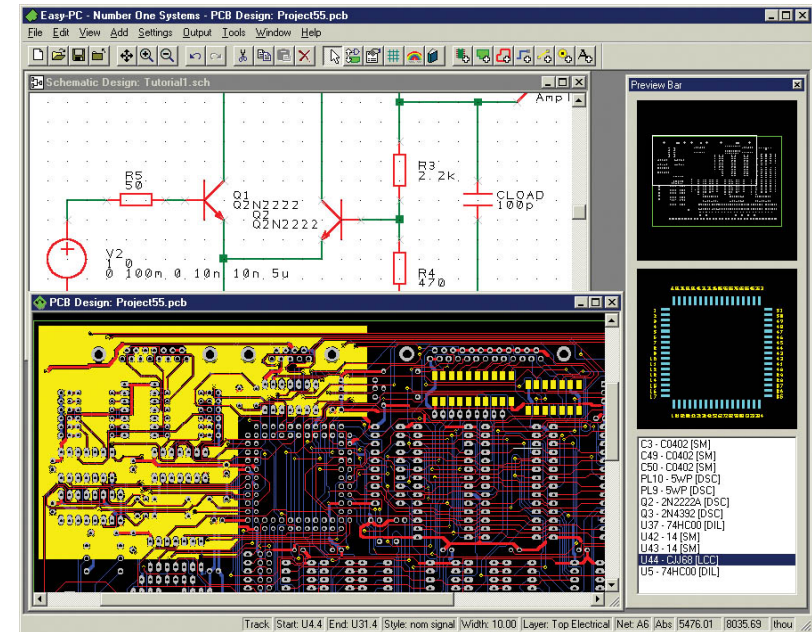


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EASY PC FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS



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EASY-PC For Windows Frequently Asked Questions

How quickly can I get Easy-PC shipped to me?

Orders received by 3:00 pm UK time each day are usually shipped the same day by 1st class post. Interlink and FedEx are available for Europe, USA and rest of world shipments at an extra charge

What do I get for my money if I buy Easy-PC For Windows?

You get Schematics and PCB Layout editors, basic generic libraries, manual routing capabilities and library creation tools etc. This is enough to take you right through the complete design process and out to manufacture. If you buy the 1000, 2000, or unlimited versions you get the AutoRouter as well. On the 500 pin version the AutoRouter isn't included

If I don't require an AutoRouter can you do anything else for me instead?

Yes, instead of the AutoRouter on 1000, 2000, and unlimited pin models you can have the Pro-Library of over 14,500 parts for Easy-PC

What constitutes a 'pin' definition when calculating the limits?

A pin is classed as a component pin or a 'free' pad in the design. It does not include vias. Component pins can be any through-hole pin or a surface mount pin. (As an example, a small board with two devices, one a DIP14 and one an SOIC14 will be counted as 28 pins in total).

Is the Schematic limited to pin count?

No, the Schematic design editor is unlimited.

What happens if the Schematic design is bigger in pin limit than the PCB product I have?

Nothing. When you translate to PCB, it will produce an error and no PCB design will be generated. You will be told that the pin limit has been exceeded.

What can I do if I have exceeds the pin limits in PCB?

You can upgrade the pin limits for the difference in price between pin limit models. We give you a new authorisation code immediately after you contact us and the credit card transaction is complete. So, progress with your design should not be unduly delayed.

If I buy a pin-limited version are there any other limits or product restrictions I need to be aware of?

Apart from the pin limits: 500 pins, 1000 pins, 2000 pins, Unlimited pins, there are no limits within Easy-PC in terms of number of layers, or physical size of the board up to 1 sq metre

Tell them about how Easy-PC For Windows has been developed...

Easy-PC For Windows is a superior system to that of the DOS products. It is written in C++ using object orientated code which means it is far more stable, easier to upgrade functionality wise and is faster to develop. None of the original Easy-PC DOS code was used (or able to be used). Wherever possible though, terminology and principles were used (they can even use their old shortcuts which have been programmed in).

When I try to install my old Easy-PC Pro/ProXM (or old DOS products) I get a "Run Time 200 error" message, why? And what can be done for it?

The error message is because the installation PC is faster than a Pentium P2 200Mhz. The compiler used didn't support this speed of machine. Nothing can be done except upgrading to EPC Win.

Can I still purchase a DOS product?

As a new purchase No. As an update to the existing product, only under pressure. Only if they really don't want a Windows upgrade.

Can I upgrade any of my old DOS products to the Windows equivalent?

Yes. For Analyser and Pulsar there is the new Easy-Spice product which replaces these two. The Windows equivalent products are also available.

Can I upgrade my Analyser 3 DOS or Pulsar DOS to the Windows version?

Officially no, but if they don't want the Easy-Spice product then we can do this. Costs are the standard upgrade price for non-EPC Win products of £75.

Can I still use my Multirouter II DOS with EPC Win?

Yes and for a modest charge we can provide a MR II Windows CD.

Can I still get bug fixes for my old versions of DOS or old versions of Windows?

DOS – No, other than the last DOS version if they have an older one.
Windows – only the latest version (V6.0) and the last V5.0 patch (5.0.8).

I have an old version of DOS and I know that there is a later version, I don't want a Windows version, can I update the DOS one?

Yes, this is possible but don't offer. Offer it as a last resort if they definitely don't want the Windows version.

[Upgrading from Easy-PC Windows type questions](#)

I have Easy-PC for Windows version 1 can I upgrade to the latest version?

Yes, absolutely. The upgrade price to the latest version is the same. Regardless of revision and number of pins.

I want to upgrade but bought Easy-PC second-hand and don't have a manual or any reference documentation. Can I upgrade?

Respectfully we have to decline. These may be an illegal copy of Easy-PC and we have no means of verifying.

I have Easy-PC version 1, 500 pins, and want the latest version unlimited pins. How much do I pay?

The price is calculated based on the price of upgrading to the latest revision plus the difference in price between pin counts on the price-list.

If I upgrade from 500 pins to 1000 pins do I get the free AutoRouter?

No, this is only available on new purchases not on pin count upgrades

[Older DOS version Easy-PC type questions](#)

Which is the nearest equivalent of the Pro/ProXM product if I upgrade to Windows?

Although Pro and ProXM were unlimited, there were limits on design items within these. The nearest Easy-PC For Windows equivalent are either the 2000 pin or unlimited pin versions.

If you are unsure of which variant you need, download the demo from our web site and read one of your designs in. There is a report (Design Status) which will tell you how many pins you have used in your old design.

What about all my design and library data with Easy-PC DOS versions if upgrading to Easy-PC for Windows?

With Easy-PC Pro or Easy-PC Pro XM all Schematics, Libraries, and PCB design data can be read into Easy-PC For Windows. With the older Easy-PC DOS only Schematics and PCB Designs can be read-in. The separate Easy-PC DOS library data cannot be read-in.

Why won't my old Easy-PC DOS product work with my 'sparkling' new PC?

Development work was stopped on the DOS products when computers were running on the Intel 386 33Mhz processor. The way in which they were compiled and developed has been greatly bettered with modern operating systems, device drivers, writing techniques, code, etc.

Are there any extras I might need to buy?

We do have some optional extras that you may need:

The **Gerber Import option** enables you to import Gerber files from both Easy-PC and other systems. They can be read in to verify that what is produced is what you expected before sending it off to be manufactured.

The **Pro Library** contains over 14500 extra components. These are made up of the components, Schematic Symbols and PCB Footprints.

The **IPC-SM-782 library** is an SMD footprint library which has been created to the American IPC council's published standard. There are equivalent Components for each footprint to give you a placeholder to use for the actual component when constructed.

Datasheets for all these products are available in PDF format.

Pro Router is a more advanced AutoRouter option designed for Easy-PC customers requiring AutoRouting on large and/or densely packed designs.

Do I get a printed manual with Easy-PC?

Easy-PC is supplied with a full printed manual running to over 350 pages. Easy-PC also has context sensitive help for more immediate assistance

What is the policy on after-sales technical support for Easy-PC?

Technical support by telephone hotline or email is available free of charge providing you have the current version of the product.

How do I keep on the current version?

We usually release a major new version in July each year with 10 -15 new features. This is not guaranteed but we've managed to do them within 12 months every time so far. For existing users who bought the product more than 30 days ago, there is a modest update fee (usually around £69 / €107). A new users guide is also available at each major release update for cost price (usually about £15 / €22).

For this they get access to the current major version and subsequent bug fixes, plus free unlimited technical support by our support team. Email support is also available for them as well.

After I buy, how can I keep my Easy-PC up to date with all the latest patches?

Just go to <http://www.numberone.com/patches.htm> and download the latest patches

What formats can EPC Win output for manufacturing?

Excellon NC Drill format, Gerber RS-274-D (file + aperture file), Gerber RS-274-X (embedded aperture table with Gerber file, preferred by manufacturers), any Windows printer, HPGL pen plot. Easy-PC version 8 now supports OBD++ format export

Is network licensing available?

No, it's not. EPC Win is a point solution.

How much is a site license?

We can do a site license but the cost is based on the number of proposed seats for the site.

What can you do for me if I buy more than one license on the same order?

1 copy is at list price

2 copies = 2nd copy 10% discount

3 copies = 3rd copy 15% discount

4 copies = 4th copy 20% discount

5-9 copies = copy 25% discount on each

10 -19 copies = 35% discount on each

20 and above copies 50% discount on each

What if I buy one license now and then another in say 6 months, and then another a year later?

For an existing registered user of EPC Win, if you buy more copies within 12 months of the initial purchase then we will allow 5% discount on subsequent purchases. If they buy another within 12 months of the second purchase then we can again allow 5% discount. If 12 months elapses since the last purchase then there is no discount

Do you have any simulator products?

Yes, we have a Spice based A/D mixed mode simulator for Schematic circuits. We also have Layan for PCB designs, this is an electromagnetic simulator. We also have a Filter design simulator and an electronic version of the paper Smith chart system.

Does the simulator product work with EPC Win?

Yes, the Easy-Spice product is integrated into the EPC Win Schematic design environment.

Does the Schematics package output a netlist for use in the PCB design editor?

Yes and No. Easy-PC uses a binary mechanism to translate a Schematic design into the PCB design editor. A Netlist is not used, this is by far a more accurate method of working. If you need a Netlist for checking purposes, one can be written from the schematic design.

Can I buy Schematics by itself without PCB?

No, they must buy the 500 pin limit version and ignore the PCB portion. The Schematic is unlimited even though the PCB portion may have a limit.

Can I buy PCB only without Schematics (I intend using OrCAD as my front-end)?

No.

How do I install Gerber Import?

Install the main Easy-PC For Windows product.

From within Easy-PC, click on the Settings menu, Optional Features, select Gerber Import and click Apply, type in the supplied authcode and click Apply. Cancel the dialog. Close down Easy-PC For Windows and re-open. The Gerber Import facility will now be available.

Instructions are on P.14 of the EPC Win Manual, or P.7 of the ER Manual & in the on-line help.

Post shipment type Questions

I was only shipped Easy-PC For Windows, not the Easy-Router II Autorouter/Gerber import/IPC782 Library etc. where are the other products?

The CD contains everything you need. If you have purchased the additional items you can install them through the main CD using the product key codes which we supply.

When the CD is inserted it runs the Installer product which displays a window of product install choices. Physical options which need installing are done through this, other cost options which are integrated are already installed and just need licensing.

I didn't get a product key code with my Windows to Windows version upgrade (V5.0 to V6.0 etc.).

No, this is correct, use your existing product key code which is inside the front cover of the manual.

I still can't find it...

Have another look. If you still can't find it, email sales@numberone.com and they will find it and send it to you but you will need to give them your customer reference number and company name/address etc.

I can't find my customer reference number or I haven't got a customer reference number

Send an email to sales@numberone.com and they will find it for you or create you a new one. You will need to give them your company name/address etc. and where you purchased it from.

I can't install the cost options, my product key code won't work.

Have you purchased the cost options? If not then you won't have the product key code. If you have, then we can check the number that is being installed, occasionally <I> is mistaken for <1> and <o> with <0>. (This is the most common question asked of our support desk and one of the easiest to resolve). Email the working authcode to the customer if possible and get them to copy/paste it in to avoid typos.

Why is Easy-Router not an upgrade to Multirouter?

Multirouter is not longer sold because of licensing issues which ceased when the original Number One Systems Limited stopped trading in 1998. Multirouter had much more development time spent on it than Easy-Router. MR for existing users is still much higher performance in terms of completion time, results and completion of design. It is really only limited when an operating system change is required, e.g. from Win 98 to Windows 2000 say. MR is not supported under this platform or NT4.0/XP.

Import/Export type Questions

What other front-end Schematics capture systems are supported?

Easy-PC can import Schematic ASCII netlists to create a PCB from OrCAD and Electronics Workbench (EWB) MutliSIM. In general though, the format supported is EDIT 2.0.0

I have an existing CAD system can you import the designs and libraries?

At this point we can only import Ultiboard PCB designs (pre-Ultiboard 2001) and UltiCAP schematics

What CAD system??? If it's PADS, P-CAD, OrCAD, Cadstar, Protel, then they may very well be a Pulsonix prospect. A lot of business has come this way.

I have a mechanical CAD system can you read the files from this product?

Yes, we import and export in DXF format. This is supported by AutoCAD and other mechanical design vendors. So, for example if you have a complex PCB profile that fits into an enclosure designed on the mechanical system this can be designed on the mechanical system, imported into Easy-PC and used as the PCB board profile

We can also export from Easy-PC in IDF format

What is the IDF Export option?

IDF is an ASCII based format (Intermediate Data Format). It is used as an alternative to DXF and is commonly used by more advanced 3D mechanical or solid modelling programs such as ProEngineer, SDRG Ideas or Solidworks. EPC Win can export in IDF V2.0 and V3.0 formats and supports component height information. V4.0 is not supported currently.

Can I import OrCAD Schematics translated into Easy-PC Schematics?

No. We can only import netlists created with OrCAD Schematics

Can I import from any other PCB Layout systems?

Yes, we support import from Ultiboard, Tsien Boardmaker2, Eagle 4.09 and 4.11

Is Windows XP supported?

Yes, All Easy-PC For Windows and Number One Systems products work on Windows '98 through to XP and including NT4.0 and Windows 2000. Windows 3.x is not supported. Windows XP is the recommended operating system for Easy-PC Fro Windows

What Windows versions are supported for a new copy of EPC Win?

Windows'98, ME, 2000, NT, XP

Are the old versions of Easy-PC For Windows still supported?

No. Problems are only fixed in the current major version of any Windows product. Support is not offered on any old versions.

Is there a Linux version available?

No, we only support Easy-PC on Microsoft Windows

What is the current version of EPC Win (Easy-PC For Windows)?

Version 8.0.x is the latest; this was released in July 2004.

What is in the new version 9 next year?

We only release information on the content of a new version about 2 weeks before the actual release date. This is for competitive intelligence reasons to keep Easy-PC ahead of our competitors

If I buy now, what version will I get?

You'll get the latest major version (V8.0) including all available patches

Is Easy-PC a reliable product?

EPC Win is a very stable product with few outstanding bugs at any one time bugs. We take quality very seriously and welcome feedback from all our many thousands of customers world-wide. Any bugs recorded that are verified as such and are applicable to all our customers are fixed as quickly as possible with and included in the latest patch update.

How would I get a free update?

Free updates are only provided if the new product was purchased within 30 days (1 calendar month) of the next major version release.

What about support, what does it consist of?

Frontline support is done through the distributor office, backup form the UK is by email or phone/fax.

How are bug fixes supplied?

If a serious bug is reported which we have to fix, a new DLL will be issued directly to the customer. This is then incorporated into the next patch which is a consolidated release of all the previous DLLs which have been fixed. Only DLLs which have been fixed since the last patch are issued. Patches are provided from a 'base' release (usually the major release, e.g. V8.0), and from the previous patch, say V8.0.6 to V8.0.7. This enables users to update to the latest version even if they miss patches in between.

How often are bug fixes supplied?

Whenever they are needed. From a new release there are normally a few to start with, then less throughout the year. We normally issue about 8-9 patches during a product's life.

How big is the library that comes with Easy-PC?

The standard library is about 2,500 complete parts (schematics symbol and footprint). But we do have an optional Pro library of 14,500 parts from a range of manufacturers

Can I edit/reuse one of the existing items in the standard library?

Yes. Any item already there or created by you can be modified, edited and reused multiple times. One resistor symbol and resistor footprint symbol can be used many, many times by different components with different values if required.

Can I import the libraries from my old (non-Easy-PC) system?

Yes, Ultiboard and Eagle

Can I import the libraries from my old Easy-PC system?

Yes, from all Easy-PC for Windows versions and from Easy-PC Pro and Easy-PC Pro-XM (old DOS versions)

Autorouter type questions

What is an AutoRouter?

Yes, we really get asked this question!! Be prepared to answer this one. An AutoRouter is quite a clever program

That automatically inserts tracks between the airline interconnections in the design

Is the AutoRouter a cost option?

At present the autorouter is included at no extra cost providing you purchase a 1000 pin, 2000 pin, or unlimited pins. If you buy a 500 pins then it isn't included

Do I need an AutoRouter?

What sort of designs are you doing (analogue or digital)? If analogue then the chances are you won't. If they are digital then the router will help.

How good is the Easy-PC AutoRouter?

Well we've more than 1100 customers with it (Easy-Router II) but this really depends on the complexity of the design. If it's a high density design then it may not route 100% every time. Easy to mid complexity are moderately handled by the router. You can try it by installing Easy-PC from the demo disk.

How can I tell if Easy-Router II Autorouter is installed?

- 1) Run Easy-PC, check on Settings menu under Optional features. A check box next to the router will show you that it is installed.
- 2) You could also look in the PCB design editor to see if this option is available on the Tools menu. Read in a small PCB design and try routing it
- 3) If you have installed the router and it is still not showing, you may not have run down Easy-PC first. Do this then try again. Easy-PC has to be run down to initialise the router option.

Will you be developing Easy-Router II in the future?

Yes, we will be starting a new project at the end of 2002 but this isn't likely to show results for some time yet.

Are there any alternatives to Easy-Router?

Yes, we have a Spectra interface but do not supply the router itself. Spectra is obviously a lot more money but will give a much better result than Easy-Router. The Spectra interface is authorised using an authcode and is free to users who request it from our sales office sales@numberone.com

Also, if Easy-Router is not adequate, frequently these are good Pulsonix prospects!!!

I heard of a product called Multirouter. What is the difference between Multirouter and Easy-router?

Multirouter was developed under UNIX originally and ported to Windows. It only runs under Windows 85 and 98 whereas Easy-Router works under NT4.0/2000 and XP as well. Easy-Router can run from within Easy-PC whereas MR runs as a batch 'engine' from a dialog inside Easy-PC. With Easy-Router you can select individual nets to route as well as whole components, selected nets and the whole design.

Is Easy-Router an upgrade to Multirouter?

No. Easy-Router was developed in-house as a long term replacement. Currently it doesn't replace existing MR installations and is intended for new users only.