

Learning TradeStation  
**Essentials of the TradeStation Desktop**



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## Table of Contents

Welcome to the Learning TradeStation series. The main topics in this lesson are included below for your easy reference, and the complete links for more features are available in the TradeStation® platform help system.

To access the topics directly on your desktop, navigate to the top Menu bar within the TradeStation platform, then select **Help > Get Help > Platform Trading**.

### *Essentials of the TradeStation Desktop*

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## Logging into TradeStation


This is the first step to log in to TradeStation to start using the application. Once you log into the TradeStation platform you have the option to be connected to the network or work offline. It also displays status messages related to the log on process.

- ▶ Access using the Windows Start menu or the Windows desktop and open the TradeStation application. The TradeStation Network Logon dialog is displayed.
  - **User Name** - Enter your user name.
  - **Password** - Enter your password.
  - **Save User Name** - Check this setting to save your user name with your profile so you don't have to enter it each time you log on.

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The following options displayed are determined by your account status.

- **Logon** - Click to log into TradeStation. If you have both live and simulated accounts setup, you will be prompted to select the type of environment (live or simulated) you want to log into. If you only have a live trading account, then the TradeStation platform will automatically open.
  - **Live Trading** - Click to access your live trading account.
  - **Simulated Trading** - Click to access a virtual trading environment (a simulated trading account must be setup).
  - **Work Offline** - Click to open the TradeStation platform without being connected to the network.
- 
- **Network Status** - Click to view information about the data and order execution network.
  - **Close** - Exits TradeStation without logging on.


 If you do not want to connect to the TradeStation Network and want to work offline instead, click Work Offline at this point. Since you are not connecting to the network, cache data will be used; you will not receive any new data until you log back onto the TradeStation Network.

## Upgrading TradeStation


After logging in, there will be times when you will be notified when there is a new version of TradeStation available. If this occurs, the dialog will appear and the following options will be available.

- **Go to Download Page** - Launches the TradeStation web site where you can upgrade to the new version of TradeStation.
- **Use Existing Version** - Click to proceed to TradeStation.
- **Prompt me again in [ ] days** - Check this setting to be reminded to upgrade for the number of days you select. The TradeStation - Upgrade window will be displayed each time you log in until you upgrade to the newest version of TradeStation.

## Live Trading for Brokerage Accounts

In TradeStation, live trading involves using funded TradeStation brokerage accounts to place trades and track actual market positions. In addition, TradeStation brokerage clients always have the option of choosing Simulated Trading to place simulated trades and establish simulated positions. For Live Trading, **Live**  appears on the TradeStation status bar.


You can exit from live trading in one of several ways, including:

- From the status bar, double-click on **Live**  to exits from live trading.
- From the Menu bar, click **File**, select the check marked *Work Online* to disconnect from the data network which also exits

from live trading.


- From the status bar, double-click on **Data**  to disconnect from the data network which also exits from live trading.


There are several ways for you to know whether you are using the simulator for placing trades.

- The status bar (at the bottom of the desktop) displays **Live** .
- All trading account numbers begin with something other than 'SIM'.



### Simulated Trading for Subscription Accounts

In TradeStation, simulated trading involves using special simulated accounts to place trades and track simulated positions. The TradeStation simulator allows you to try out platform features other than those you might typically utilize such as strategy automation, advanced orders, and alternate market types.


Simulated trading may only be done on symbols associated with your real time data entitlements. In addition, TradeStation brokerage clients always have the option of choosing Live Trading to place real trades and establish actual positions in the marketplace using funded brokerage accounts. For Simulated Trading, the Order Execution Simulator information dialog appears and **Sim**  appears on the TradeStation status bar.

 Simulated trading accounts do not represent real money or real positions. The simulated environment is designed to let you practice using different trading approaches, platform tools, and markets. To perform Live Trading, you need to exit the simulator and logon by selecting Live Trading.

You can exit from simulated trading in one of several ways, including:

- From the status bar, double-click on **Sim** .
- From the Menu Bar, click **the File > Work Online** sequence to disconnect from the data network which also stops the simulator.
- From the status bar, double-click on **Live**  to disconnect from the data network which also stops the simulator.

you are using the simulator for placing trades.

- The Order Execution Simulator information dialog appears the first time the TradeStation desktop loads after you logon.
- The status bar (at the bottom of the desktop) shows **Sim** .
- All trading account numbers begin with 'SIM'.
- Trade Bar status messages will be preceded by the phrase 'Simulated Acct'.
- TradeManager status messages will be preceded by the phrase 'Simulated Acct'.


### Managing Simulated Accounts

From the Menu bar, click **File > Edit Simulated Accounts...** to access the Edit Your Simulated Trading Accounts page on the TradeStation support site where you can manage your simulated trading accounts. Here you can add 'funds' to each of your simulated accounts or you can reset any of your accounts to a specific starting balance. For more information see [Editing Simulated Accounts](#).

## About Live Trading



In TradeStation, live trading involves using funded TradeStation accounts to place trades and track actual market positions. In addition, TradeStation clients always have the option of choosing Simulated Trading to place simulated trades and establish simulated positions.

## Logging onto Live Trading

 See [Logging into TradeStation](#) for instructions on selecting Live Trading during the logon process.


## Exiting Live Trading

You can exit from live trading in one of several ways, including:

- From the status bar, double-click on **Live**  to exit from live trading.
- From the Menu bar, click **File**, select the check marked *Work Online* to disconnect from the data network which also exits from live trading.
- From the status bar, double-click on **Data**  to disconnect from the data network which also exits from live trading.

## Live Trading Indications

There are several ways for you to know whether you are using live trading for placing trades.

- The status bar (at the bottom of the desktop) displays **Live** .
- All trading account numbers begin with something other than 'SIM'.

## About the Desktop

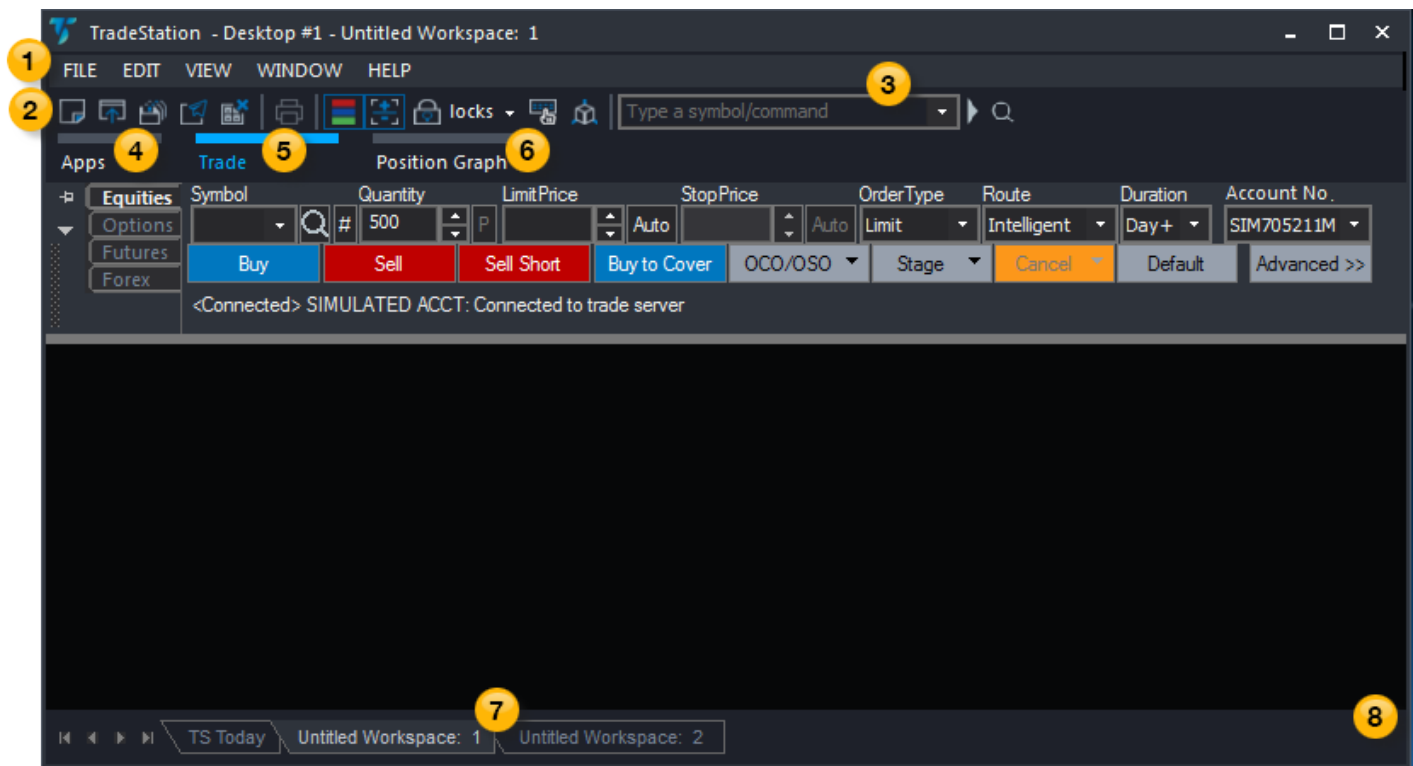
When you start TradeStation, you'll be looking at the Desktop. The desktop includes the Menu Bar, Command Line, Tool Bar, Trade Bar, Position Graph Bar, TradingApps, Status Bar, and the workspace area. In the Desktop, you'll be working with one or more tabbed workspaces, and it is in these workspaces that you add windows, much like you add sheets to a workbook when working in a spreadsheet application.

### VIDEO - TradeStation 10 Platform Overview and Tour

Think of the desktop as your overall organizational tool; it enables you to specify overall settings for your workspaces as well as the overall look and feel of TradeStation. You can have multiple Desktops open at once, each having a separate name and different settings.

For example, each desktop enables you to define how many workspaces to remember in your workspace list and globally toggle title bars on and off as well as other global features. The full list of desktop options is listed in [Setting the Desktop Preferences](#).

- Click on an element number on the graphic to learn more about that section of the desktop.





- 1 [Menu Bar](#) - Used to select platform features from a drop-down menu.
- 2 [Tool Bar](#) - Used to select platform features by clicking on icons. Hovering over an icon shows a tool tip.
- 3 [Command Line](#) - Type a symbol to be applied to the selected window or type a command to perform an action.
- 4 [Apps](#) - Used to access the TradingApp Launcher that contains trading tool windows and trading apps.
- 5 [Trade](#) - Used to access the Trade Bar. Fields on the top row of fields specify order parameters. Click an order action button in the middle row to send. View status as order is processed.
- 6 [Position Graph](#) - Used to access the Position Graph Bar where you can view the profit/loss of positions.
- 7 [Workspace Tabs](#) - Each tab represents an open workspace on the desktop.
- 8 [Status Bar](#) - Shows the account status and whether an account is available for trading.

#### Related Topics

[Creating a Desktop](#)

[Saving a Desktop](#)

[Working with Multiple Monitors](#)

[Switching Between Desktops](#)

[Printing a Desktop](#)

[Setting the Desktop Preferences](#)

[About Workspaces](#)

[About Windows](#)

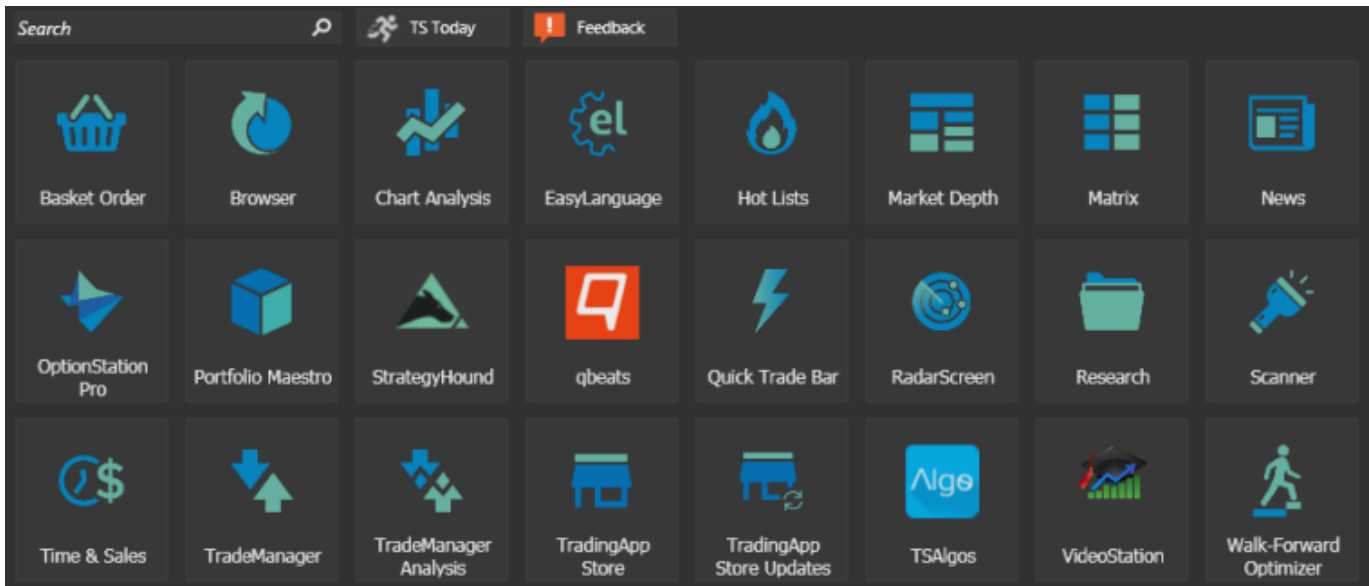
[About Bar Panels](#)

## About the TradingApp Launcher

The TradingApp Launcher lets you add a new instance of a built-in TradingApp (trading application) window (such as the built-in Chart Analysis, Matrix, and RadarScreen windows) to a workspace on your desktop. You can also add other custom TradingApps that you purchase from the TradingApp store, or create directly using EasyLanguage, as well.

- Access the TradingApp Launcher by clicking the **Apps** tab (at the top edge of your desktop) or using the **View > TradingApp Launcher** menu sequence.

The TradingApp Launcher allows you to locate and add TradingApp windows to your TradeStation desktop. Click a TradingApp icon to launch and add the application window to your current workspace. You can quickly scroll through the list of TradingApps to locate a named item or use the Search feature to filter the list to show items that include the words you type. To find more TradingApps, click the [TradingApp Store](#) icon.



### Moving the TradingApp Launcher

Click the ▼ (drop-down arrow) at the upper left of the TradingApp Launcher window and select Floating. Click and drag the move handle at the top of the floating window to move the TradingApp Launcher to a new location. Select Docking to return the TradingApp Launcher to its default docked position. For more information about displaying, hiding, and moving bar panels, see [About Bar Panels](#).

### Resizing the TradingApp Launcher

When docked, click and drag the edge (opposite the docked edge) of the TradingApp Launcher to change its size. When floating, click and drag the lower-right corner (or any edge) of the TradingApp Launcher to change the width and/or height.

### Organizing TradingApps in the TradingApp Launcher

Click and drag any TradingApp icon to move it to another position in the list (to the right or left of another TradingApp icon).

## Displaying or Hiding the Apps tab

Under the **View** menu, select the checked **TradingApp Launcher** item to hide (remove) the tab or select the un-checked item to show (re-display) the tab.

### Related Topics

"About the Desktop" on page 8

## About Windows


In the Desktop, you can create new workspaces and add windows to these workspaces. This allows you to view and analyze Chart Analysis windows, RadarScreen windows, News windows, TradingApps, EasyLanguage documents, and more. For all open workspaces, you can also receive alert information and monitor strategy orders. Each of these windows is important and, when used properly, provides you with powerful trading tools.

### VIDEO - Creating TradingApps and Workspaces

You can have many windows open at the same time. There are several ways you can arrange windows to make it easy to move from one window to another. The topics below cover how to work with windows; for example, how to resize and reposition windows and how to turn title bars on and off as well as how to minimize, restore, and maximize windows.

The TradeStation Desktop has several main window types:


- **TradingApp** - Trading and analysis tools, such as the build-in Chart Analysis, Matrix, or RadarScreen windows, as well as custom TradingApp windows created with EasyLanguage.
- **Report** - The windows that hold reports, such as the Strategy Performance Report.

 The topics listed below do not cover working with report windows in your Desktop (for example, the Optimization Report). For information on report windows, see the documentation for each specific report.

## Saving Windows

Individual windows cannot be saved directly but are saved as part of a workspace. When you save a workspace, all changes in all windows contained in the workspace are saved. In addition, you have the option of saving only your current workspace or all open workspaces at the same time.

1. From the Main menu bar, click **File > Workspaces > Save Workspace**, or right-click on the workspace tab and select **Save Workspace**.
2. If you've already named the workspace, the workspace and its changes are saved.
3. If the workspace is new (Untitled Workspace), you are prompted to type a workspace name in the File box, then click **Save**.
4. All of the windows in the workspace have been saved. You can open the named workspace at any time to view the windows as they were saved.

 See [Saving a Workspace](#) for more on saving windows within a workspace.

## Copying Windows

You can make a copy of the current window and paste it into any workspace. This allows you to make a duplicate copy of a particular window while keeping the original workspace intact.

1. Activate a window to copy from.
2. From the Menu bar, click **Edit > Copy Window**.
3. Switch to the workspace or desktop where you want to add a window.
4. From the Menu bar, click **Edit > Paste Window** to insert the copied window to desktop or workspace.

When you paste a window into a blank desktop, a new workspace is automatically created.

## Related Topics

[Making a Window Active](#)

[Resizing a Window](#)

[Moving a Window](#)

[Maximizing, Minimizing, and Restoring Windows](#)

[Refreshing TradeStation Windows](#)

[Arranging Windows](#)

[Closing a Window](#)

[About Workspaces](#)

[About the Desktop](#)



## About Workspaces

Workspaces help you organize your trading ideas so you can concentrate on the markets and make decisions in a timely manner. Think of a workspace as a repository for related windows—a place where you can put related windows together on your screen. You can create a workspace to work with a particular stock, a group of stocks, an industry, a market, or group specific information that you want to view together. TradeStation includes four sample workspaces so you can get an idea of how they function. The sample workspaces are Chart Analysis, Futures, Options, and Stock Watch. To open a sample workspace, see [Opening Workspaces](#) for details. You can even use the sample workspaces as a building block for your own workspaces.

When you first create a workspace, it is blank. You then add windows to the workspace i.e. Chart Analysis, RadarScreen, TradingApp, etc. These windows are then saved as part of a workspace file with the extension .tsw. When you want to analyze other stocks, industries, or markets and want to keep your ideas separate, you can create additional workspaces; the Desktop makes it easy to switch between them.

You will work in one workspace at a time (only one workspace is visible at a time); this visible workspace is referred to as the "current workspace". However, TradeStation monitors all open workspaces for you, so while you are working in one workspace, TradeStation is actually monitoring activity in all open workspaces for you. And, there's no limit to the number of workspaces you can have opened at one time (other than your computer's resources).

To maximize your computer's efficiency, keep open only the workspaces you really need.

### Related Topics

[Creating a Workspace](#)

[Saving a Workspace](#)

[Working with Multiple Workspaces](#)

[Closing a Workspace](#)

[Copying a Workspace](#)

[Transferring a Workspace](#)

[Email a Workspace](#)

[Renaming a Workspace](#)

[Deleting a Workspace](#)

## Customize - Toolbars

The Toolbars tab in the Customize dialog allows you to customize the display of toolbars within the TradeStation Desktop as well as work with custom toolbars. The settings on this tab apply only to the toolbars available for the active window that appears in the Toolbars list.

- ▶ Access using the menu bar **View > Toolbars > Customize** menu sequence and select the **Toolbars** tab.
- ▶ Access using the menu bar **View > Macros** menu sequence, or from the main toolbar Macros button. Click the Toolbars button and select the **Toolbars** tab.

### Toolbars \_\_\_\_\_

Contains a list of predefined and customized toolbars.

- Check this setting to select the desired toolbar to be displayed in the platform.
- **Show Tooltips** - Displays the highlighted name when the cursor is hovered over the desired icon in the toolbar.
- **Large Buttons** - Enlarges the icons in the selected toolbars for easier viewing.
- **New** - Creates a new customized toolbar.
- **Reset** - Restores the TradeStation toolbar back to the original default settings. This is helpful when an icon from a predefined toolbar has been deleted accidentally.
- **Delete** - Removes any customized toolbars that was created. This option is only available when a customized toolbar is selected. TradeStation toolbars can not be deleted.

### Toolbar Properties \_\_\_\_\_

Displays the toolbar properties for the selected toolbar. Customized toolbars are the only toolbars where the toolbar name and enabling and/or disabling the shared properties can be edited.

- Select the customized toolbar to modify the toolbar name.
- **Shared** - Check or deselect this setting if you want your customized toolbar to be shared.

- 
- ▶ Click **Close** to apply any changes.

## About Backup & Restore

The Backup & Restore utility in TradeStation provide an easy way to save and recover your work (information elements you have created or modified in TradeStation) on a regular basis. This helps protect your work in the event of a hardware or software failure and is also useful for restoring previously edited elements when upgrading your system or moving your work to another computer.

### VIDEO - Backing Up and Restoring Your TradeStation Work

Each backup job produces a single archive file that contains all elements that were included in the job. This archive file, or any specific elements within the archive, can later be restored into the same or more recent build of TradeStation. Since a TradeStation archive file contains only component information (it does not contain any user specific items such as user name, password, or account information), any archive can safely be restored by any user.

For multi-source components (such as workspaces), you can specify additional folders in different locations to be backed up as part of the component. In each referenced folder, only the files with that component's file extension will be included in the archive.

You can define multiple backup configurations that can include different backup settings. For example, you might use a 'Daily' configuration to automatically backup desktops and workspaces every day and use a 'Weekly' configuration to backup all components each weekend.

A unique archive file is created for each backup job that is run. The name of the archive is automatically based on the name of the selected backup configuration along with the TradeStation version and date/time.

If TradeStation is open when a backup job is run, either manually or scheduled, the connection to the TradeStation data network will be closed and all TradeStation related processes will be stopped or frozen so that all necessary files can be included in the archive. During the backup process, windows will not update, alerts will not trigger, strategy automation will be suspended, and orders may not be placed. Once the backup job is complete, all open desktops and data network connections should return to their pre-backup state.

### Related Topics

[TradeStation Backup](#)

[Running or Scheduling a Backup Job](#)


[Restoring an Archived Backup File](#)

[TradeStation Backup/Restore Preferences](#)



## Macros Wizard

The Macros wizard dialog guides you through the process of creating, editing, deleting and/or running and Command Line Command or Order Entry macros. In addition, you can assign hot keys and toolbar buttons to macros.

- ▶ Access from the Main toolbar and click the **Macro**  icon. Or, click **View > Shortcuts > Macros**. The Macros dialog appears.

### Categories \_\_\_\_\_

Contains the two macro types available: Command Line Command Macros or Order Entry Macros.

- Select the desired macro type.

### Macros \_\_\_\_\_

Contains a predefined list of macros associated to the selected macro type selected in the Categories section.

- Select the desired macro name to display the macro description.

**Edit** - Launches the Create Command Line Macro dialog with the selected macro name displayed in the Type the Command Line Command(s) box. Click and type the new text to rename the macro name.

**Create** - Launches the Create Macro dialog and is the starting point of the Macro wizard. For more information, see [Create Macro Wizard](#).

**Remove** - Launches a dialog prompting you if you are sure you want to remove the selected macro name.

**Run** - Launches a Macro Confirmation dialog asking you if you would like to run the selected macro. If your macros are locked, you will not be able to run the macro until you unlock the macros.

**Hot Keys** - Launches the Hot Keys dialog. For more information, see [Hot Keys](#).

**Toolbars** - Launches the Toolbars dialog. For more information, see [Customize - Commands](#) and [Customize - Toolbars](#).

### Description \_\_\_\_\_

Provides detailed information for the selected macro.

- ▶ Click **Close** to exit.