



The British Broadcasting Corporation Microcomputer
Prestel Adapter

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Connecting a Prestel* Adapter to your British Broadcasting Corporation† Microcomputer provides a link with the exciting world of computer communication. Inexpensive and easy to use, the Prestel Adapter converts the BBC Microcomputer Model B into a powerful computer terminal capable of two-way communication.

Access to viewdata

Firstly, the Prestel Adapter allows the BBC Microcomputer to communicate with the British Telecom viewdata service through the public telephone network. Subscribers to Prestel are able to dial up a wealth of constantly updated information on a variety of subjects including news, sport, travel information, microcomputing, financial news and a great deal more.

Access to other databases

In addition, information can be obtained from other computer systems. Several companies are already providing information and services which can be accessed by a computer terminal connected to the telephone network. The Prestel Adapter is far less expensive than a dedicated device yet it allows you to take advantage of the large amounts of information available. Users who need to have rapid access to such information will be able to write programs for their BBC Microcomputers which will instruct the unit to dial up another computer automatically, retrieve a certain piece of information, and then finish the call; all in a matter of seconds!

Access to software

Also available as part of the Prestel system is the Prestel microcomputing service which includes Micronet 800 and other information services. Subscribers are able to download a wide variety of software in addition to accessing information of general interest to microcomputer owners.

Access to electronic mail

The Prestel Adapter can be used to talk to almost any computer with a 1200/75 bits-per-second telephone connection, such as the British Telecom Gold‡ business service. A subscriber to this service is able to type messages on a BBC Microcomputer fitted with a Prestel Adapter, edit the text until it is satisfactory, and then send the completed message by telephone to a central computer. Only the person to whom the message is addressed can dial in and read it. This system can be faster, and is more secure, than the telex system. Once loaded into the memory of the BBC Microcomputer the message can be recorded on cassette tape or disc or dumped onto a printer.

As well as being able to communicate with one another within the UK, subscribers will be able to send international messages as the British Telecom Gold service has direct links with similar electronic mail services overseas.

Access to armchair shopping

It is already possible to book hotels, theatre tickets, or holidays and transfer money from one bank account to another. It is likely that these services will continue to expand until it is possible to do all the shopping without leaving the comfort of your armchair.

Access to business information

The Prestel database has an area dedicated to financial information. Subscribers can obtain up-to-date share prices and use the service for share transactions.

Automatic dialling

The Prestel Adapter, which is connected to the BBC Microcomputer via the RS423 port, contains a function which allows the computer to dial telephone numbers automatically. § A list of frequently used telephone numbers can be stored in the computer ready for instant use.

A viewdata telecommunications ROM is supplied with the Prestel Adapter together with a voucher which entitles the holder to a version 1.2 operating system ROM if one is not already fitted to the BBC Microcomputer. These two ROMs contain all the operating software needed to drive the Prestel Adapter and to download programs offered by dial-up systems such as Prestel and Micronet. No additional software is needed to participate in the BT Gold service.

'Sideways' ROMs are easy to instal at home with the aid of a screwdriver, but those who prefer to have the ROMs fitted by a dealer can do so, free of charge.

The Prestel Adapter is housed in a cream coloured case to complement the BBC Microcomputer and a comprehensive user guide is supplied with each adapter.

Technical data

You will need a BBC Microcomputer Model B and a colour or monochrome monitor (or television set) to receive or transmit data. If you want to store data you will need a cassette recorder or disc drive. A dot matrix or daisy wheel printer with a Centronics® parallel interface will be needed if printed information is required.

The unit operates in full duplex mode, baud rate 1200/75 (1200 receive and 75 transmit) and measures approximately 205mm by 345mm by 75mm. Three leads are supplied with the unit: a mains lead which is two metres long and fitted with a 13 amp plug; a 700mm lead with a five-way DIN plug for connection to the RS423 interface; and another lead, two metres in length, with a Type 600 connection for insertion into the new-type British Telecom telephone socket. If your existing telephone has an old-type connection, you will be able to make arrangements with British Telecom for them to fit a new socket.

Protocol conforms to CCITT V.23 specification. Power supply is contained within the unit.

The Prestel Adapter is fully approved by British Telecom.

APPROVED for use with telecommunication systems run by British Telecommunications in accordance with the conditions in the instructions for use.

* Prestel is a registered trademark of British Telecom

† British Broadcasting Corporation is abbreviated to BBC throughout the text

‡ British Telecom Gold is a registered trademark of British Telecom.

§ There are some restrictions on this facility if you have a telephone connected to an MF rather than pulse-dialled PABX.

For further details ask your nearest dealer
or write to:

Acorn Computers Limited
Fulbourn Road
Cherry Hinton
Cambridge CB1 4JN

The BBC Microcomputer Prestel Adapter is distributed in the UK by Acorn Computers Limited. Every effort is made to ensure that the information in this leaflet is correct, but we reserve the right to make alterations to the system at any time. No responsibility is accepted for errors or omissions.

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