



# HOME INVENTORY

# CREATIVE SOFTWARE



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Home Inventory is a single program designed to run on the Commodore 64 computer, and comprises a complete system for tracking your home inventory with a computer. The program is available on either tape or disk. The tape version requires the Commodore Datassette recorder, while the disk version requires the VIC-1541 floppy disk unit.

## PHILOSOPHY

For a majority of families, one's home inventory is an important consideration for insurance and estate management purposes. By keeping track of the purchase price, current value, and serial numbers of various categories of items, you can better manage your possessions and be aware of their value.

Of course, you could do so without the aid of your Commodore 64. But the computer is an excellent tool for handling information: it not only relieves the tedium of manually recording all those items, it also never makes an arithmetic mistake when it adds or subtracts columns of figures. Further, the computer's ability to search its memory for specified information relieves you of the chore of flipping through pages of documents looking for information on a specific possession.

## PROGRAM DESIGN

Home Inventory is what is known as a "menu driven" program. You are presented with a list, called a MENU, of operations to perform, and you select the operation you want from the list. This makes the program very easy to use, since you always know just what options are available to you at any point in the program.

Home Inventory is designed to provide all the basic functions you need to do a thorough cataloging of your personal and family possessions. Use it to enter, change, delete, print, and record inventory items in various categories and in various locations in the house. The program can also analyze and evaluate the information you've entered, displaying tables of the value of the inventory in any category or any location.

You can record all types of items, such as appliances, works of art, and sports equipment, in the data file. Your possessions can be grouped into any category you feel is appropriate; all items that are in the same category will be evaluated together. Also, you can classify your possessions according to location, such as kitchen, living room, or dining room, and evaluate them according to location.

Although the program is a powerful household tool, it is easy to use and provides thorough error checking. Entry of your data is a simple step-by-step process, and all data is checked for validity. If you make a mistake, the

program will allow you to reenter your data correctly. Of course, certain errors, such as entering false information, cannot be detected by the program and the accuracy of the Home Inventory reports will suffer.

The program will always let you go back and correct any improperly entered data, so don't worry if you make a mistake. But by being careful and doing things right the first time, you'll avoid extra work.

## HOW TO ENTER DATA

There is a certain standard and simple procedure for entering data while using Home Inventory. You can always tell when you are expected to type something by the fact that a checkerboard pattern or a blinking rectangle, called a cursor, appears on the display. At all other times, there is no cursor.

In addition to the cursor, prompting messages will be displayed, so you will always be reminded just what sort of information the program expects from you at any particular time, such as a number or a name. Furthermore, a segment of underlining will be displayed where the cursor is, so you can see approximately how many letters or digits you may type in. Typing in your data is just like filling in the blanks on a form.

Sometimes these "blanks" will be already filled in for you. The words or numbers which appear are called "defaults" and are provided as a convenience to you. You may type right over the defaults if you don't want to use them, or you can use them as is by simply pressing RETURN without typing over them.

The characters you type will appear on the screen where the cursor is, and the cursor will move one space to the right. But when the cursor reaches the end of the underlined section, it will stop and you can't type any more. If you make a mistake, you can backspace the cursor with the DEL key and type over your mistake. No special cursor movement keys will work with Home Inventory except the DEL key.

When you have typed in the desired information, press the RETURN key to tell the computer you are finished. All data entry is terminated by pressing RETURN.

All monetary amounts must be in the range of zero through 9999999.99. Do not type a dollar sign when entering monetary amounts, and do not include commas within numbers. You do not need to type the decimal point and zeroes if the amount is in even dollars.

At any time while you are typing in data, you may immediately abort what you are doing by pressing the F7 key, located at the lower right of the keyboard. Pressing F7 will cancel whatever it is you are doing. In general, you can consider the RETURN key as the "go ahead and do it" key, and the F7 key as the "stop whatever you are doing" key.

Every now and then, as you are entering or displaying data, the computer will suddenly stop and apparently go dead. This is completely normal; the Commodore 64 is designed so that it needs to stop and clear out extraneous clutter in its memory from time to time. This will happen more often when the memory is getting full. When this happens, please be patient. At the most, it will remain dead for about 2 minutes, usually much less than that. Just keep waiting; the computer will "wake up" and continue on its merry way.

## GETTING STARTED

There are three basic things you'll need to do in order to get started with Home Inventory:

1. Read this manual thoroughly and have it next to you as you run the program.
2. Go through your house and other places where you keep possessions, and write down in a notebook all the items of reasonable value, including the date of purchase, the purchase price, and serial number, if known. It is best to organize your inventory by location, and within a location, by category. For example, itemize all your dining room furniture, then dining room silverware, the dining room linen, and so on, before going on to another room.
3. Have a blank cassette tape or a diskette available on which to record the data you will be entering. Generally, the short C-10 tapes will be too short store enough; we recommend you use regular C-60 tape. You disk users may store your Home Inventory data on the same diskette which contains the programs, but we recommend using a separate diskette.

## LOADING INSTRUCTIONS — CASSETTE

To load the program, first place the tape in the cassette unit. Rewind the tape completely, and then type LOAD and press the RETURN key. The Commodore 64 will display PRESS PLAY ON TAPE; press the PLAY button on the tape recorder. The screen will blank out while the computer searches for the Home Inventory program. When it is found, the screen will return to normal and you will see the message FOUND HI. Press the Commodore "logo" key (at the lower left of the keyboard); the screen will again go blank, and the computer will load the program. After the program is done loading, the Commodore 64 displays READY. Type RUN and press RETURN to start the program.

If you should get an error while loading, the computer will stop and display an error message. You should rewind the tape and repeat the above procedure. If Home Inventory keeps failing to load properly, you may have your cassette unit located too close to your TV; try moving the cassette unit away from the TV and start the load procedure again. If this doesn't work, you may have an out-of-alignment cassette unit. Take the cassette unit and tape to your Commodore 64 dealer and have him check the unit.

In the unlikely event that the Home Inventory tape is bad, return it to your local dealer or to Creative Software and it will be replaced free of charge.

## LOADING INSTRUCTIONS — DISK

To load the program from disk, be sure that the disk drive is connected and turned on. Place the Home Inventory diskette in the disk drive in the manner described in the Commodore disk unit instruction book, and carefully close the drive door. Type LOAD "HI",8 and press RETURN. The disk will spin, the red light will light up, and the program will load. After the program has finished loading, type RUN and press RETURN.

If you should have a load error, remove the diskette from the drive, turn the entire system off and then on again, and try repeating the above procedure. Be sure the disk unit is at least one foot away from the TV set. If the program still fails to load properly, take the diskette and drive to your Commodore 64 dealer and have him check the unit.

In the unlikely event that the diskette is bad, return it to your dealer or Creative Software and it will be replaced free of charge.

## OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAM

Home Inventory helps you organize your personal possessions, grouping them in any way you see fit, by location as well as category. Locations may be rooms in your house, such as bedroom or study, or may also include such places as bank vault, lawyer's office, or warehouse. Categories may include such things as appliances, furs, jewelry, art works, books, silverware, and stereo equipment, to name just a few. You can have up to 200 different locations and categories.

Each inventory item you enter into the computer's memory is called a RECORD. The entire collection of records is called a FILE. For each record you enter you must provide eight pieces of information, called FIELDS. The fields in each record are:

Field	Allowable Range of Value
1. Location	up to 10 characters
2. Category	up to 10 characters
3. Description	up to 15 characters
4. Serial number	up to 15 characters
5. Purchase date	up to 8 characters
6. Purchase price	0 to 9999999.99
7. Current value	0 to 9999999.99
8. Valuation date	up to 8 characters

The maximum number of records you can enter into the computer's memory is 200. The program keeps track of how many records are in the memory and will remind you to save the items on tape or disk when the memory is full. This prevents you from overflowing and losing the records you've entered.

The Home Inventory program can take the data you enter and present it in a logical, visual fashion. It relieves you of the drudgery of manually adding up columns of figures for all your possessions. The displays allow you to see at a glance the value of the things you own.

You can also use the program to search through the computer's memory for specific items, such as everything in the living room or just those items you purchased for more than \$100, for example.

The program can also produce printouts of the information if you have a Commodore VIC-1525 printer connected. RS-232 printers will not work with this program.

## SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

The most convenient way to use Home Inventory is to enter the data on a particular item on the same day you acquire it. Since this is not always



possible, it is helpful to be prepared with all the information you'll need before running the program. It is particularly important that you give careful thought to the categorization of your possessions, as this will affect how they are grouped and evaluated. It is a good idea to periodically get a printout of your inventory and keep it with the program cassette or diskette for reference.

### DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS

Load Home Inventory as described previously and run it. After the title and copyright notice have been displayed you will be asked if you already have an inventory file. If this is the first time you have used the program, or you are going to start a brand new file, enter an N (for No) at this point; you will skip the next step and go directly to the Main Menu, described below.

### LOADING THE INVENTORY FILE

If you do have an inventory file, enter a Y (for Yes). You will be asked if your file is on tape or disk; enter a T or D as appropriate. If you are using tape, you will be asked to prepare the Home Inventory data tape. This means you should place the tape containing the data into the tape unit and rewind it fully. When this is done, press any key to signal that you are ready. You will be asked to PRESS PLAY ON TAPE so press the PLAY button on the tape recorder. The screen will blank out, the tape will move, and the inventory data will be entered into the computer's memory from the tape. When it is done, the screen will come back to normal and you will see a message informing you that the file is loaded. Press any key and the Main Menu will be displayed.

If you are using disk, you have the opportunity of loading the current inventory file or the backup file. This allows you to work with the backup file if you wish. After you specify which file you want to load, you will be asked to prepare the Home Inventory data disk. This means you should insert the diskette containing the inventory data into the drive, carefully close the door, then press any key when ready. The disk will spin and the data will be loaded from the disk into the computer's memory. Then press any key to display the Main Menu.

### THE MAIN MENU

The main menu is simply a list of things you may do or options you may select. It looks like this:

#### HOME INVENTORY: MAIN MENU

- I — ITEM ENTRY & UPDATE
- S — SEARCH THRU ITEMS
- V — VALUATION OF ITEMS
- L — LISTING OF ITEMS
- A — SAVE ITEMS ON DISK OR TAPE
- E — EXIT PROGRAM

To select the operation you wish to perform, type its letter and press RETURN. Each of these operations is described in detail below.

### **MAIN MENU OPTION I: ITEM ENTRY AND UPDATE**

This is the option you use to enter items into the computer's memory or to update items in the memory. When you select this option, another menu will be displayed. This menu, called Menu 1, looks like this:

#### **MENU 1: ITEM ENTRY & UPDATE**

R — REVIEW ITEMS IN FILE  
A — ADD ITEMS TO FILE  
C — CHANGE ITEMS IN FILE  
D — DELETE ITEMS FROM FILE  
S — SAVE ITEMS ON DISK OR TAPE  
M — GO BACK TO MAIN MENU  
E — EXIT PROGRAM

As with the Main Menu, you select the option you wish by typing its letter and pressing RETURN.

### **MENU 1 OPTION A: ADDING ITEMS TO FILE**

This is the option you should select the first time you use this program. It puts items into the computer's memory, adding to those already in memory (if any).

To add an item, you'll have to enter the eight pieces of information ("fields") listed previously, for each item, as follows:

(1) The first field is the location. Simply type in the name of the place where the item is located, such as kitchen or garage. You may type in any word or words you wish, up to 10 characters.

(2) Entering the category is like entering the location; simply type in any word or words, up to 10 characters. If you use abbreviations for the location or category, be sure to use the exact same abbreviations for all inventory items which are in the same location or category. If you make a spelling mistake, the computer will think you have entered a different location or category.

(3) The description field is used to describe the actual item, such as refrigerator or waterbed. It may be any descriptive remark up to 15 characters.

(4) The serial number may be any letters, digits, and certain punctuation marks, up to 15 characters. If the item has no serial number, enter NONE.

(5) Enter the date in MM/DD/YY format. For example, November 15, 1976, should be entered as 11/15/76 or as 11-15-76. This saves you typing, and saves room in the computer's memory.

(6) To enter the price, do not type a dollar sign, but simply enter the numerical amount. Do not include commas.

(7) Entering the current value is the same as entering the price.

(8) Entering the valuation date is the same as entering the purchase date.

If, at any time you are entering data, you press the F7 key, the item will NOT be added. You may then terminate the ADD operation altogether and go back to Menu 1 by pressing F7 again. Or, by pressing any other key at this point, you will once again have a chance to add the item.

Notice that the "blanks" you are supposed to fill in may already have some information in them. This is the information contained in the previous record (if any), and is provided as a convenience to you. For one thing, it helps you remember what you entered in the previous record. For another, it can be used as a short-cut for data entry; if the field already contains the same data you intend to enter anyway, you may simply press RETURN and that data will be entered without your having to type it in again. Otherwise, you may type over the existing data just as if it weren't even there. Thus, all items in the same location or the same category can conveniently be entered one after the other, since you won't have to type the location or the category over and over again.

### **MENU 1 OPTION C: CHANGING ITEMS**

You can change any item by choosing option C. When you do so, the program will ask you for the number of the item you wish to change. Simply enter the item number and that item will be displayed. To change a field, type the desired information in that field. To leave a field unchanged, press RETURN when the cursor is located in that field.

If at any time you press F7, any changes you have made to the item so far will be ignored and the item will not be changed.

After you have made an entry in all the fields (just as when adding an item), you will be informed that the item has been changed. If you are finished changing items, press F7 to go back to Menu 1. Press any other key to continue making changes to items.

### **MENU 1 OPTION D: DELETING ITEMS**

To delete an item from memory, use this option. As in the previous option, you will be asked for the number of the item you wish to delete. When you enter the number, that item will be displayed so you can make sure it is the one you wish to delete. If it is NOT the item you wish to delete, press F7 and it will be preserved. If it IS the item you wish to delete, press any other key, wait a moment or two, and it will be deleted.

Be very careful not to delete an item unless you really mean it, for once the item has been deleted it is gone for good!

When you are finished deleting items, enter a zero when asked for the item number and you will be returned to Menu 1.

### **MENU 1 OPTION R: REVIEWING THE ITEMS**

You can view some or all of the records in memory with this option. If there are no items in memory, you will be told so and this option will do nothing. Otherwise, you will be asked which item you wish to start with. To look at all the items, enter a 1. If you wish to look only at the items from say, the 20th item on up, enter a 20. If you decide you don't want to review the items after all, press F7.

The items will be displayed on the screen, one at a time. To view the next item, press any key except the F7 key. To stop viewing items, press F7.

### **MENU 1 OPTION S: SAVING ITEMS ON DISK OR TAPE**

After you have finished adding, changing, or deleting items, you may record the data on tape or disk with this option. This same option is also available on the Main Menu for your convenience.

When you select this option, you will be asked if you want to save the items on tape or on disk. Enter a "T" for tape or "D" for disk.

If you are using tape, you will be requested to PREPARE THE INVENTORY DATA TAPE. What this means is that you should insert the cassette on which you want to record the data into the cassette recorder and rewind the tape to the beginning. When you have done this, press any key to signal the computer you are ready. When you are asked to PRESS RECORD AND PLAY ON TAPE, press both the RECORD and PLAY buttons on the cassette unit. The screen will blank out, the tape will move, and the program will record all the data onto the tape. Then the tape will stop and the program will tell you the file has been saved. Rewind the tape, label it appropriately, and store it in a safe place.

If you are using disk, you will have the option of saving the file with or without making a backup copy. If you choose to save WITH a backup (which we recommend you do), the existing inventory file on the disk (if any) will become the backup file, having the name "INVENTORY BACKUP", and the items in memory will be saved on the disk under the name "INVENTORY". (If you already had a backup file, it will be erased.) You will now have two files, one containing the current data and the other (the backup file) containing the data as it was before you began this session of Home Inventory. Therefore, if anything should go wrong with the current file, you will still have your backup file, rather than losing all of your data. This is why, when you are loading the inventory file at the beginning of the program, you are given the option of loading the current file or the backup file.

If you choose to save the items WITHOUT a backup file, the INVENTORY file, if any, will simply be erased and recorded over. The backup file, if any, will remain unaffected.

### **MENU 1 OPTION M: GO BACK TO MAIN MENU**

This option does just what it says; it causes the Main Menu to be redisplayed so that you can perform other functions with the Home Inventory program.

### **MENU 1 OPTION E: ENDING THE PROGRAM**

When you are finished using Home Inventory, select option E to end the program. This option is also made available on the Main Menu and other menus for your convenience. When the program ends, the display will clear and your computer will be READY for other uses.

If you have made any additions, deletions, or changes to the data while you have been using Home Inventory, you will be reminded to save the items on disk or tape before you quit. However, you may end the program without saving your data if you wish.

If you have not used your computer for anything else after ending the program, you may continue the program from where you left off by typing CONT and pressing RETURN.

### **MAIN MENU OPTION S: SEARCH THRU ITEMS**

After you have some data in memory, you can search the memory for specific items. When you select this option from the Main Menu, you will be shown another menu, called Menu 2, which looks like this:

#### **MENU 2: SEARCH THRU ITEMS**

L — BY LOCATION  
C — BY CATEGORY  
D — BY DESCRIPTION  
S — BY SERIAL NUMBER  
P — BY PURCHASE PRICE  
V — BY CURRENT VALUE  
M — GO BACK TO MAIN MENU  
E — EXIT PROGRAM

The last two options are the same as on Menu 1. The other options are described below.

**MENU 2 OPTION L: BY LOCATION**

This option allows you to search for and display items which are in a certain location. You will be asked to select a location to search for. You may enter the exact location, such as WOODSHED, and all items for which you entered WOODSHED as the location will be searched for and displayed (if any).

However, you may also type in an incomplete location description. For example, if you type in just the letters ING, every item in which the letters ING appear in the location field will be sought out and displayed. This may include such locations as LIVING ROOM, DINING ROOM, and SEWING ROOM.

When you are finished searching for items, press F7 to go back to Menu 2.

**MENU 2 OPTION C: BY CATEGORY**

Searching by category works the same way as searching by location, except that only the category field will be searched. Again, any combination of characters can be searched for, and if that combination of characters occurs anywhere within the category field of a record, that record will be displayed.

Searching by description and searching by serial number are also done the same way.

**MENU 2 OPTION P: BY PURCHASE PRICE**

Searching by price works a little differently from the searches described above. In this case, you specify that you want to search for items that have a purchase price greater than a certain amount and less than a certain amount. For example, to search for items which cost from \$100 thru \$200 (inclusive), enter 100 for the GREATER THAN amount and 200 for the LESS THAN amount. If you want to find only those items that cost exactly \$150, for example, enter 150 for both amounts.

Searching by current value works the same way as searching by purchase price. In both cases, press F7 to stop searching and go back to Menu 2.

**MAIN MENU OPTION V: VALUATION OF ITEMS**

This option is used to compute the total purchase price and current value of the entire inventory or only the inventory in a certain location or category. You select which valuation you want from Menu 3, which looks like this:

**MENU 3: VALUATION OF ITEMS**

- L — VALUE BY LOCATION
- C — VALUE BY CATEGORY
- A — VALUE ALL INVENTORY
- M — GO BACK TO MAIN MENU
- E — EXIT PROGRAM

As in the searching procedure described above, you specify which location or category you want; the computer then adds up all the purchase prices and current values for inventory items which match your specifications. This is the way to find out how much everything in your master bedroom, for example, is worth overall. You can also obtain a total figure for your entire inventory.

**MAIN MENU OPTION L: LISTING OF ITEMS**

This option allows you to get a listing, on the screen or on the printer, of all the items or just certain ones. First, you will see Menu 4, as follows:

**MENU 4: LISTING OF ITEMS**

- L — LIST BY LOCATION
- C — LIST BY CATEGORY
- A — LIST ALL INVENTORY
- M — GO BACK TO MAIN MENU
- E — EXIT PROGRAM

When you select one of the listing options, you will be asked if you want the listing to be on the screen or on the printer. Enter the letter S for screen or the letter P for printer. To get a printout, you must have a Commodore VIC-1525 or equivalent printer connected, turned on, and loaded with paper.

To list by location category, you specify which items will be listed in the same way as was described in the section on searching thru items.

While the listing is in progress, whether on the screen or on the printer, you may stop it at any time by pressing F7.

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0100101011  
00011101110  
1010101100001010  
001010000010110000  
10101100010010001010



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