

QuickBooks

Compare QuickBooks Pro, Premier and Enterprise Understand the Key Differences



*This guide complements of
Scott Gregory,
QuickBooks Specialist*



Compare QuickBooks Products

The Inside Scoop
 (see notes below)

**Enterprise
 Version**

Premier

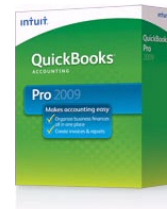
Pro



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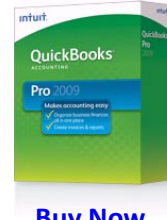
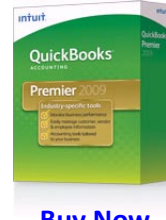
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# of simultaneous users	A	Up to 30	Up to 5	Up to 3
Data file size	B	1 GB or more	150-200 MB max	150-200 MB max
Create & e-mail quotes	C	✓	✓	✓
Create & e-mail sales orders	C	✓	✓	NO
Create & e-mail invoices	C	✓	✓	✓
Create & e-mail purchase orders	C	✓	✓	✓
Optimized for larger data files and network usage		✓	NO	NO
Print checks, pay bills and manage expenses	D	✓	✓	✓
Track sales and customer payments		✓	✓	✓
Track credit cards		✓	✓	✓
Track sales taxes		✓	✓	✓
Manage payroll, payroll taxes and direct deposits	E	✓	✓	✓
Set reminders and create to do lists		✓	✓	✓
One-click business reports	F	150+ industry-specific	150+ industry-specific	100+
Import data from previous versions of QuickBooks	G	✓	✓	✓
Import data from Excel	H	✓	✓	✓
Import data from Quicken	I	✓	✓	✓

The Inside Scoop (see notes below)	Enterprise Version	Premier	Pro
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Import data from Peachtree	I	✓	✓	✓
Download bank and credit card transactions	J	✓	✓	✓
Multiple currency capabilities		✓	✓	✓
Create a business plan		✓	✓	NO
Create a budget	K	✓	✓	✓
Forecast sales and expenses		✓	✓	NO
Customize your invoices and other forms	L	✓	✓	✓
Create industry-specific reports		✓	✓	NO
Track inventory, set reorder points	M	✓	✓	✓
Create inventory assemblies and bills of material	M	✓	✓	NO
Track inventory in multiple warehouses, serial/lot # tracking	N	✓	NO	NO
Free 25GB secure online data backup plan	O	✓	NO	NO



“THE INSIDE SCOOP” – WHAT YOU REALLY NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THESE FEATURES

A: # OF SIMULTANEOUS USERS – A common source of confusion with QuickBooks users everywhere. The easiest way to understand this issue is this – each computer that is going to use QuickBooks needs its own paid, licensed copy installed on it. For example, if you have 3 people in the office that are going to use QuickBooks, you need to purchase 3 licenses.

Another example – if you have 7 people in the office that are going to use QuickBooks, you need to purchase 7 licenses. HOWEVER, Pro will allow up to 3 users and Premier will allow up to 5 users working in the same QuickBooks file at the same time – no exceptions. Enterprise will allow you to have up to 30 users in the same QuickBooks file at a time.

If you have a server in your office (or a desktop computer that is acting as a server), you do not have to purchase a separate license for that computer AS LONG AS nobody is sitting and working with QuickBooks on that computer each day. ([back to comparison chart](#))

B: DATA FILE SIZE – They don’t tell you this anywhere in the users’ guide for Pro or Premier, but it is important for you to know you may outgrow these versions for some technical reasons. My experience is that Pro and Premier data files start to take a long time to run reports at the 150-200 MB (megabyte) size. In addition, Pro and Premier become more susceptible to data corruption and other funky issues if they get to be too large.

The Enterprise version was designed to handle a much larger data file. There are some businesses running smoothly today with data files over 1 GB (gigabyte). If you find that you are outgrowing Pro or Premier, the transition into Enterprise is very seamless and easy to do.

There is no hard and fast rule on this topic. Nor is there any way to know exactly how many invoices, estimates, etc. will get your data file to become “too big”. However, these rules of thumb relating to the 150-200 MB max file size for Pro and Premier have served my clients very well over the last 10 years.

([back to comparison chart](#))

C: CREATE AND E-MAIL QUOTES, SALES ORDERS, INVOICES AND PURCHASE ORDERS – Pro, Premier and Enterprise give you 3 options for e-mailing your forms:

- 1) Via Microsoft Outlook
- 2) Using your web-based e-mail client (i.e. Gmail, Yahoo, etc.)
- 3) Using the QuickBooks e-mail servers (extra fees apply)

If you choose to use Outlook or Outlook Express, the outbound e-mails are tracked through them, so that a copy of outbound e-mails end up in your Sent Items folder. If you choose the QuickBooks e-mail system, you do not get any type of e-mail tracking unless you opt for their paid Online Billing Services program.

([back to comparison chart](#))

D: PRINT CHECKS, PAY BILLS AND MANAGE EXPENSES – If you want to print checks out of QuickBooks, you'll need to get QuickBooks check stock. But, you don't necessarily have to purchase your checks directly from QuickBooks. Many other web sites and local printers can supply QuickBooks check stock to you. Most businesses use the voucher style check for QuickBooks, but a wallet style is also available. ([back to comparison chart](#))

E: MANAGE PAYROLL, PAYROLL TAXES, AND DIRECT DEPOSITS – Unless you want to look up all of the deductions for each employee for each payroll by hand out of the payroll tables, you will need to either subscribe to one of the [payroll services offered by QuickBooks](#) or use a third-party payroll service like PayCycle, Paychex, etc.

The costs for these services are completely independent of the cost of the QuickBooks software. Many third-party payroll services offer “electronic bridges” that take the data from their service and electronically import it directly into QuickBooks. If you process payroll using the QuickBooks payroll services, your data is already integrated directly with QuickBooks. ([back to comparison chart](#))

F: ONE CLICK BUSINESS REPORTS – For QuickBooks Premier and Enterprise, many industry-specific reports are also available out of the box. For example, in the Premier and Enterprise: Manufacturing and Wholesale versions, you get the Profitability by Product and Sales by Class and Item Type (among others) that are not included in the Pro version. ([back to comparison chart](#))

G: IMPORT DATA FROM PREVIOUS VERSIONS OF QUICKBOOKS – QuickBooks software makes this process a snap. If you are moving from an older version of Pro to either Premier or Enterprise, the data upgrades seamlessly. If you are moving from an older version of Premier to either Pro or Enterprise, the data also upgrades seamlessly. However, you cannot move from Enterprise to Pro or Premier without [using some third-party companies](#) to assist with this transfer of data. ([back to comparison chart](#))

H: IMPORT DATA FROM EXCEL – What this means is that if you have a customer list, vendor list, inventory/item list and/or chart of accounts in Excel, you can import that into QuickBooks using the import wizard. However, if you envision importing actual transactions such as invoices into QuickBooks, you will need the help of a third-party add-on tool (such as [Transaction Pro Importer by Bay State Consulting](#)) to get the data into QuickBooks. Other than those four data sets specifically mentioned, no other data can be brought directly into QuickBooks from Excel – it has to pass through another program first. ([back to comparison chart](#))

I: IMPORT DATA FROM QUICKEN OR PEACHTREE – QuickBooks has a handy tool that allows you to take data from either of these programs and transfer it. ([back to comparison chart](#))

HOWEVER – you may not want to use this tool, and instead, opt to create a new data file and then enter transactions from that point forward. My experience in many cases has been that the process of bringing in data from Quicken or Peachtree causes many more headaches than it is worth. You spend lots of time cleaning up and fixing things. It is important to evaluate your options here, and I can assist you with that. ([back to comparison chart](#))

J: DOWNLOAD BANK AND CREDIT CARD TRANSACTIONS – As long as the bank where you have your checking/savings accounts and/or the issuing bank of your credit card offers the download of information into QuickBooks, this capability will exist. In most cases, there are no extra fees for this service, but be sure to read the fine print from your bank at the time you sign up.

There are screens within QuickBooks that allow you to then match up and enter the downloaded information into the appropriate spots within the software. My experience shows that it is critical to have a basic understanding of how QuickBooks works before you turn on this functionality. Otherwise, it is easy to download transactions and make a mess of your QuickBooks very quickly. Trust me, I've seen it.

[\(back to comparison chart\)](#)

K : CREATE A BUDGET – Yes, QuickBooks allows you to create a budget. One budget for each business year – that's it. You can't have version A and version B of the budget for next year unless you store them outside of QuickBooks in Excel.

The budget tool in QuickBooks acts like a mini-spreadsheet and allows you to copy in numbers from a prior year or post them from scratch. You can then run several budget vs. actual reports to see how the business is doing. However, don't expect a lot out of the budgeting tool. If you need advanced budgeting features, you will want to explore a budgeting add-on program for QuickBooks. [\(back to comparison chart\)](#)

L: CUSTOMIZE INVOICES AND OTHER FORMS – QuickBooks has a nifty, feature-rich tool called the Layout Designer that allows you to customize these forms as you like and avoid the expense of having to purchase pre-printed invoices, purchase orders, etc. It is a snap to add your company logo to your forms, and also pick and choose what fields, columns, etc. show up on what forms. You may unleash your inner graphic artist with this tool within QuickBooks. [\(back to comparison chart\)](#)

M: TRACK INVENTORY, SET REORDER POINTS/CREATE INVENTORY ASSEMBLIES AND BILLS OF MATERIAL – QuickBooks does provide the capability to keep track of inventory using various reports such as a "Stock Status by Item" and "Stock Status by Vendor" reports.

However, if your inventory needs are more advanced, you may want to look at several of the excellent inventory add-on products for QuickBooks. For example, QuickBooks does not take into account a lead time factor for inventory items. Nor does it allow for a "where-used" capability for bill of material items and related inventory planning. It does not allow you to quickly see the purchasing history of an item (i.e. what vendor and what cost), nor does it do any type of MRP.

I have always said that if you mention "QuickBooks and inventory" in the same sentence, you need to ensure QuickBooks can do what you need it to. I can help you figure out the answers to those questions. [\(back to comparison chart\)](#)

N: TRACK INVENTORY IN MULTIPLE WAREHOUSES, SERIAL/LOT # TRACKING – As mentioned in (L) above, when I hear "QuickBooks and inventory" in the same sentence, it gives me reason to pause. It should for you too.

The Advanced Inventory module is also available to businesses using the Enterprise version of QuickBooks (extra fees apply). Using this module, your business will have the capability to track multiple locations, as well as serialization or lot tracking of your inventory. Keep in mind that there are other advanced inventory software packages that work with QuickBooks which may offer more and/or better functionality than the Advanced Inventory module provides.

[\(back to comparison chart\)](#)

O: FREE 25 GIGABYTE ONLINE DATA BACKUP PLAN – QuickBooks Enterprise includes a free 12 month subscription to the QuickBooks Online Data backup service. This service allows you to securely store your important QuickBooks data, as well as any other computer files (think Excel, Word, etc.) offsite. This service can be set to automatically backup your critical business day each day at a set time and put the copy in a very secure, encrypted digital vault.

Keep in mind that there are other online backup services that can work not only with Enterprise, but with Pro and Premier too. [My favorite is Mozy Pro](#). It is a snap to set up and quite cost-effective for businesses. [\(back to comparison chart\)](#)

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About Scott Gregory:

Scott provides a wide variety of QuickBooks solutions and profit improvement techniques to his clients in a relaxed yet very informative manner. Scott is a Certified QuickBooks ProAdvisor, Certified QuickBooks Enterprise ProAdvisor. He has taught hundreds of students a variety of QuickBooks courses for over five years in the Community Learning Division of Lakeland Community College. [Find out more about Scott!](#)

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