



## Let technology tackle the tax trauma and beat the revenue's deadline

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The latest PC software packages from Amazon.co.uk take the pain out of tax returns

**13 September 2000** For thousands of self-employed small business owners and home PC users time is running out - September 30th is the Inland Revenue's tax return deadline\* and for those who don't beat the clock a 100 fine is in store. If you're going through the pain of preparation at the moment then the advice is simple: forget pen and paper, invest NOW in one of the latest tax return software packages for your PC to save time and money. Although the clock is ticking there's still time to balance your books for the tax man and Amazon.co.uk, the UK's biggest on-line retailer, stocks a wide selection of consumer friendly tax return packages in its new Software store. Order now and your choice will be delivered to your door - fast.

PC's are exceptionally adept at the calculations involved in putting tax returns together and there are now many software applications that enable business owners - or the growing number of workers who have opted to complete their own tax returns - to do it themselves, avoiding hefty accountants bills. Add the fact that the tax man fined 600,000 people for filing late returns in 1999, and the advantages of investing in a financial software package soon outweigh the initial outlay, especially since this year every return filed over the internet will receive a 10 discount.

### AMAZON.CO.UK'S RECOMMENDATIONS

**TaxCalc 2000** is the eighteenth version of the tried and tested TaxCalc application from the Consumer's Association. When users create a new return in TaxCalc, they get an exact replica of the conventional paper return - but on screen. The advantage over paper is that it's difficult to get the 'filling in' procedure wrong. When essential financial information is missed off, the programme prompts the user to provide the missing information. And when everything's complete and checked, users have the option of filing electronically or printing out a copy to send to the Inland Revenue.

Microsoft's **Money 2000 Financial Suite - including Tax Saver 99** allows users to input information direct onto a virtual tax form, or to complete the form by following a question-and-answer session. The package claims that, "three quarters of the UK population could save an average 180 per year by taking care of their personal finances". Prompt and accurate filing of returns certainly contribute to this saving - and TaxSaver allows users to review and check information before it's e-mailed, as well as estimating the amount of tax they're likely to pay.

A budget alternative is **The Learning Company's Tax 2000 Self Assessment**, another interview based programme to keep you on the straight and narrow. A good companion to this package is **The Learning Company's Tax Code Checker 2000**, that will check to ensure users are banded in the correct tax code, making sure they don't contribute to the billions of pounds overpaid by tax payers every year.

The key to a painless tax return is to organise accounts on a daily and weekly basis. Do this and users discover that importing data stored over the course of the year into their return is a much easier process. **Quicken 2000 Deluxe** has long been one of the top two packages in the UK, and has just received a boost as it now includes the QuickTax package free of charge.

Like Quicken, **Microsoft Money 2000 Personal and Business** allows users to itemise their income, loans, interest payments and tax-deductible expenses, ready to be incorporated into the tax return. Alternatively, for small business owners who need a complete financial control package, **QuickBooks 8** is an option. With facilities for customer invoicing, sales tracking, payroll and year end preparation, it is ideally set up to keep the tax man happy.

### AMAZON BESTSELLERS

All of the software packages mentioned above are available from the Amazon.co.uk. Software store at competitive prices. The current bestseller is Taxcalc 2000, closely followed by Quicken 2000 Deluxe, Microsoft Money 2000 Financial Suite & Tax Saver 99, and Quickbooks 8.

\* for those who wish the Inland Revenue to calculate tax on their behalf

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