

8. TOY TRACKER MOBILE

8.1 Introduction

This chapter tells you how to use ToyTracker Mobile, the Pocket PC-based data capture module for the Toy Tracker toy library system. It covers the following topics:

- understanding the Pocket PC basics
- preparing the Pocket PC
- using the Pocket PC away from your base to record toy transactions
- uploading the toy transaction(s) to the Toy Tracker
- confirming the mobile reservations.

8.2 Understanding the Pocket PC basics

This section provides a brief introduction to using the Pocket PC, including:

- charging the battery
- connecting to the PC
- using and abusing the Pocket PC.

8.2.1 Charging the battery

The Pocket PC battery lasts between three and eight hours of constant use and should be recharged overnight. The Pocket PC switches itself off after a few minutes of inactivity, so it should easily provide enough power for a full day of booking toys in and out.

If the battery becomes very low, the Pocket PC displays a warning and then appears to switch itself off. This protects the data already stored but prevents it from being used again until the battery has been charged.



If you experience problems with a flat battery, the fault may lie with the Pocket PC not switching off properly when you press the power button. If you press the power switch quickly it switches off; if you press it slowly it puts the Pocket PC into power saving mode which just switches off the backlight.

Use the mains adaptor (or optional car charger or additional chargers) to charge the Pocket PC as follows:

1. Plug the mains adaptor into the Pocket PC.
The charging light illuminates.
2. Leave the Pocket PC until the battery is fully charged.

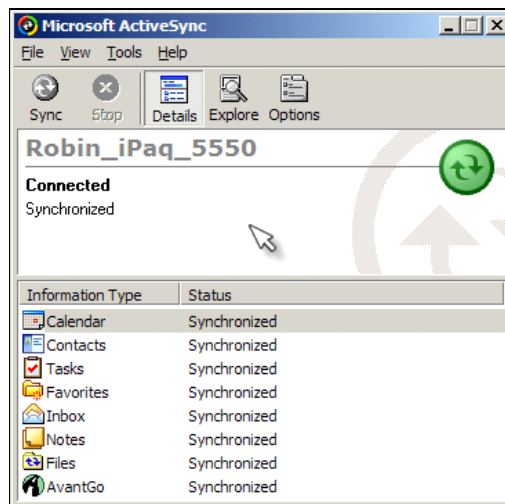
8.2.2 Connecting to a PC


To exchange data between the Pocket PC and the PC, you must connect the two. The easiest and most common method is to use the USB cable. It is also possible to make a wireless connection over a WiFi network or to make a remote connection by modem or mobile phone. Throughout the rest of this chapter, it is assumed that you are using a USB cable.

To link the Pocket PC to the PC:

1. Connect the Pocket PC and the PC by using the USB cable.

The connection software, *ActiveSync*, automatically starts up on the PC if the connection is successful.



2. Minimise the ActiveSync window by clicking on the  button in the top right-hand corner.

8.2.3 Taking care of the Pocket PC

Treat the Pocket PC as carefully as you would treat a mobile phone. Do not drop it or expose it to dust or water. Only tap the screen using the in-built stylus and never use a ballpoint pen or other sharp pointer. Rugged cases are available if required.

8.3 Recording the toy transactions

The process of recording which toys have been booked out and which booked back in while you are away from your base involves the following steps:

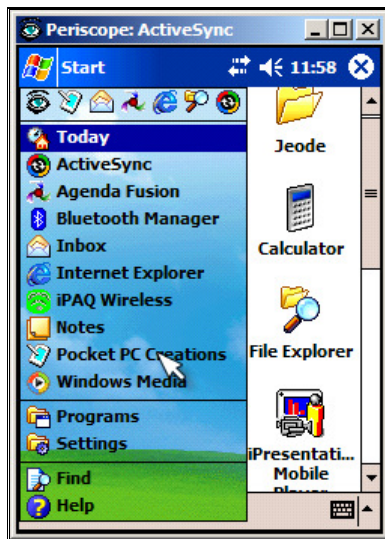
- start Toy Tracker Mobile
- record a toy transaction
- check items or revise entries (if required)
- synchronise to update the database.

8.3.1 Starting Toy Tracker Mobile

Toy Tracker Mobile uses a piece of software called Pocket PC Creations on both the Pocket PC and the PC/server.

To start this program:

1. Tap the Start button at the top of the Pocket PC screen.
2. Select *Pocket PC Creations* from the drop-down menu if shown, or tap on 'Programs' and then choose its icon:



If Pocket PC Creations does not appear to start, it may already be running 'behind' the main screen. To check this, select Start\Settings\Memory\Running Programs and activate it if necessary from the list of software that is already running.

3. Tap on the Toy Tracker Mobile icon:



Toy Tracker
Mobile

4. Tap on the Sessions button at the bottom of the screen and select the *Synchronise* option.

This ensures that you are working with the most up-to-date lists so it is important that you perform this step before recording any toy transactions.

If a message is displayed indicating that a newer version of the project is available and asking whether you want to download it, select Yes. The up-to-date lists of toys and members will then be downloaded.

You are now ready to start recording toy transactions.

8.3.2 Recording a toy booking

You record each toy transaction separately in Toy Tracker Mobile. As the data is collected, the toy transactions appear in a list on the screen.

To record a toy transaction:

1. Tap the New button at the bottom of the screen.
2. Complete each box in turn, scrolling down to reveal new boxes as necessary.

The screenshot shows the 'Toy Tracker Mobile - Session' window. At the top, there is a 'Target: Local' dropdown and a 'Home' button. Below this is the 'Toy Tracker Mobile' logo and a set of instructions: 'Select the member, then the toy, then click the option to book in or out. Add any notes if you need to. If you want to check the current status of the toy, click the "Check Current Status" button.' The form contains several fields: 'Date/Time' with the value '29-01-2010 11:29', 'Staff Member' with 'Elaine Porter', 'Branch / Location' with 'Base', and 'Member' which is currently empty. At the bottom, there are three buttons: 'Previous', 'Next', and 'Save & Close'.

3. First, ensure the **Date/Time**, **Staff Member** and **Branch/Location** boxes display your details correctly. If not, use the drop-down lists to select the correct details.

4. Then tap in the **Member** box and select the member. Members are listed in ID order.

You can also search for a member by typing his or her first name and last name in the **Member Search** box. You must enter the name exactly and separate the first and last names with a comma, as in the following example:

Smith, Jane

You can display and hide the member's details by tapping on the tick or cross by **Show Member Details**.

5. Tap in one of the **Toy** boxes to use either the old toy code or the new Toy Tracker toy code to select the toy.



Note that if you select a toy in both boxes then the last one you selected is the toy used in the transaction.

You can also search for a toy by typing the exact name in the **Toy Search** box, as in the following example:

Flower Feely Toy

The current location of the toy is displayed and you can display and hide the toy's details by tapping on the tick or cross by **Show Toy Details**.

6. Select the action you want to perform by tapping on the appropriate box: Book In, Book Out, Reserve or Record as Broken.
7. Complete any remaining details, depending on the action selected.
 - If you are booking a toy in, then there are no further details required.
 - If you are booking a toy out, you must specify:
 - **To When?** – the return date
 - **No of Weeks to Charge** – the number of weeks to charge. This figure is used in the calculation of the total to charge if a per week amount is specified for the toy
 - **Paid?** – whether the member has paid, not paid or paid a contribution only.
 - If you are reserving a toy, you must specify the start and end dates for the reservation.
 - If you are recording a toy as broken, then there are no further details required.
8. Enter any additional notes in the **Notes** box.
9. Tap the Finish button at the bottom of the screen to save that toy transaction.
10. Tap the New button again to start the next toy transaction and repeat steps 2–9 as necessary, either until all toy transactions are recorded for the current location or until you want to synchronise.

8.3.3 Checking items/revising entries

Once you have recorded toy transactions, they appear in a list which is displayed after you tap on the Finish button. You can review or edit any transaction on the list by simply tapping on it to select the transaction.

8.3.4 Synchronising your data

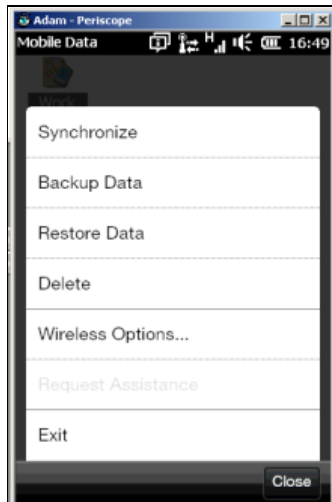
You synchronise your data to update the server or PC with data from the Pocket PC. To be able to do this, you must have first performed the set-up procedure.

Setting up

In order to tell the Pocket PC where the computer or server is that will receive the data, you must perform a set-up procedure. This specifies the required TCP/IP address. You only need to do this once. This procedure is normally performed by the System Administrator.

To perform the set-up:

1. In Pocket PC Creations on the Pocket PC, select Menu.



2. Select *Wireless Options...* from the menu to display the Wireless Synchronisation screen.



Note that Wireless Options is a misnomer as this includes non-wireless options, ie direct connection.



3. Ensure that the top option (Connect to a server) is ticked.
4. In the **Address** field, enter the TCP/IP address.
5. If you require a password, enter this in the **Password** field.
6. Tick the following options (leaving all other options unticked):
 - Automatically connect to Internet
 - Receive new sessions upon connect
 - Allow remote assistance.
7. Tap on Done.

Methods of synchronisation

To synchronise from the Pocket PC, the Pocket PC must be able to reach the server's TCP/IP address over the Internet or an internal company network. The most commonly used method is over the Internet.

There are several ways for the Pocket PC to be on the Internet, including:

- **USB cable on a home PC**
The Pocket PC is connected via a USB cable to the home PC, which is on the Internet.
- **USB cable on an office PC**
As with the home PC, the Pocket PC is connected via a USB cable to the office PC, which is on the Internet.
- **mobile phone via infrared**
The Pocket PC's infrared port points to the infrared port on the mobile phone. For this method you need a Data Account from your mobile phone network (eg Orange, O2, Vodaphone etc.). Dial up the Internet on the Pocket PC.



See your mobile phone manual and/or your mobile phone network's help desk for instructions on how to set this up.

- **mobile phone via Bluetooth**

Bluetooth is a mechanism for wirelessly connecting devices such as Pocket PCs, mobile phones, laptops etc over short distances. This method works the same as the infrared connection, but has the benefit that the two objects do not need to point at each other. To use Bluetooth, the Pocket PC and the mobile phone both need Bluetooth which must be activated in both.



See your mobile phone manual and/or your mobile phone network's help desk for instructions on how to set this up.

- **WiFi (wireless network)**

You can use this either:

- at home or in the office if a wireless network is available.
See your IT Administrator for instructions on how to connect to WiFi.
- at public 'WiFi Hotspots', such as most McDonald's, chain hotels, Starbucks, service stations, Internet cafés, etc.

The Pocket PC must be WiFi enabled to use this method.



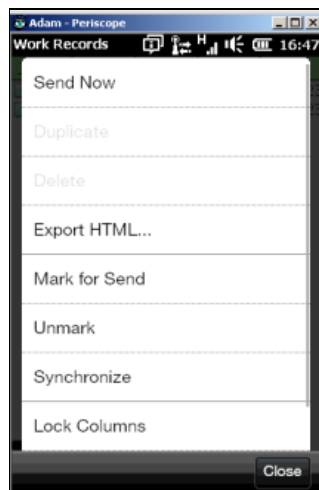
For further information on WiFi connection visit www.btopenzone.com.

Performing the synchronisation

For performance reasons you are advised to upload at least once daily.

To synchronise from the Pocket PC:

1. From the list of toy transactions in Toy Tracker Mobile, tap on Menu.



2. Select *Mark for Send* from the menu.

The folder icon next to each item changes from blue to green. Those items marked with a green icon will be uploaded during the synchronisation.



Advanced users who do not want to send all items can highlight only those items that they do want to send, by using the stylus, and then tap and hold to display a menu. From the menu, select Mark for Send. Only the selected items, which are now marked with a green icon, will be sent.

3. Tap on Menu and select the *Synchronise* option from the menu.

A dialog box displays progress; the items disappear one by one from the list as they are uploaded. The items only disappear off the list once the server has confirmed receipt, so there is no danger of losing items.

The likely transmission speeds are:

Connection	Item without photo or voice notes	Item with photo** or voice notes
Cable/cradle at office (on same LAN)	10s per second	Several per second
GPRS (mobile)*	2-5 seconds	10-30 seconds
3G (mobile)*	Several per second	1-2 seconds
WiFi	Several per second	1-2 seconds
Home cable/cradle with Broadband	Several per second	1-2 seconds

* Transmission speed can vary considerably depending on signal strength and other factors.

** The size (resolution) of the photo makes a big difference to the transmission speed – send smaller photos if you can.

When there are no items left on the list, the upload is complete and your data is synchronised.

8.4 Confirming mobile reservations

To avoid a potential conflict between reservations made while using the mobile service and reservations made back at your base, you must check through all mobile reservations and confirm them when you are back at your base. You perform this confirmation on Toy Tracker itself (not on the Pocket PC).

To confirm mobile reservations:

1. Select option 6, *Maintain Basic Data*, from the Main Menu.
2. Select option 8, *PPC Menu*, from the Maintain/View Basic Data Menu.
3. Select option 2, *View PPC Reservations*, from the PPC Menu.

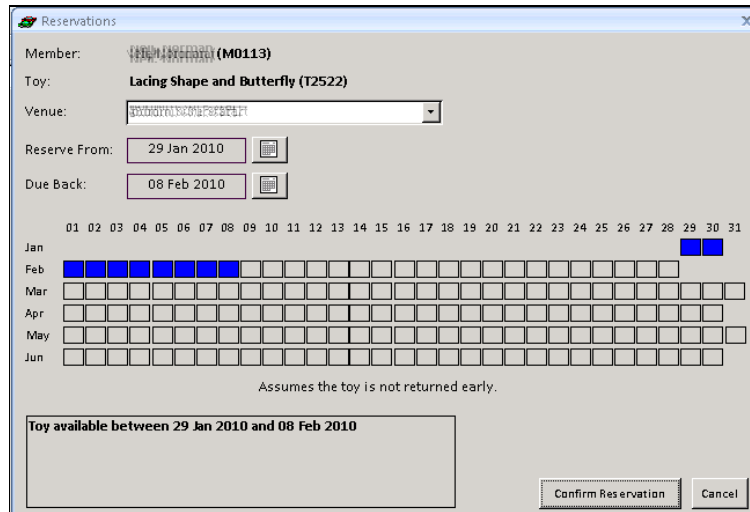
The Browse Mobile Reservations screen is displayed listing all reservations awaiting confirmation.

For each reservation listed, you must review the dates requested and the toy's availability and confirm it to make the reservation.

4. Click on the Open Form button to the left of the first reservation.



The Reservations screen is displayed.

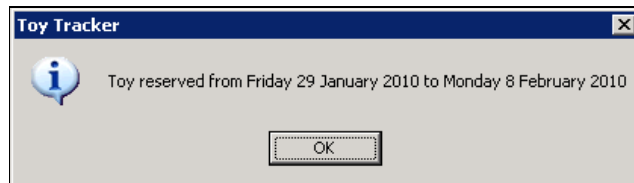


5. Check whether the toy is available for the requested dates. You can change the dates if necessary.

Any conflicts in availability are displayed in red on the calendar.

6. If the toy is available and you are happy to make the reservation, click Confirm Reservation.


A message displays the dates for which the toy is reserved.



7. Click OK to confirm the dates.

You return to the Browse Mobile Reservations screen. The confirmed reservation is removed from the list.

If you do not confirm a reservation, you can enter notes to explain why and what action to take.

 *If you wish to remove a reservation that has already been dealt with from the list, tick the **Reservation Completed?** tickbox. When you next open this screen the reservation will no longer be displayed.*

8. Repeat the process until all the reservations have been dealt with.