WORDSTAR

ON THE

IBM PC

Richard Curtis

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WORDSTAR ON THE IBM PC

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CHAPTER 0

Introduction

For some time MicroPro's WordStar has been the most popular word processing package for microcomputers. The IBM Personal Computer (better known as the PC) is one of the most popular microcomputers. This book will show you how to put the two together to form a word processing system that, function for function, outperforms other available packages, many of which sell for several times the price of WordStar. This book will also show you how to use the power of WordStar and the IBM PC to make any writing task easier.

SOME INITIAL ASSUMPTIONS

We have made a few assumptions about the people who might be reading this book. The first is that they are people who, for one reason or another, have to put words on paper on a regular basis. The second is that they already own, or have access to, an IBM PC with at least 128K (kilobytes) of RAM (random access memory) and two disk drives (preferably of the newer 360K double-sided variety). The third is that they have used the PC enough to be familiar with at least the fundamentals of its operation, such as running simple applications programs.

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The final and most important assumption is that our readers are people who have investigated WordStar, and, like so many others, find it to have a very impressive number of commands. In order to learn how these commands are used, the beginning WordStar user must consult either the formidable-looking *WordStar Reference Manual,* the *WordStar Reference Card*—which serves the moderately experienced user well, but is of little help to the novice—or the *WordStar Training Guide,* which is helpful in a general sense but does not cover the special features available to IBM PC users.

We think that a great number of people out there are, or soon will be, in regular contact with the IBM PC. Nearly all of these people can make good use of WordStar, once they learn how truly easy it is to run. The ideal way to learn, of course, would be to have a patient friend teach you. Rather than introduce you on a command-by-command basis to the 132 commands that make WordStar run, he would show you enough to get started, then be there to help if you got stuck. We hope that this book can represent such a friend.

The truth is, you don't really need to know more than four or five WordStar commands in order to enter, edit, and print almost any document. One of the features that makes WordStar such a popular package is that it displays the words you type just as they will appear on the printed page. It also allows you to edit your work in a natural way, as though you were going over it with a pencil, erasing something here, adding something there, but seldom having to write anything more than once.

This book deals with WordStar Version 3.3. Although it may be compatible with later versions (those with higher version numbers), it does not deal specifically with earlier versions of WordStar. This is as it should be since MicroPro's policy is to update, at a nominal charge, any release of WordStar to the current version. Your dealer will tell you how to accomplish this if you have not done so already.

We will also cover the three major "add-ons" to WordStar: MailMerge, SpellStar, and StarIndex. However, you do not need to have these add-ons in order to run WordStar, and since WordStar is what most of this book is about, you'll be able to try almost everything described here using WordStar alone.

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WHAT THIS BOOK WILL TEACH YOU

This book will teach you how to make WordStar run. It won't teach you how to use every single WordStar command, but if you read through the book from beginning to end and—this is very important—follow the suggestions we make, you will be able to do some pretty amazing things with words using your PC and WordStar.

Our aim is to make you feel comfortable with WordStar as quickly as possible. It's something we've done for quite a few people already, and we have a bias in favor of what works. That's why you'll find us making a few suggestions that might sound like mere opinion. While many other books of this type simply step their readers through every intricacy of the software without ever daring to say "Do this!" or "Don't bother with that!," our experience in teaching people to use WordStar suggests that they appreciate being told what to do, especially the first time around. Later on, after you've learned what WordStar and word processing are all about, you'll understand our strategy. We urge you to reconsider our advice then, in light of your personal requirements.

Once you've mastered those aspects of WordStar that we deal with in this book, your own curiosity and the *WordStar Reference Manual* should be enough to take you as far with it as you want to go. Most of making WordStar run involves learning how to execute its editing and formatting commands, and seeing what they do on the screen as well as in print. The commands that we don't discuss here work pretty much the same way as the commands we do cover. In deciding which commands to include and which to leave out, we relied on our own experience and left out only those which, upon reflection, we realized we rarely used.

In deciding how to structure this book, we once again relied on our own experience in using the WordStar/PC combination. We have found that the most efficient way to use this package is to type in a rough draft (without worrying too much about how rough it is), save it to disk, edit it, and finally, format it. It's a strategy that has worked well for us, and we hope to show that it can work for you too. That's why this book treats these topics in the order that it does. If you follow our advice and prepare a document as you read this book, you'll learn not only the commands

that make WordStar run, but also the most efficient way to use those commands.

For those of you who don't already own a copy of WordStar, we'd like to add a word of advice. With WordStar, as with any software package, support is a major issue. If you have a problem with WordStar, or even just a simple question about how some aspect of it works, your WordStar dealer is the person to call. WordStar is popular, and there are a lot of places that sell it. Mail-order houses often advertise low prices, but it's sometimes difficult to get them to support the product once they've made the sale. If you buy WordStar from a mail-order house, do what you can to find out how well they'll take care of you when you have a question, or when it's time to upgrade your license. As good as this book may be, your dealer is your direct line of support to MicroPro, so pick your dealer carefully.

NEW WORDS AND KEYBOARD SYMBOLS

Although we have a hunch that most people reading this book will have at least a little bit of computer experience, we're not going to assume that everyone does. That's why we're going to make every effort to describe the workings of WordStar and the PC in plain English. We'll also explain any new terms as we introduce them. Wherever computers are concerned, you're bound to find some language that isn't familiar and, often, some equally unfamiliar symbols. About the only symbols that we use in this book are "pictures" of the keys on the PC's keyboard. Among the more common ones are

which represents the "Enter" key on the PC keyboard, and

CTRL

which represents the "Control" key on the PC keyboard. (See Fig. 0-1.)

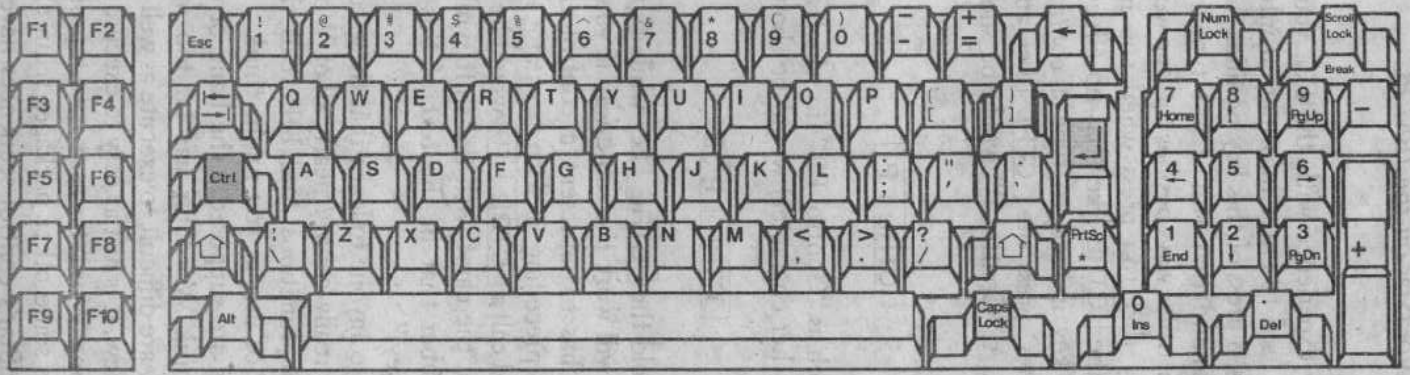

FIG. 0-1 The IBM PC Keyboard.

If you've had any experience with the PC, you probably know that the [↵] key is used to enter information into the computer. In almost all programs, a press of this key signifies that the computer should "read" a command that you've just typed. WordStar uses the [↵] key in several other ways besides the one we just mentioned.

Like the shift key that you press when you need to type an uppercase character, the [CTRL] key has no effect if it is pressed alone. The [CTRL] key is used to type a *control character.* To type a control character, press the [CTRL] key and the character key at the same time. A "Control P" would be shown in this book as

[CTRL][P]

A *control sequence* such as "Control PB" (in which a control character is followed by another character) would be shown as

[CTRL][P]B

You do not have to hold the [CTRL] key while typing B, although the control sequence will work the same way if you do.

When WordStar has to represent a control character on the screen, it does so by preceding it with a carat (^). For example, the character we would call a [CTRL][P] would be shown onscreen as ^P. Do not confuse the carat with the shift symbol on the PC's shift key. And remember that in the text of this book, [CTRL] means the "Control key."

It shouldn't surprise anyone to learn that these control characters and control sequences really *control* nearly all of WordStar's editing, formatting, and printing functions. And, believe us, they're not nearly as hard to remember, or use, as you might think.

Control sequences are supposedly the bane of every WordStar user. Some people think WordStar has far too many control sequences, and that they are difficult to execute as well as to remember. We disagree. In our view, it is just as easy to execute three keystrokes from the keyboard using WordStar as it is to reposition your hands over a function key as some other packages require.

In addition, WordStar's control sequences have another advan-

tage over function keys: the letters they use reflect the commands they execute. For instance, it's easier to remember that, CTRL K D means "blocK Done," than to remember what F10 (or worse yet Alt-Shift-F10) does. We're convinced that given an understanding of how WordStar's control sequences are organized and executed, anyone can become comfortable with them.

FIRST STEPS

Before reading any further, be sure that your PC is set up and working properly, and that it is connected to a suitable printer. By "suitable" we mean either the IBM dot matrix printer, or any other printer that you know works with your PC. You should also have a few blank diskettes handy, and know the fundamentals such as how to put disks into the PC's disk drives, and how to turn the PC on.

You'll need to do a little work with your PC to make an *installed WordStar disk*. This will involve making a disk that contains all of the files or the WordStar distribution disk (the one you bought from your WordStar dealer), along with the PC's operating system (PC-DOS, Version 2.0) and a few of its special commands. This won't take more than a few minutes, and we'll explain every step.

Copying Program Files from the WordStar Distribution Diskette

For the PC owner, installation of WordStar entails nothing more difficult than telling WordStar what type of printer you have and how it is hooked up to your PC. A program called WINSTALL.COM, supplied on one of the disks that comes with your WordStar package, handles it all for you. All you have to do is make selections from the menus it presents.

But first things first. Before you can install WordStar, you'll need to:

- Format a blank diskette.
- Copy the WordStar program files onto the disk, along with

certain PC-DOS utilities that you may want to have access to while running WordStar.

- If you have also purchased MailMerge, SpellStar, and/or StarIndex, copy these program files onto the WordStar program disk.

Nothing can be copied onto an unformatted disk, so the first task is to format the work disk. To format any disk, you must run the FORMAT program that is supplied with PC-DOS.

As will probably always be true where machines are involved, you must follow certain start-up procedures that are best described in simple declarative sentences. So, we beg your indulgence for a moment. . . .

First, put your working PC-DOS diskette in drive A: of your PC. Put a suitable blank disk (preferably a double-sided one) in drive B:, and *boot* the PC by turning the PC's power switch to ON. After a few moments of silence (the PC is performing its power-on self-test routine), the disk in drive A: will go to work, the PC will beep, and DOS will be loaded into the PC's memory. (The blank disk in drive B: will be used later.)

NOTE: The *drive specifier* (the letter used to designate the drive) is always followed by a colon. The letter alone won't be recognized by either WordStar or DOS, so in an effort to set a good example, we'll continue to use the colon throughout this book whenever we refer to a disk drive.

Once DOS has been loaded, the first thing it does is ask you to set the PC's time-of-day clock by answering the prompts

```
Enter new date . . .
```

and

```
Enter new time . . .
```

If you don't want to set the clock, a simple [↵] will suffice. DOS can get along fine without knowing what time it is. If you don't know how to set the clock, look it up under the TIME com-

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