Examples of Uses of 1-2-3

The following examples will give you a better idea of the kinds of problems you can easily handle using 1-2-3. For the time being we will ignore most of the details in setting up the formulas used in this and other examples.

Suppose you wanted to convince a friend that setting up an IRA, an individual retirement account, was a sound thing to do. You could begin by laying out a table that computes and displays the running balance in an IRA. For any given year for twenty-five years, the corresponding balance could be displayed. We can assume that the maximum individual contribution of \$2,000 per year is made at the beginning of each year. Then, assuming that a fixed interest rate of 8% per year compounded annually applied, you could type that information in the table. Such a table appears in figure 1.1. Some of the intervening years have been omitted in the interest of brevity.

Rate	8%
Years	
1	2,160
2	4,493
3	7,012
4	9,733
5	12,672
...	...
10	31,291
...	...
15	58,649
...	...
20	98,846
...	...
25	157,909

Figure 1.1 IRA table with a \$2,000 annual investment and an 8% rate

Do not be alarmed by all the numbers you see in figure 1.1. When we get into actually using 1-2-3, you will see how you can make it do most of the work. For instance, in the IRA table of figure 1.1, the actual typing required is limited to the entry of the labels Rate and Years, the two numbers 1 and 8, and a single formula to compute the first year's accumulation. The other year numbers and IRA values were produced by 1-2-3 through the use of one simple, short command. The same would be true even if we wanted the table extended to cover 50 or 100 years.

The "What-If?" Phase

If you wish to assess the impact of a different interest rate with 1-2-3, you merely type in the new interest rate at the spot occupied by the old interest rate. The consequences of this change are automatically recomputed and displayed. Thus, typing a 12% over the old 8% would transform our previous figure 1.1 into figure 1.2.

Rate	12%
Years	
1	2,240
2	4,749
3	7,559
4	10,706
5	14,230
...	...
10	39,309
...	...
15	83,507
...	...
20	161,397
...	...
25	298,668

Figure 1.2 IRA table with a \$2,000 annual investment and a 12% rate

However, it may be difficult for you to keep track of how a rate change affects the balances. Wouldn't it be nice to see the impact of two different interest rates side by side, as in figure 1.3?

Rate	8%	Rate	12%
Years		Years	
1	2,160	1	2,240
2	4,493	2	4,749
3	7,012	3	7,559
4	9,733	4	10,706
5	12,672	5	14,230
...
10	31,291	10	39,309
...
15	58,649	15	83,507
...
20	98,846	20	161,397
...
25	157,909	25	298,668

Figure 1.3 IRA tables with 8% and 12% rates

Yes, of course, this is probably easier to work with. But how much extra effort does it take? With 1-2-3, going from either figure 1.1 or 1.2 to figure 1.3 can be accomplished in a few seconds, with fewer than ten keystrokes. It would take no more effort even if the tables we were working with had hundreds or even thousands of entries. If you find this hard to believe, read on, as we will show you in the remainder of this book exactly how you can do this with 1-2-3.

Avoiding Extraneous Details

In trying to persuade someone of the value of setting up an IRA, the impact of different rates of interest will play an important role. You might prefer not having to see every year's balance from year 1 to year 20 or year 25. You might like to see just the balances for a fixed term, say ten years, at specified rates, as in figure 1.4.

	+YEAR10
8%	31,291
10%	35,062
12%	39,309
14%	44,089

Figure 1.4 Ten-year balances at specified rates

Figure 1.4 shows an IRA's balance after ten years, under four different assumptions regarding the interest rates.

Is it possible, without a great deal of effort, to use 1-2-3 to include the effects of other terms? Figure 1.5 shows the consequences of maintaining an IRA for ten, fifteen, or twenty years.

	+YEAR10	+YEAR15	+YEAR20
8%	31,291	58,649	98,846
10%	35,062	69,899	126,005
12%	39,309	83,507	161,397
14%	44,089	99,961	207,537

Figure 1.5 IRA table for specified rates and terms

It takes very little effort to have figure 1.5 show balances for other interest rates or other time periods. You can change any one, or several, of the interest rates and any one, or several, of the column headings and then immediately recalculate all of the table entries at the push of just one button.

Driving the Point Home with Bottom Line Results

The value of an IRA is not truly understood until you contrast what the situation would be without an IRA. That is, most attempts to set aside money for whatever purpose first have to come to grips with the income tax. With an IRA, you can take up to \$2,000 per year of the money you earned and place it in an IRA account. Without an IRA, if you had earned \$2,000 or more, and you were in the 50% incremental tax bracket, you could set aside as true savings only \$1,000 for every \$2,000 you earned. (Of course, not every dollar you earn is taxed at the highest marginal rate.)

Obviously we need help in calculating the with-tax and without-tax comparisons to assess the full benefit of an IRA. It takes very little effort with 1-2-3 to generate a table such as depicted in figure 1.6.

Years	Taxed at 50%
1	1,080
2	2,246
3	3,506
4	4,867
5	6,336
...	...
10	15,645
...	...
15	29,324
...	...
20	49,423
...	...
25	78,954

Figure 1.6 Extra income with an 8% IRA in the 50% bracket

It would be even better to be able to compare the with-IRA versus the without-IRA situation by focussing on the critical items, which are the assumed rate of interest and the expected incremental tax bracket. Figure 1.7 shows just these items, assuming a term of 20 years. The 1-2-3 worksheet we will be constructing soon (it looks just like the table in figure 1.7) is so flexible that if you change any of the interest rates in the left column, or if you change any of the tax rates in the top row, or any combination of the above, the remaining table entries will immediately be updated on request. That makes it easy for you to assess the impact of the choices you have made.

		Tax Bracket			
		20%	30%	40%	50%
IRA Rates	8%	19,769	29,654	39,538	49,423
	10%	25,201	37,801	50,402	63,002
	12%	32,279	48,419	64,559	80,699
	14%	41,507	62,261	83,015	103,768

Figure 1.7 Extra IRA income due to tax deferment after 20 years

Here too, if you change any of the rate or bracket entries in figure 1.7, then pressing a single key will recalculate all of the table entries.

The New Generation of Desk-Top Computer Programs

1-2-3 is first and foremost a superb spreadsheet program. The examples we have just sketched out serve to suggest the power and

versatility associated with spreadsheets. It may not be clear at this point just how much effort it takes to construct these kinds of spreadsheets. In fact, it would be more fitting to speak of how little human effort they actually take.

There are, of course, other spreadsheet programs available. What sets 1-2-3 apart from these? Many factors do; among them are

speed:	1-2-3 computes very rapidly
capacity:	it lets you use as much memory as is available permitting spreadsheets with as many as 2,048 rows and 256 columns
ease of use:	you do not have to memorize intricate commands; 1-2-3 prompts you <u>in English</u>
helpfulness:	it remembers how you last used a particular spreadsheet so you do not have to keep repeating things you shouldn't have to repeat
scope:	1-2-3 provides much more than a spreadsheet capability. (Its support of graphics and data management are sketched in the remainder of this chapter, so let us move on.)

A Picture Is Worth a Thousand Numbers

Some people have a knack for reading tables of numbers. Other people are confused when they see too many numbers. 1-2-3 easily converts a mass of numbers into something more intelligible. Isn't the pie chart of figure 1.8 easier to grasp than the corresponding table in figure 1.9?

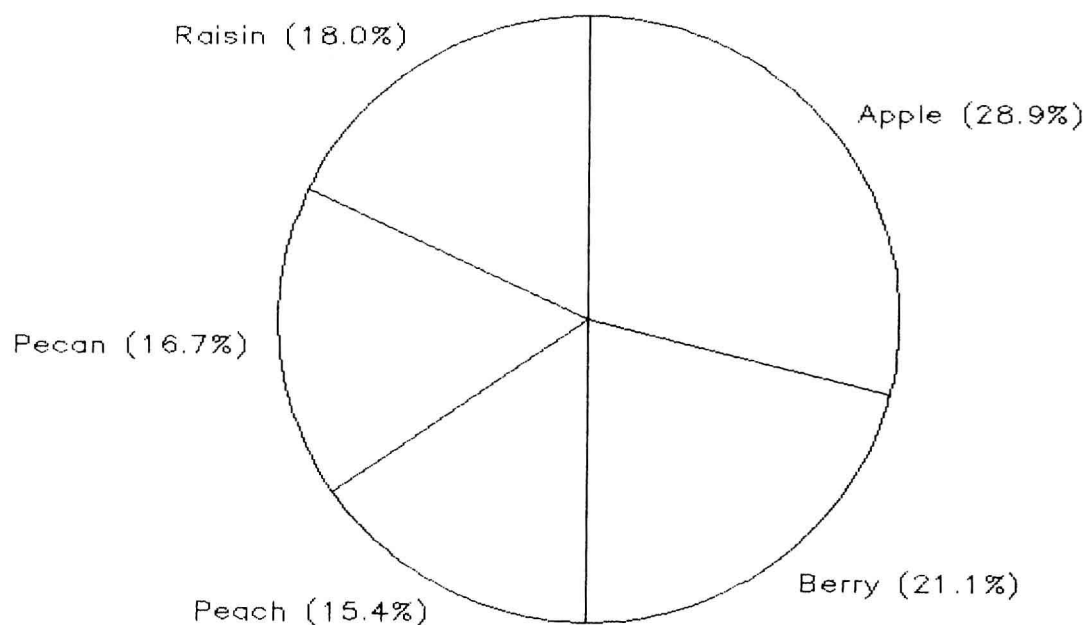


Figure 1.8 A pie chart prepared using 1-2-3