

Getting started

The manual is broken is broken down into four main sections

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1.0 - Software and hardware requirements

1. [Operating system](#) – Compatible versions of Windows
2. [Internet](#) – Communication requirements
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1.1 - Operating system

Links will only run on a PC so any stand alone computer or workstation requires to be running Windows (from XP onwards).

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1.2 - Internet

A Broadband internet connection is essential for maintenance and if you are using the Links online services such as Bookings.

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1.3 - Hardware specification

Obviously Links will perform to its optimum with the latest hardware.

The basic rule is that if the computer is capable of running Windows XP it will run Links.

Ideally your computer should have the following minimum Specification.

1. Pentium 3
2. 40Mb hard drive
3. 512Mb RAM

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1.4 - Networking

Links will run on an NT based server (Windows 2000, NT, Windows server, XP, Vista etc).

If you have more than 3 computers on your network, using the ePos module or the internet server, it is best to have a dedicated server.

The advantage of a dedicated server is that all the data is in one secure location (provided you have a proper backup facility). Any data input in one computer is immediately available to all other users – in other words – there is no risk of duplication.

The server software has to be installed in order to run the internet server for online bookings etc.

Links will handle up to 12 users working on the system at any one time.

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2.0 - How to install the software

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2.1 – Installing the software

Run the Setup.exe file and the software will install itself in a directory called Equinox on the c:\ drive and a “Links” icon will appear on the desktop. This sets up a stand-alone copy of Links. To set up a network see Network help.

To uninstall simply delete the Equinox directory and the icon

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2.2 - Log-on

When you click on a module icon you come to the log-in screen from which you log-in to the program proper.

The log-in screen is important for several reasons as a number of checks are made to ensure the safe running of the module.

When the log-in button is clicked the licence file is checked, the system date checked and, if there is a password, it has to be entered.

Notes

NEVER BYPASS THE LOG-IN SCREEN AS THE PROGRAM WILL LOCK UP AND YOU MAY LOOSE DATA.

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2.3 - Menus

Navigation

Once you log-in you move to the Main Menu – a screen with various Buttons down the right hand side.

Menus are the way you move about the program – they do not contain data.

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3.0 - Tips on using the software

1. [Buttons](#) - Navigating the software using the buttons
2. [Commands](#) – The basic commands for operating the software
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3.1 - Buttons

The simple way to navigate the software is by clicking on the buttons.

The buttons are generally red, blue, yellow, green and cyan rectangles down the right hand side of the screen with writing on them that describes their function i.e. “Edit”.

You can move between the buttons using the mouse or you can use the “Tab” key, the “Up” and “Down” arrows or the function “F” keys on the keyboard.

When you see a dotted rectangle round the script on the button this is the “active” button and pressing the “Enter” or “Return” key will activate that button.

Notes

The “Exit-F9” button will always take you back a screen

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3.2 - Commands

The main commands are:-

“Insert” creates a new record or entry.

“Edit” makes a change to the record you are currently viewing.

“Find” locates a record using an index number or name.

“Delete” will remove the record you are viewing but, as a precaution, you will always be asked to verify that this is what you want to do.

“Print” will print the data currently on view.

“Exit” will take you back one screen and eventually out of the program.

Other commands include:-

“Tag” marks the current record for a special sort and processing.

“Archive” puts the current record “out of the way” – it does not delete it but simply indexes it where it will not interfere with the current data.

“Restore” is the opposite of Archive and retrieves a record from the archive – perhaps a member has left and then decides to re-join.

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3.3 - Colours

The buttons are colour coded according to their function:-

“Blue” takes you somewhere either to a new screen or to a new record (using the Find option)

“Yellow” alters what you are viewing it either as an “Insert” or an “Edit”

“Green” is a “Print” function

“Cyan” is a multiple process function e.g. sorting records, processing them and then printing a list.

“Red” spells CAUTION as this is either a “Delete” or “Archive” function or it navigates away from what you are working on

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3.4 – Function keys

Function keys are shortcut keys along the top of the keyboard marked F1 to F12.

If you do not like using the mouse you can use the F key to activate a button e.g. F1 will usually activate the “Find – F1” function.

The F numbers are marked on the buttons.

Notes

F9 will always get you back to the start if you get lost!

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3.5 – Shortcuts

There are a variety of keyboard functions you can use:-

The “Enter” or “Return” key activates a button if this is active (see Buttons) or moves to the next field when entering or editing data.

“Up” arrow – moves you to the next record up.

“Down” arrow – moves you to the next record down.

“Tab” – moves you to the next field when you are entering or editing a record and to the next button at all other times.

“Control+T” will take you to the top of the list and “Control+B” to the bottom.

“Control+N” will take you to the next record and “Control+P” to the previous one.

Notes

Always use the “Tab”, “Enter” or “Return” keys to move to the next field when inserting or editing data!

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3.6 – Mouse

The mouse is simplest and easiest way to navigate the software but it can cause problems especially when you try to short circuit the processes.

Use the mouse to select buttons and not to move between fields!

When you are editing or inserting data the information you enter is processed as it is entered and can change the options available to you depending on what you enter.

If you jump between fields then the information you are providing may not be complete and the computer cannot process the data fully leading to errors in the final record.

If, for example, you were adding a new lady member but skipped the field for designating her sex then the computer would automatically assume that she is a Male and that will cause confusion and falsify the records.

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3.7 – Find

The “Find” option is always a blue button and generally labelled “Find-F1” but could be F2 and F3 where there are additional option for a Find.

“Name” is the same as “Find” and will ask you to type in a name e.g. typing “S” then pressing the “Enter” key will take you to the start of the “S’s”. The more information you give the computer closer you will get to what you are looking for – “SMI” will take you closer to say “Smith”.

“PIN” is again the same as “Find” and will ask you to type in a member’s index number (Personal Identity Number).

Notes

When using the “Find” option use the “Up” and “Down” arrows to check the records before and after the one you are viewing.

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3.8 – Insert

When you first use the software there will not be any data or records stored and to add data you use the “Insert” function.

When you insert a record you will be prompted for information as you move through the fields or you may be asked to select information from drop down lists – simply move through the fields until you get to the “Save” prompt.

In some cases the system will automatically allocate index numbers to the records giving that new record the next number in the sequence.

When a record is inserted the system may also check to see if the existing data already has data with the same index e.g. the same PIN. In such cases you will receive a warning and have to modify the duplicate data.

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3.9 – Edit

Once a record has been created you can find it again and make changes to it i.e. edit it.

The process of editing is similar to inserting except that you can see what already exists.

As you move through the fields they are highlighted in blue and you simply overtype what is in the field or press Enter to leave it and move on to the next field.

If a field loses its highlight you can click on it with the mouse and drag it across the contents.

To delete the contents of a field use the “Backspace” or “Delete” key when the field is highlighted.

Move through the fields in turn using the Enter key until you reach the Save prompt.

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3.10 – Save

As you move through the fields during an Edit or Insert you will eventually come to a prompt that asks you to “Save” or “Restore” your work.

“Save” preserves the changes you have just made.

“Restore” discards the work you have just done.

If you are in the middle of changing data and you press an F key or click on a button this will automatically save your work and you may have to use the Edit function to complete the changes you were making.

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3.11 – Print

Links provides a huge variety of Print options from individual record to full member’s lists.

Normally when you use the Print option the computer will preview what is to be typed on the screen. This shows you what you will be getting and how many pages it will print on.

The preview page can be sent to the printer using the Print option at the top of the screen. You can also discard the preview if it is not what you thought you were getting or select part of a large report if you only need part of it.

Links uses the default Windows printer unless the report has been assigned to another type of printer e.g. a receipt or label printer.

All standard reports and letters are designed for A4 and, if your printer is not set to this, the output may not fit on the page.

Links automatically tells the printer if the document is portrait or landscape.

A variety of address labels can be printed on standard label sheets normally 2 or 3 across and 7 down.

Notes

See Other Information help file for details of special stationery, printers and mail-merging.

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3.12 – Exit

Always use the “Exit-F9” button to exit the program as there are processes that are activated as you exit each section of the program setting it up for the next time it is used.

If you have logged on as a supervisor the exit sequence will provide you with options to Backup, Upgrade and Update the software

Notes

Only use the “X” button on the top right of the screen in an emergency as using this during normal operations can cause loss of data!

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3.13 – Spreadsheet mode

Certain screens, where records are displayed in a column, have a series of boxes on the left of the screen with an arrow in one of them – this is known as spreadsheet mode.

To select a record click on it and the arrow will move to the corresponding box and clicking on “Edit” or “Records” will take you into the highlighted record.

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3.14 – Hints and tips

If you are editing or inserting data you can always tell where you are by looking for the blinking cursor (a vertical line that flashes on and off) or the blue highlighted data (if the field is not empty).

If you get totally lost and nothing seems to be happening click on a button – this will save your work and get you back to the main screen.

When a popup box appears double click the line you want to select or use the Down arrow and then Return on the line you want.

Always use the Tab, Return or Enter keys to move between fields – NEVER USE THE MOUSE TO JUMP ACROSS FIELDS.

Some screens have “Tabs” along the top of the screen to break up large amounts of information to manageable pages. Click on each tab to reveal that information.

If a process is running you will see a counter on the screen. **DO NOT STOP THE PROCESS AS THIS COULD LEAVE RECORDS UN-PROCESSED OR DAMAGED.**

If you get lost press the F9 key or click on Exit – this will get you back to a page you recognise.

When entering date fields the simplest way to enter the 1st of February 2010 is 010210 (always 6 characters – ddmmyy). Note for the current year this can be shortened still further e.g. 0102.

Other acceptable date formats are 1.1.6, 1/1/2006, 1-Feb-06.

Time fields are input in the form hh.mm e.g. 10 is 10 o'clock, 10.1 is 10 minutes past 10 and 10.01 is 1 minute past 10.

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4.0 – Special features

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2. [Licence](#) – Obtaining a licence or renewing one
3. [Users](#) – Restrict access to the software
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4.1 - Overview

There are five basic Links modules – Membership, Handicap, Bookings, ePos and Accommodation. These modules can be used separately or use the central Membership system to automatically control the others.

The membership module is the central module and stores all information on the membership and controls all financial aspects of the membership.

The handicap system maintains member's golf records and runs all official competitions for both the Men's and Ladies sections. Links is a CONGU registered supplier and is compatible with all Centralised Handicap databases.

The Bookings module is a full timesheet that can handle up to 72 holes for visitors and members. It has its own internet server for real-time online bookings.

The ePos system is a Point-of sale till system with stock control. It can run members accounts in the form of a Loyalty Scheme or Compulsory Spend scheme in conjunction with a members ID card.

The Accommodation module is a booking system for rooms or chalets.

Notes

The Handicap, Booking and ePos system can run independently but, when the Membership is also being run, the members' details can be taken automatically from it avoiding double entry and eliminating errors.

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4.2 - Licence

An annual license is required to run Links and this is issued on receipt of a maintenance fee which entitles you to FREE updates and software support should you encounter any problems.

If you have a demo copy of the software you will need a licence file from Links Software to get full access to the program.

If you do not opt for annual maintenance then you need to contact Links Software for the licence-free option!

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4.3 - Users

Links operates at different levels according to the *Username*. This allows certain machines and users to be Supervisors with extra rights and it can be used to prevent access to certain parts of the module.

The main log-on is **LINKS**. This is the *Supervisor* log-on and provides full access to all levels of each module and allows certain essential maintenance tasks to be carried out such as *Optimising* and *Upgrading*.

LINKS2, 3, 4 etc. also allow access to all levels of each module but do not have **Supervisor** rights and therefore cannot perform certain functions.

Other log-ons include SHOP, BAR, CAT(erer), OFFICE and HOTEL which only allows access to the till screen of the ePos module. MEN and LADIES access the handicap modules. Other log-ons can be created as required.

Notes

See the Password section for additional security options.

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4.5 - Pictures

The pictures providing the background to the menus are located in the sub-directory called Pictures in each of the Links modules.

If you want to use your own photos they must be in JPG format and numbered 1.jpg to 18.jpg

Each picture is assigned to a specific menu (the number is visible in the bottom left corner of the menu).

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