Adminsoft Accounts Basic User Guide - Installation

adminsoft

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Installation

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Running the Downloaded File

We always recommend you download Adminsoft Accounts from our web site: www.adminsoftware.biz That way, we know the file you have just downloaded is clean, and *only* contains Adminsoft Accounts. If you download it from other sites, it's unlikely to contain any viruses or malware, but it may contain some pop up advertising, and/or some other products (browser add-on's are common) that will get installed along with Adminsoft Accounts.

The downloaded file will be named something like: AdminsoftAccounts4220.exe The number at the end, 4220 in this case, refers to the version number. Here it's v4.220 The file is digitally signed using the SHA-256 algorithm, as stipulated by Microsoft. However, sometimes Windows does not understand the digital signature, and may report the file as being corrupt, or not a valid exe file. If this happens, and your PC refuses to save or run the downloaded file, you can download a ZIP version of it. If are using Windows XP SP1, or an earlier version of Windows, you may not be able to download the exe file, so will have to download the ZIP file. Windows XP SP2 onwards should be fine. The ZIP version is available from the same web page as the main download, just a bit further down.

If you do download the ZIP file, extract the contents of the ZIP into a temporary folder before attempting to do anything with it.

After downloading the accounts system, either as an exe or ZIP file, please follow these instructions:

- Temporarily disable your anti-virus software. This should not be necessary, but unfortunately many anti-virus software packages will interfere with the installation, often preventing files and/or folders from being created, and sometimes deleting files, all without reference to the user!
- If you are NOT in North America or western Europe, please make sure your Windows has the language set “English (US) for none Unicode applications” loaded.
- Now run the downloaded file, AdminsoftAccounts4220.exe or similar, or admnstup.exe contained in the ZIP file if you've downloaded that instead. If possible run it by doing a single right click on the flile and selecting the option 'Run as administrator'.

Once you start the install program, if it's AdminsoftAccounts4220.exe or similar, it might take 5 to 10 seconds to get going (during which time it might not appear to be doing anything). The exe program is compressed (a bit like the ZIP file), and it has to uncompress the files into a temporary folder before it can do anything (it'll create the temporary folder automatically). If you're running admnstup.exe that was in the ZIP file, that should run almost straight away.

When the installation program starts up, if you have never installed Adminsoft Accounts on your PC before, it will look similar to this:

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By default, it will install into a folder called 'Adminsoft Accounts' in the root folder of your hard drive. It's usually best to allow it to do this. Although Windows security on some PC's may not allow this. If you want to install into a different location, type in the new location, or click on the '**Browse**' button. You can install the software pretty much anywhere, but we do not recommend you install it into the 'Program Files' folder. This folder is for programs *only*, where as Adminsoft Accounts stores the program and data into the same folder (the data goes into sub-folders). In older versions of Windows this wasn't an issue, but later versions (from about Windows Vista onwards) are stricter, and depending on your Windows setup may prevent Adminsoft Accounts from running. In the example screen above, you can see it's detected it's running in Windows 7, and so has already displayed a warning about installing in the 'Program Files' folder. The installation program will automatically create the folder 'Adminsoft Accounts', you just need to accept it being created off your root folder (which is C:\ ), or enter an alternative location.

PLEASE NOTE: if you decide to install the 'Adminsoft Accounts' folder into a location other than the default location, it can not be a NAS drive, or a folder that's automatically backed up to the cloud. Both of these are great for storing data, but not for keeping the live data for applications like accounting systems, as they can sometimes corrupt the data due due tot he way these kind of applications work. NAS drives and folders backed up to the cloud are fine locations for backing up your data to.

'**Put a shortcut onto your desktop**' allows the installation program to create a shortcut to Adminsoft Accounts on your Windows desktop. By default, this option will normally already be selected.

'**Create option in your Windows Start menu**' is fairly self explanatory. Again, normally this option is already selected.

'**Run Adminsoft Accounts after installation**' means it will run the accounts system as soon as you exit the installation program. If you do not want to run the accounts system at this time, then click on this option to unselect it.

'**Backup existing software and data before update**', if this is a new install of Adminsoft Accounts, you can ignore this option. If you're just updating the software, this option will already be selected. If selected, it will copy the entire contents of the folder 'Adminsoft Accounts' and all sub-folders, which includes all you data. This copy goes in a folder created in: C:\ProgramData\Adminsoft The folder that's created will contain the current version number of your software along with the date and time of the backup. NOTE: if you have selected an alternative location for you data (ie. it doesn't live in a folder in the Adminsoft Accounts folder) then it will not get backed up.

The **'Help'** button will display another window containing some brief helpful information. This window can stay open through out the installation process. So you can keep referencing it if you wish. This help window also contains a '**Copy to Clipboard**' button that will paste a copy of the help text onto your Windows clipboard, that can be pasted into another application, such as Notepad, Microsoft Word, etc.

The **'Install Guide'** will display a copy of this PDF guide. So if you're reading this, you don't need to click this button!

The **'Cancel'** button will do exactly that. It will exit the installation program without installing Adminsoft Accounts.

When you're ready to install, click the **'Install'** button. Installation is pretty quick, and normally only takes between 5 and 15 seconds. You will see a new window open up very briefly, probably a couple of times. This is normal. When the install is complete, the installation program will tell you it's done. If there are any issues, it will tell you. If there are issues, you may need to email technical support: support@adminsoftware.biz

So, when installation is complete, the program will now look like this:

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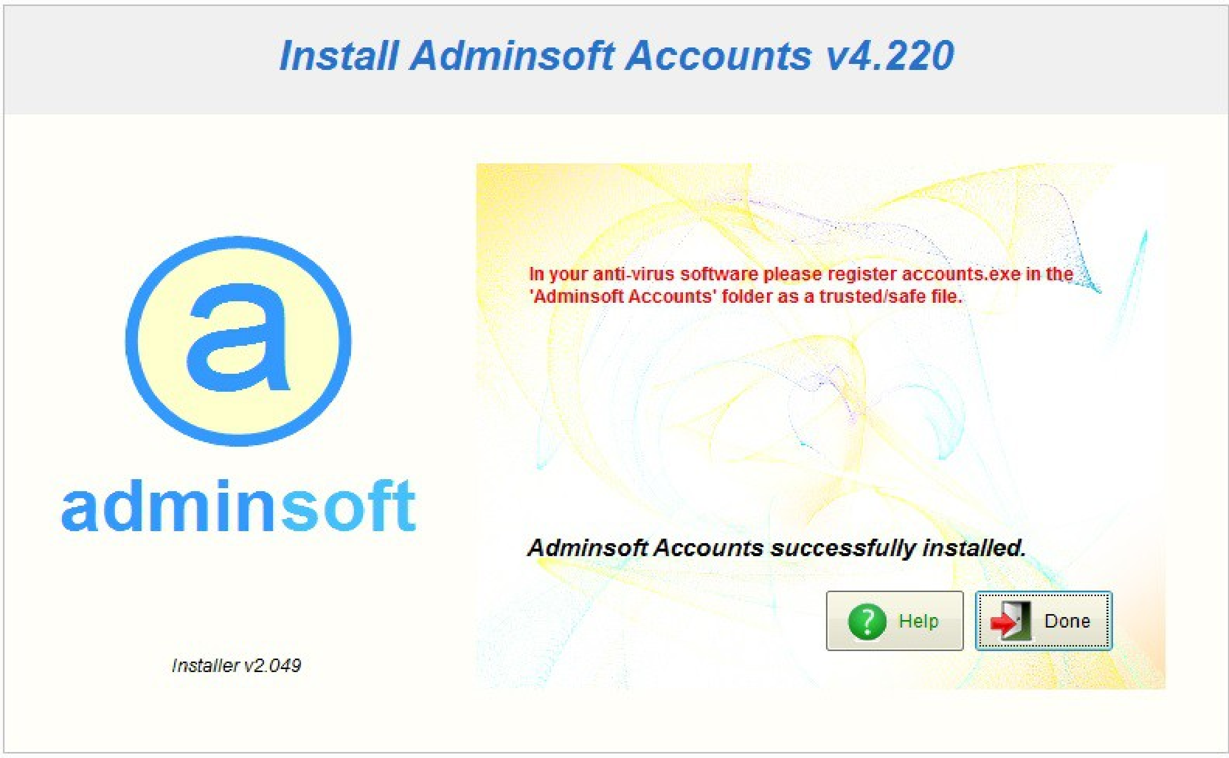

Before going any further, now is a good time to remember to **enable your anti-virus** software again!

Important: Before running Adminsoft Accounts for the first time, In your anti-virus software, register accounts.exe (in the folder 'Adminsoft Accounts') as a known trusted/safe/exempt program. The actual terminology differs from program to program. Also, if possible, register 'Adminsoft Accounts' as a trusted/safe/exempt folder (not all anti-virus products have an option for folders). When ever you update Adminsoft Accounts, by the way, I'm afraid you will need to re-register accounts.exe, as the contents of the file will have changed. Your anti-virus software will detect the change, and may not allow the updated software to run, or may prevent it from running properly. But if you are able to register the folder, this may not be necessary.

When you click the '**Done**' button, if you left the option '**Run Adminsoft Accounts after installation**' selected, the accounts system will start up, and the installation program will close down. It may take a few seconds before you see the accounting system start up.

If Adminsoft Accounts doesn't start up, or starts up and displays error messages, you may need to remove it and try to install it again. To remove it, delete the folder 'Adminsoft Accounts', and also delete the folder 'Adminsoft' in your 'C:\ProgramData' folder. Before trying to install again, please read through this installation guide again, and make sure you follow all advice given. Usually if an install fails, the most likely cause is anti-virus software messing things up. Next likely cause is Windows user access rights, it may be necessary to login as Administrator, or at least rigth click on the downloaded program and select the '**Run as administrator**' option. Other possible issues can be the language (English (US) none Unicode character set is required), or a Windows compatibility issue (if this is suspected, set compatibility mode to Windows Vista).

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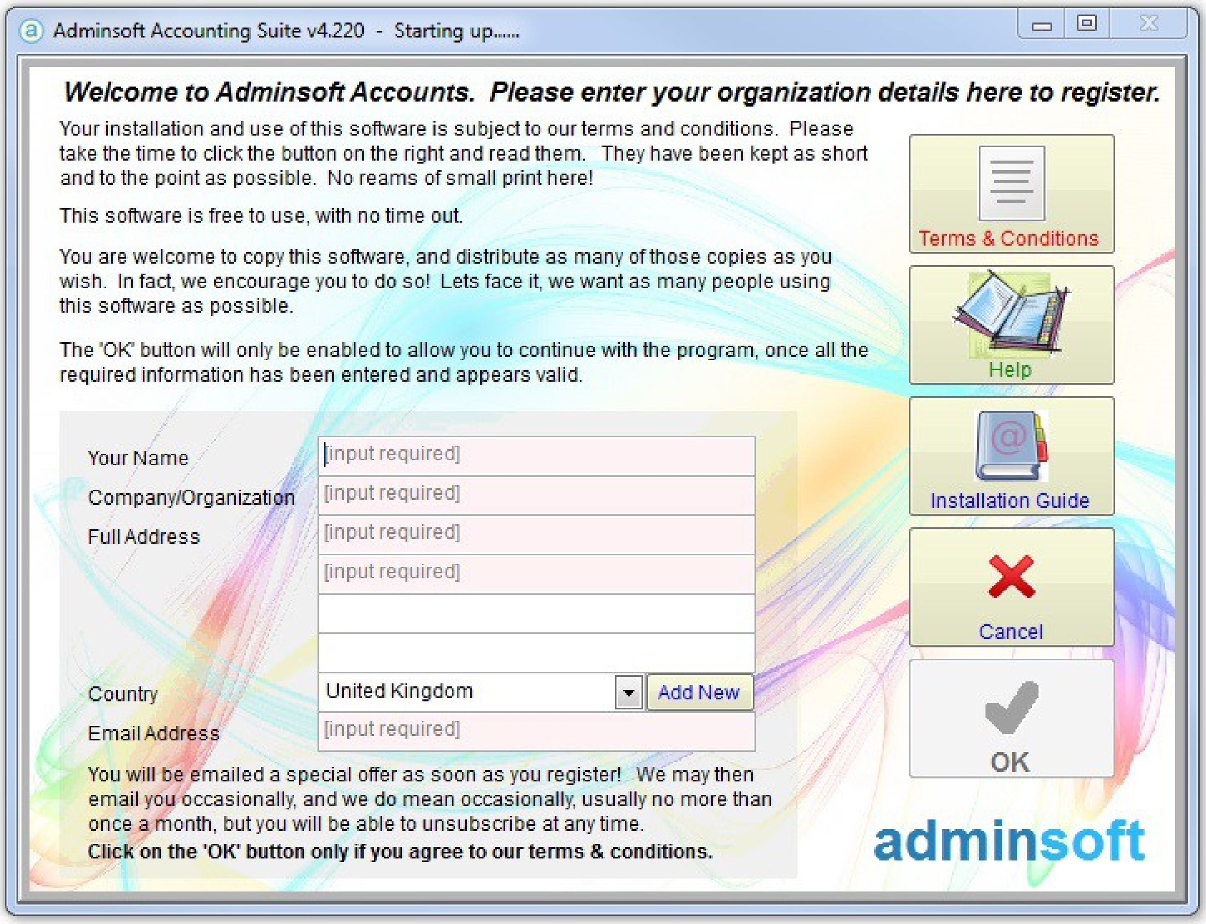
Running Adminsoft Accounts for the First Time

When run for the first time, the accounts system will ask you to register. The form looks like this:



The '**OK**' button will remain greyed out until all the input fields with a light red background have been filled in. The software will try and obtain what country you're in from Windows, and then display it in the '**Country**' input field. If it's not correct, click the small down arrow head to the right to drop down a list of countries, and then select one. If your country is not in the list, click the '**Add New**' button.

It's important you enter a valid email address. After registration an introductory email will be sent to you. Sometimes this contains a special offer. We very rarely send out email shots, so you won't receive any spam from us.

Below is a completed registration form:

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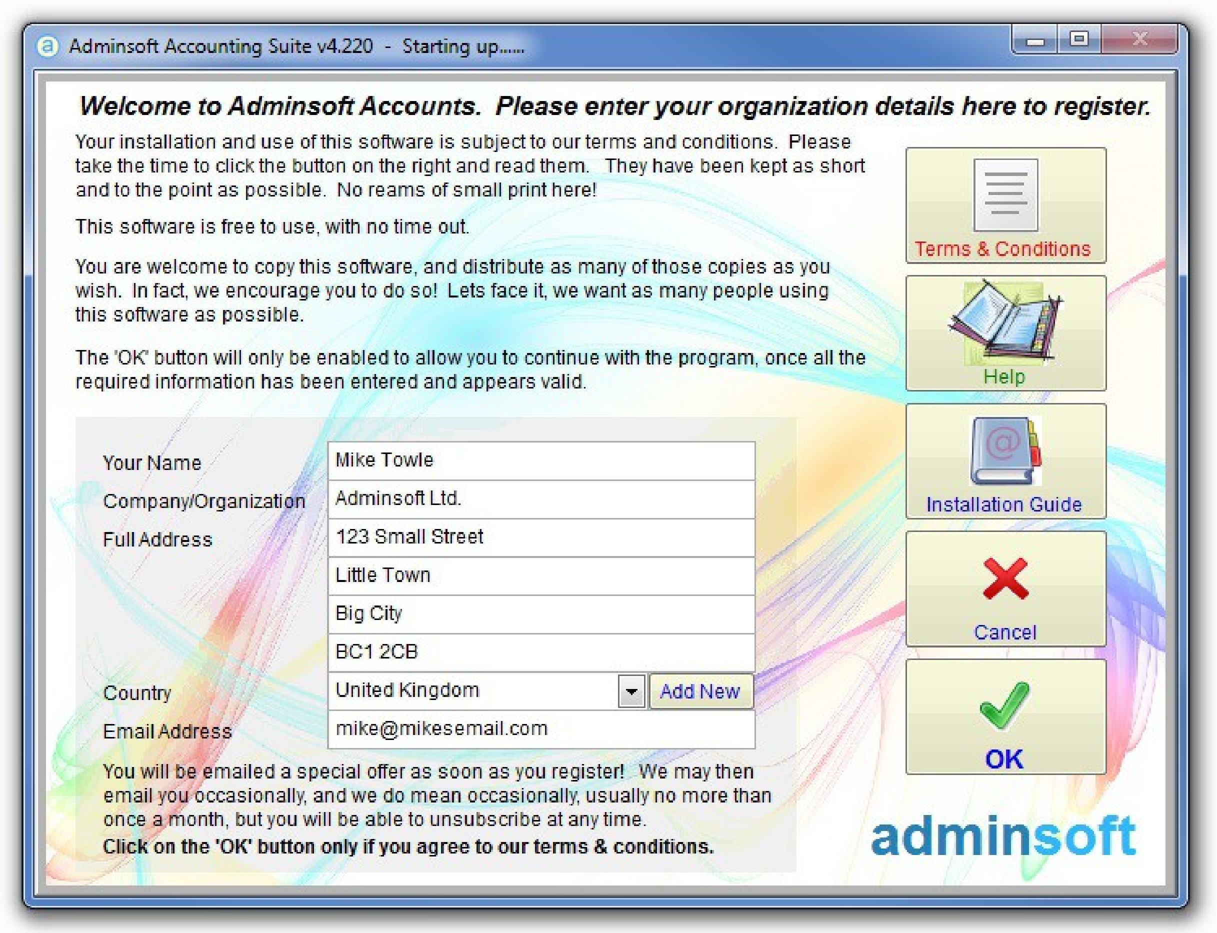

Click on the '**Terms & Conditions**' button to read the contract between us. Basically, it says we're responsible for pretty much nothing, and the onus on the software working correctly is entirely on you! But we recommend you read it anyway, just so you know. We've kept it as short and simple as possible.

The '**Help**' button displays some brief information to help you complete this form, if necessary. The information is displayed on top of the form though, it's not in a separate window, so needs to be closed before you can continue with the registration.

The '**Installation Guide**' displays this guide in PDF format. As you're already reading this, you won't be requiring this option.

The '**Cancel**' button will cancel the setup and exit Adminsoft Accounts. If you start up Adminsoft Accounts again, it will go straight into this setup screen. You can't use the accounting system until this information has been provided.

When you click the '**OK**' button, Adminsoft Accounts will register your software over the internet. If your firewall displays a message asking you if you want to allow the application to send data over the internet, please allow it to do so. A web page thanking you for registering will appear in your default browser.

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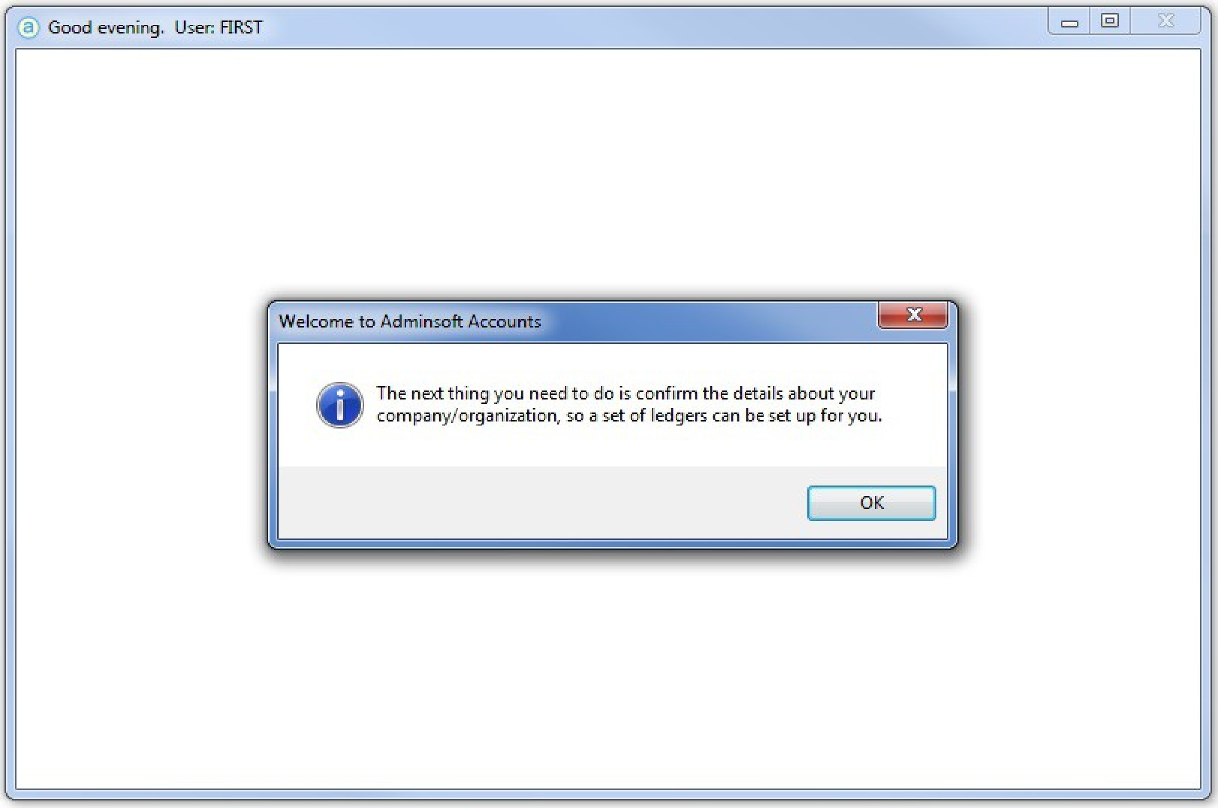
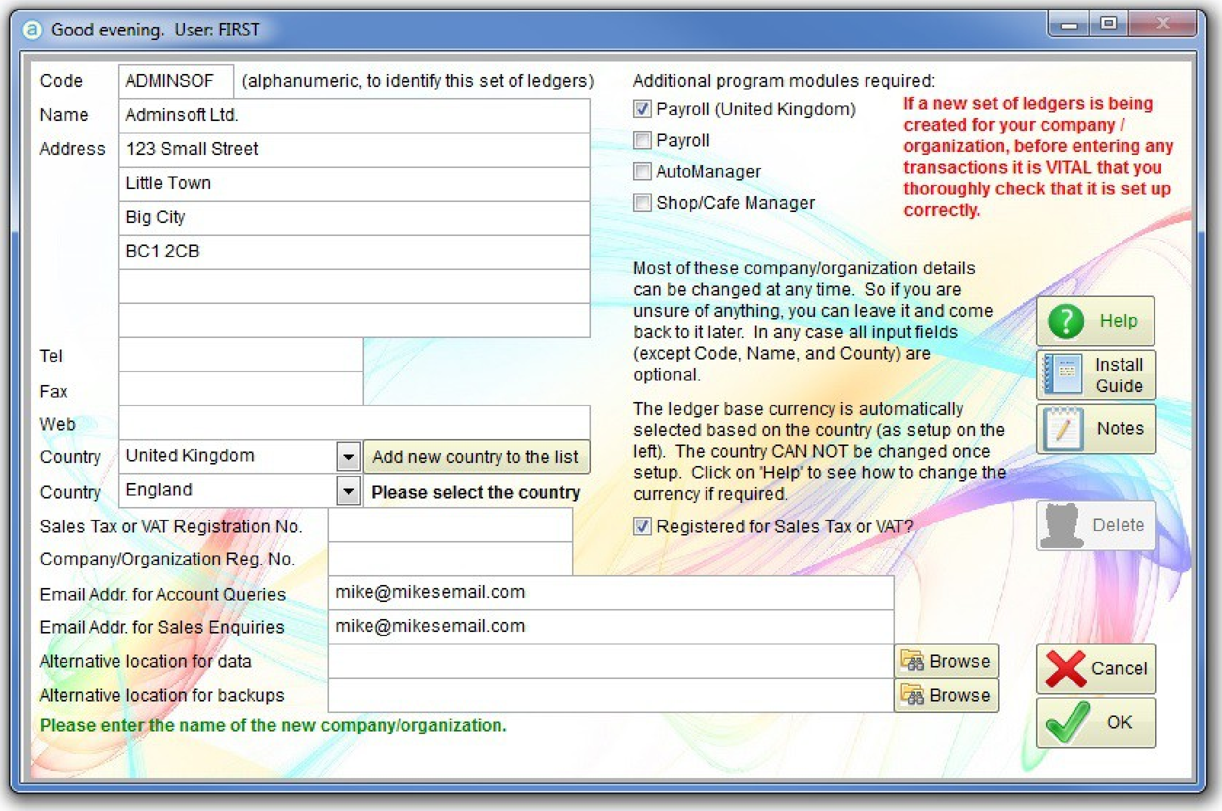
Next, the following message will appear:



The accounts system can handle the accounts for almost as many companies/organizations as you wish. Most users only require one, although it can be useful to setup two: one containing your live data, and the other to use for trying things out when you're unsure what to do. You'll need to enter some basic information such as name and address, email address, etc. Though most of this it will have copied from your registration form (during the installation stage, but any subsequent companies/organizations created will start off with a blank form).

Below is the form for creating a new company/organization that appeared in our example during installation:



The first bit of information it asks for is the '**Code**'. When it creates the set of ledgers, it will use this code to name the folder that will contain all your data. So it's important it's unique. As you're not likely to set up many companies/organizations, this shouldn't be an issue.

The first time you create a company/organization, this code will be created for you, although you can edit it. If your company was called Adminsoft, for example, you could enter 'ADMINSOF' as the code. The code can be anything you like, up to eight characters (letters and/or numbers can be used). Also, you don't need to remember it. It's simply to give each company/organization (ie. a set of ledgers) a unique reference.

Most of the information in this screen can be changed at a later date. But the input fields '**Code**' and '**Country**' can not. Entering the right country is important, because the currency used in the accounts system is dependant on the country, as is the terminology. For example, 'A/c. Receivable' in the USA is usually called 'Sales Ledger' in the UK.

If you are registered for Sales Tax or VAT, make sure the '**Registered for Sales Tax or VAT?**' box is ticked (it's ticked by default). Although the software will set up Sales Tax/VAT tables for some countries, it may not do so for your country, and if it does set up a table, it may not be up to date, so you will need to check the tax codes and rates setup before entering any invoices. This is discussed in more detail in the 'Setup' guide.

The accounts software comes with four additional modules. The first in the list is '**Payroll (United Kingdom)**'. This was designed specifically for use in the United Kingdom (even then, it's about as basic as a payroll can get. But unlike HMRC's on-line facility, it has no limit on the number of employees). It may work in other countries, but the payroll handles the data in a way that is specific to the United Kingdom tax rules, which complicates things a little. The next module is '**Payroll**', this is designed to operate in other countries. Depending on how sophisticated the requirements are. So there are no guarantees it will be useable in your country. If you want to use payroll, and are not based in the United Kingdom, select this one. There is a user guide specifically for setting up and running payroll. The other module is '**AutoManager**', this is designed specifically for those business operating auto parts retail, and/or workshop. It can handle point of sale, including bar code scanners, cash drawers, and receipt printers. It also allows the booking in of vehicles (or other types of equipment), booking out parts to jobs, allocation of labour, etc. It may be it's useful in other similar environments. Such as plant equipment, caravans, RVs, etc. The fourth module is '**Shop/Cafe Manager**'. This is designed for general retail (again it allows the use of bar code scanners, cash drawers, and receipt printers), it also handles cafe/restaurants by allowing tabs to be monitored for each table, orders to be sent to the kitchen (via a separate printer), and so on. User guides are available for both these modules.

When creating a new company/organization, and it's not the first, you'll see a '**Copy From**' button. This allows you to copy ALL data from another company/organization. You can also copy data from one company/organization to another by simply backing up the data in one, and then restoring it into the other.

'**Alternative location for data**' allows you to store your data somewhere other than the default location. In our example above, if the '**Code**' you entered for your company/organization was 'ADMINSOF', then the data would be stored in:

Adminsoft Accounts\ledgers\ADMINSOF

But this input field allows you to store it somewhere else, either on your hard disk, a network disk, or even on a memory stick. But, if you start up the accounts system, and try to access your accounts and the data location is not available, you will get error messages! So beware if using this facility on a network.

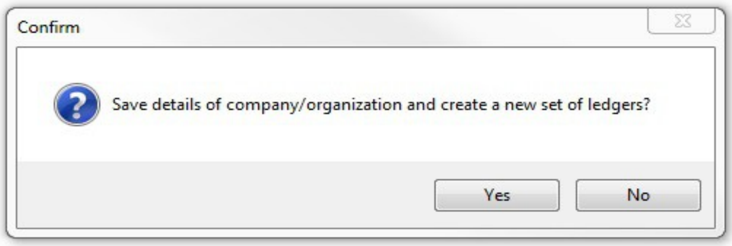
Most users can ignore this option, and use their data in it's default location.

WARNING: Do not store your data on a shared backup device such as a NAS drive, or into a folder that is automatically backed up to the cloud. Both these, for different reasons, can corrupt your data. Many suppliers sell backup drives for networks saying they are suitable for file sharing, which they kind of are, provided only one user accesses the file at a time. They do not usually support record locking or proper buffering. The problem with folders that are backed up to the cloud, is that when a file is being backed up, it can not be opened by the accounts system. So if the accounts system needs to use the file, and it's not available, it will fail to record or update data and/or index records.

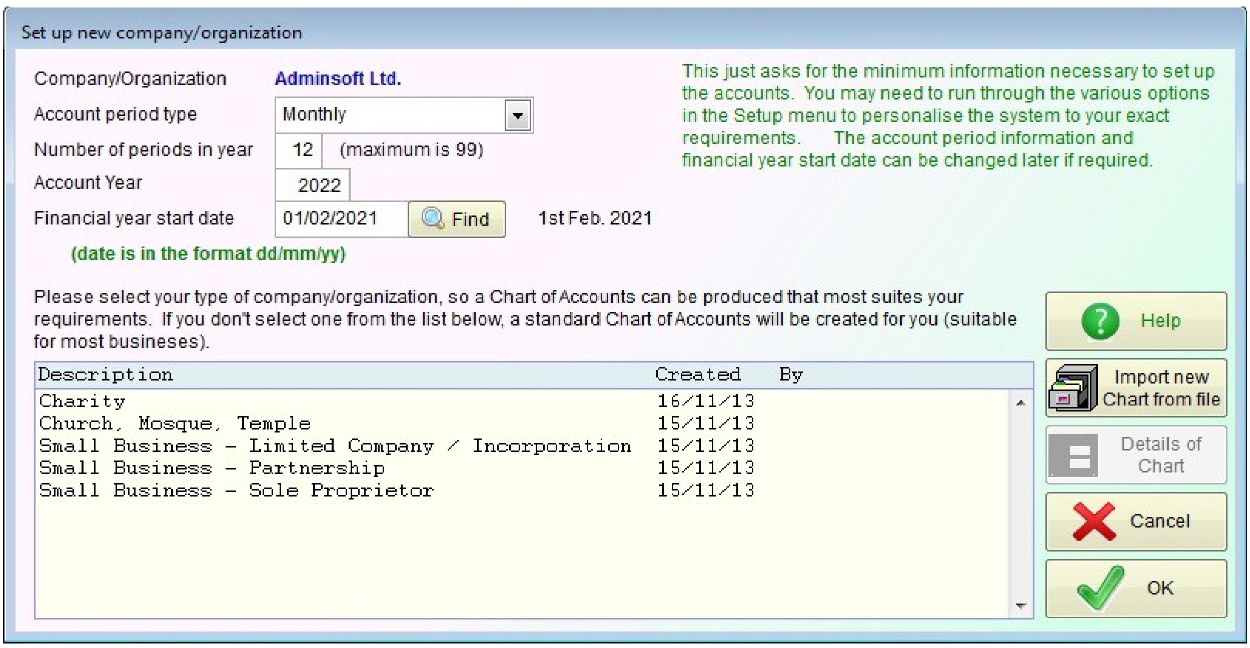
If you need to share data over a network, the data *must* be sat on a hard drive in a Windows PC, or better still on the hard drive in a Windows file server.

'**Alternative location for backups**'. When backing up, there is an option for a quick backup to hard disk. Not ideal, because if your hard disk fails, or is stolen, you still lose your data. But if you're in a hurry, it's better than nothing (we always recommend backing up to a memory stick, preferably several used in rotation). If you have a folder that is automatically backed up to the cloud or a nSA drive, you can't store the accounts data directly into it (see warning above), but you can backup your data to it (cloud backups are very useful for that). Hence this option.

Once you've filled in this form, click on the '**OK**' button. The following question will appear:



If you click '**No**', the form will vanish and dump you into the accounts system opening screen. Not a big deal, it just means you would then have to click the '**New Comp./Org.**' button and enter the details again. So please click '**Yes**'. You'll then be presented with the form below:



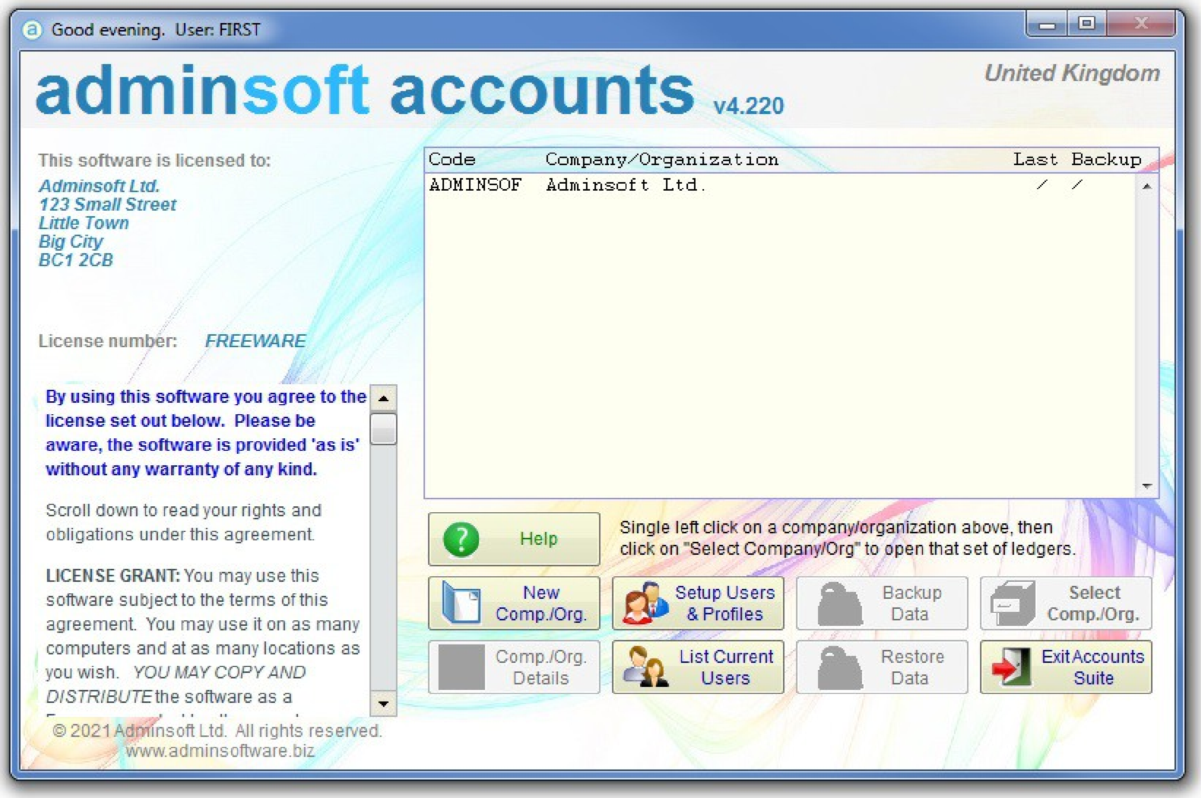
This is the last form before all the data files are created for your company/organisation. The first bit, obviously, is dealing with your financial periods and year. It makes a best guess, but of course your actual requirements may be a very different, so edit as necessary. Most account periods are monthly, but some are weekly, you even have the choice of 445 (which is the system where two periods are made up of four weeks each, then the third is five weeks, then it goes back to four weeks, and so on). The system is quite flexible. This is not set in stone. Once your company/organization has been created, you can edit the account periods and/or financial year at any time. The '**Account Year**' is the year in which your account year ends.

The lower half of this form deals with the chart of accounts. By default, it will use a chart of accounts suitable for small Ltd. or Inc. companies (these are companies limited by share capital).

But you can select another from the list. Once your company/organization has been created, you can edit the chart of accounts, changing account codes, deleting accounts, or creating new ones. So you're not stuck with what ever account are created.

'**Import new Chart from file**' allows you to load up a different chart of accounts. On our web site, there is a section where other users have uploaded chart of accounts they have created. You may wish to peruse this section, and download to your PC a chart of accounts that you think may be more relevant to your company/organization. You can then import that chart using this option. This is perhaps an option for the more experienced user.

When you click the '**OK**' button, the system will start creating your data files. When it's finished, it will leave you in the accounts system start up form. As below:



As you can see, there is one company/organization in there called Adminsoft Ltd. From here you can single left click on your company/organization and then click the '**Select Comp./Org.**' button. This will take you into the accounts for that company/organization. Alternatively, you can simply double click on the company/organization. The next step is to setup your data ready for you to enter accounts and transactions, please see the next section of the User Guide – Setting Up.

A few last things though before we leave this installation guide, the buttons on the start up form above:

'**Help**' will display some help text describing how to use this start up form. You'll see '**Help**' buttons on most forms through out the accounts system. One really useful feature they have, is they provide a section for you to make notes that relate to the option in use.

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'**New Comp./Org.**' allows you to create a new company/organization. This works in the same way as we created the first company/organization above. Although you will have to create your own '**Code**'. It creates an entirely new set of files, so the data held for the new company/organization does not have any affect or interfere in any way with any other existing company/organizations. You can set up as many as you wish. Very useful if you look after the accounts of several companies/organizations.

'**Setup Users & Profiles**' allows you to create new users of Adminsoft Accounts, and create passwords for them if necessary. When installed, a user account is automatically set up for you, the user name is **FIRST** and there's no password. When creating new users, we recommend you keep this user name for a little while, until you are happy you can login using a different user name. **Always keep a note of any new passwords you create.**

'**List Current Users**' will display a list of all users currently accessing the accounts system, regardless of which company/organization they may be working in. This of course, is only of use when running the software over a network.

'**Backup Data**' is very important! **We strongly recommend you use this option regularly.** You will need to click on a company/organization in order for the '**Backup Data**' button to become enabled. It will then allow you to backup the data for the selected company/organization. Backing up is one of those things busy users who are pressed for time often skip. But, if something happens to your accounting data, such as a hard disk failure, lock out due to ransomware, etc. there's nothing SO valuable as a good backup! If you're in a hurry, in the Backup data option you can select '**Quick Backup to Hard Disk**' which will copy your data into a backup folder (within the 'Adminsoft Accounts' folder). It's quick and easy to do, and does at least give you a back up. But of course, the backup is on your hard disk drive. So if anything happens to your hard disk drive or your PC, you may lose that backup. It's much safer to backup onto a USB memory stick, or some other external device (ever your phone, they usually have plenty of memory capacity). If you don't have the time to do this once a day, please make a point of doing it at least once a week, perhaps at the end of the week.

One really good way of securing your data is to install some software that automatically backups up a folder to the cloud. Set it to backup the folder:

C:\Adminsoft Accounts\backups

The above is assuming you installed Adminsoft Accounts into the default location. You can tell Adminsoft Accounts to backup into a different folder/. In the Company/Organization window (discussed a few pages back), there is an input field '**Alternative location for backups**'. This allows you to set a different folder for backups for a particular company/organization. If you have several company/organizations they can share the same folder. NOTE: NEVER be tempted to use software that automatically backups up to the cloud to backup your live data, as it can corrupt the data files.

'**Restore Data**' allows you to select a backup and copy it back into the live system. As with the backup option, you will need to click on a company/organization so that it knows which set of files you need to copy the backed up data to.

'**Select Comp./Org.**' launches the accounting system, using the data from the selected company/organization.

'**Exit Accounts Suite**' will exit Adminsoft Accounts. After working on the accounts for a company/organization, you should always exit the system properly. If you end the program using Windows Task manager, or if you close down your PC with Adminsoft Accounts still running, you may corrupt your accounting data files. If you are running the software as 'Freeware' (ie. you have not purchased a Software Registration Key), then after the software closes down it will launch a web page off our web site. This page often provides information about what's happening with the software, and is worth a quick look through.

On the left hand side of this start up form you'll see a scrollable section that contains the details of the software license. Please read this carefully. It basically says the accuracy of any and all information output and contained within the accounts system is entirely **your responsibility**, and that Adminsoft Ltd. or any of it's agents can not be held responsible for any loss whatsoever, howsoever it occurred, whether notified of the potential for a loss or not. You are deemed to have accepted these terms by your continued use of the software. It might all sound a bit draconian! But the thing is, we have no idea at all what data you're going to put in the accounts system, or how you're going to use it, or what Windows you're going to run it in, or the condition of the PC that you'll be using. Once our software is out there, we've really no idea what people are going to do with it. So you can understand we can't offer any kind of guarantees at all.

Updating Adminsoft Accounts

A new version of the software is released every month or so. It's strongly advised you keep your software up to date. If you're in the United Kingdom, you will have to keep the software up to date, otherwise it may fail to submit your payroll or VAT data to HMRC.

To update the software, simply download the latest version from our web site, then run it. Just as if you you were installing it for the first time. Except it will recognise that you already have Adminsoft Accounts installed on your PC, and will update your existing copy. It will not disturb any of your data. But it's always good practice to backup your data before updating your software. Once every couple of weeks the software will check to see if there is a new version available, and if there is, it will give you the option of downloading it.

We hope enjoy using Adminsoft Accounts.

End of document