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Acorn

# View Hints and Tips

This document attempts to help with commonly experienced View problems. Additional information on the features mentioned can be found in View books supplied with the program.

Applicable Hardware :
BBC B
BBC B+
Master Series

Related Application Notes: Label printing within a View macro



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## PRINTERS AND VIEW

View can use virtually any printer that is compatible with the computer. To use any special features the printer may have you will need a printer driver, and this is best obtained using the Acornsoft Printer Driver Generator, available from Acorn approved dealers.

This program is a series of questions on your printer, which should be answered using the manual for your printer. Understanding the printer manual is probably the most difficult part. The program then creates a printer driver for subsequent use by the View family.

### Some hints on the use of the Printer Driver Generator.

Don't forget the HT 2 130 command if you want to access the extended highlight codes.

The questions in the Printer Driver Generator are only suggested uses of that particular highlight code - it is up to you what function you choose for that code.

Effects that are required for the whole document, perhaps for example condensed mode, can be entered in response to the printer initialisation question, and then will take effect immediately printing starts. This question also allows a large number of codes.

### Characters #`_'$

Dollar Sign and Hash sign - You have to enter the codes the PRINTER uses for these characters. For ` you enter "#". If your printer prints # and $ characters; then you have to enter the codes from the printer manual into the PDG.

Different printers use different codes to represent the above characters. Some printers do not have some of the characters, others use long escape sequences to reach them.

Sometimes you will find that the character(s) you want can be printed by sending other characters from the BBC. For example you may find that sending # prints ` or sending ` prints $. This may be the easiest or only way of printing the character you want.

The Printer Driver generator recognizes this problem and gives an alternative way of printing #/` and $. You can enter a code or codes which the printer uses to print the characters. So for example if you reply to PDG response: ESC 17 to the code for ` question then the printer driver will send ESC 17 to the printer when it receives the pound sign from VIEW.

## MICROSPACING AND CHARACTER PITCH

View can adjust the spacing between words to 'justify' the text. If your printer is capable of it, this adjustment can be in fractions of a character width. To use this feature, type MICROSPACE after loading a suitable printer driver.

Note that this is not the same as proportional spacing, where the spacing of idividual characters is adjusted. View cannot proportionally space text, but your printer may be capable of doing this independently.

View, by default, assumes 12 pitch text when calculating this spacing. To change this, there is optional parameter to the MICROSPACE command. This takes the form of a number indicating the character width in 1/120ths of an inch. This means that the pitch, which is characters to the inch, is 120 divided by this number. So....

10 pitch is MICROSPACE 12
12 pitch is MICROSPACE 10
15 pitch is MICROSPACE 8

and so on.

MICROSPACING - When typing text in VIEW with "Justification" on VIEW inserts spaces into the line between words to align the text at the right margin. This can give an uneven number of spaces between words.

MICROSPACING on the printer is changing the gaps between words so that all of the gaps are the same length and the text is still right-aligned. Clever printer drivers can do this in conjunction with the printer - IF the printer supports microspacing.

PROPORTIONAL SPACING - Normally when typing text on the screen and printing, each character is displayed having the same width, therefore, in VIEW, 74 characters fit under the standard ruler.

Proportional spacing is printing each character in its own width. Therefore, more 'i's and 'j's will fit on a line than 'm's and 'w's. Many printers can do this and VIEW printer drivers can switch on and off proportional spacing. BUT if you change the length of characters the alignment at the right margin will be lost. This is because the proportional spacing is done AFTER the alignment.

**To USE microspacing:**

1) In PDG (see pages 10 and 17 of manual) specify microspacing. You need to refer to your printer manual for whether HMI code adjustment is required. If in doubt type NO. You need to get HMI setting code from the printer manual.

2) Before printing load printer driver with: PRINTER epson (for example) then set microspacing with MICROSPACE. You may be able to pur numbers after the MICROSPACE command to achieve different "pitches" (lengths of character) on the printer. Try MICROSPACE 12 (or 10, or 15).

## PAGE LAYOUT

View has a very flexible way of controlling the layout of the text on the page, but this can be confusing at first. Unexpected blank areas in the text are usually an indication that you haven't taken advantage of this flexibility.

A View page is divided into 6 parts, listed here in the order they occur on the page.

THE TOP MARGIN A number of blank lines printed at the top of the page, before the header. View defaults to 4 lines, but this can be changed by the stored command TM n, where n is the number of lines you would like. n can be 0, when no lines will be printed.

THE HEADER A single line which is printed on each page. It is defined with the DH command and can be temporarily changed back to a blank line with the HE command. (Note that a line is always printed, although it may be blank.)

THE HEADER MARGIN A number of blank lines printed after the header and before the main text. View defaults to 4 lines, but this can be changed by the stored command HM n, where n is the number of lines you would like. n can be 0, when no lines will be printed.

THE MAIN TEXT The main text will be printed here. The number of lines depends on the margins and page length - the explanation of page length below.

THE FOOTER MARGIN A number of blank lines printed after the main text and before the footer. View defaults to 4 lines, but this can be changed by the stored command FM n, where n is the number of lines you would like. n can be 0, when no lines be printed.

THE FOOTER A single line which is printed on each page. It is defined with the DF command, and can be temporarily changed back to a blank line with the FO command. (Note that a line is always printed, although it may be blank.)

THE BOTTOM MARGIN A number of blank lines printed at the bottom of the page after the footer. View defaults to 4 lines, but this can be changed by the stored command FM n, where n is the number of lines you would like. n can be 0, when no lines will be printed.

The commands that affect the page layout take effect on the next page to be printed. A common mistake is to leave a blank line before these commands, which is printed as part of the text area, so the header, and header and footer margins have been printed before the commands affecting them have been encountered. This results in the first page not having the desired layout, but second and subsequent pages being correct.

If you have View 3, and want just continuous text, the PB stored command can be used to turn off all the margins, and headers and footers.

## PAGE LENGTH

The page length in View means the total of the margins, header lines, and text area. This means that the number of lines of main text is

page length - margins - header line - footer line

For the default length of 66 lines, and with the default margins this is

66 - 4*4 - 2 = 48 lines of text.

Standard paper is 66 lines long, but you can alter the View page length with the PL stored command. If your printer skips the perforation automatically, you will need to account for this.

A simple way to calculate the length required is to run the following BASIC program (hit ESCAPE when more than a page has been printed) and count the number of lines appearing on a page. This is the value for view's page length.

```
10 VDU 2
20 REPEAT
30 PRINT "A printing line"
40 UNTIL FALSE
```