ASTROLABE

Please Read This Before Installing Your Programs

Most of the software that we sell is included in the install menu on this CD. However, you must purchase each item separately and be issued a password for it before you can install it. Passwords for your initial software purchases normally appear on the back of your CD sleeve. To install additional programs from this CD you can call or email us to purchase codes for them. We can then save you shipping charges by emailing these additional passwords to you. **It is important to keep your serial numbers and passwords in a safe place in case you ever need to re-install your programs.**

What to Install First

- **When upgrading to *Solar Fire Gold v8*:** *If you're upgrading from a v7 that is on the same computer,* **it doesn't matter whether or not you uninstall v7 before installing v8.** When uninstalling v7, just remember to answer *No* when asked whether you want to uninstall your charts and user files. Since v7 and v8 share the same chart and settings files, there's no need to transfer your user files to v8.
  If you're upgrading from v6 (Deluxe) or earlier, **it's best to leave your older *Solar Fire* installed for the time being.** This will make it easier to import your chart files from the previous version.

- **ACS PC Atlas**: You only need to install the *Atlas* separately for *Nova Chartwheels*, *Astrolabe Reports* and *Solar Fire v4*. Other programs (like *Solar Fire Gold v8*) either have the entire Atlas embedded in them or do not require an Atlas. **If you do need to install the Atlas separately, it's best to install it before installing the other programs.** Then the other programs will automatically set up a connection to the Atlas, and you won't have to do this manually.

- **Astrolabe Reports:** After installing the Atlas, **install the *Astrolabe Reports Core* program *before* installing your first report** (*Professional Natal Report, Professional Forecaster*, etc.). Then, to learn how to use your report programs, click on the **EZ Start Guide shortcut** that gets installed on your desktop.

How to Install Your Astrolabe Programs from the CD

1. Place the CD into your computer's CD drive and wait for the menu of programs to appear. (If you're given a choice to "Run SETUP.EXE" or "Open folder," select Run.) The menu lists the programs and also the user guides and free utilities that are on the CD. There's also a ReadMeFirst file that's worth looking at.

2. Click on the program that you have purchased so that it becomes highlighted, and click on the **Install** button.

3. When prompted to do so, **enter your name, serial number and password for the program *exactly as they appear*** on the sticker attached to the back of the CD sleeve or in the email sent to you. Type in your name using precisely the spelling, spacing and capitalization that is given. When entering serial codes and passwords, any letters are always capitalized. For the numbers, use the ones at the top of your keyboard rather than those on the numeric keypad, and always type a zero rather than the letter O (the serial numbers and passwords never use the letter O.) If you are installing a separate *ACS Atlas*, the serial number is much longer but the same data entry rules apply.

4. **When a program is installing, go along with where it wants to install.** Do not attempt to install it anywhere else. Unlike previous versions, *Solar Fire Gold v7 and v8* install their program files under the Programs folder, and their charts, settings and other user files in a Solar Fire User Files subfolder under the Documents folder.

5. If, after installing *Solar Fire Gold*, you have any problem with the astro-glyphs, close the program and then restart Windows. The next time you open *Solar Fire Gold* the problem should be cured.

6. After installing any program (and periodically thereafter) <mark>check Astrolabe's website</mark>, http://alabe.com/dlpage.htm, **for the latest free updates.** In most programs you can access online updates from the program's main screen by selecting **Help menu > Check for Updates on Web.**

Getting Help with Your Astrolabe Programs

"How do I…?" Questions. To get help in using a program, try pressing the **F1** key to get help on the screen that you're currently working in, or select **Help menu > User Guide** at the top of the program's main screen to browse through all the on-screen help. Also, for most programs, the installation CD (or Solar Fire v8 download page) contains the program's whole user guide as a pdf file that you can view and print using *Adobe Reader*. If you don't have *Adobe Reader*, you can install it for free from your Astrolabe CD, the *Solar Fire Gold v8* download page, or http://get.adobe.com/reader/ .

Questions about Astrological Techniques. In *Solar Fire Gold* you can select **Help menu > Encyclopedia** for discussions of astrological terms and concepts. You can also find answers on the web by visiting http://alabe.com/support or http://alabe.com/forums either directly, or through the *Solar Fire* or *Nova Chartwheels* **Help menu**. If you can't find an answer there, you can ask a question on the forum or submit a support ticket to have someone answer your question.

Troubleshooting Problems. If your program doesn't seem to be working right, first try restarting your computer. If this doesn't help, try downloading the latest program updates as described in step 5 above. These easy-to-do actions solve a surprising number of difficulties.

If this doesn't work, try uninstalling the program and reinstalling it. To uninstall: On the Windows desktop, select **Start button > Control Panel > Programs.** From the list of installed programs, select the name of the program. At the top, click on "Uninstall" (NOT on "Change" or "Repair.") After confirming that you really want to uninstall, you will be asked whether you want to keep your charts and user files. Ordinarily you would want to answer Yes. Only if it becomes apparent that your user files have become corrupted would you need to uninstall them also. (In that case, it would be a good idea first to make a backup copy of them.) After reinstalling, again check the web for updates.

As a Last Resort…. **Phone** support is available Mon-Fri, 10am-4 pm U.S. Eastern time at (508) 896-5081. You may also visit the Astrolabe home page at http://alabe.com. At the top, select **Support > Submit a Ticket** to submit your question by email.

How to Submit a Query. In any written or phoned query, be as specific as possible. Always include the Astrolabe software title and version (which you can see in the program's Help menu > About), and a clear description of what result you were trying to achieve. If you have a problem or think you have found a bug, please include the Windows version, exactly what you did leading up to the problem, the results you got, and any error messages that appeared. Sometimes when you get an error message you will be asked to "Click here for more detailed information." This extra information, especially the filenames that are shown, can be very helpful in solving your problem.

> **Important note for the pre-release version of** *Nova Chartwheels*: Astrolabe will deal with installation problems by phone and email, but for other problems and for procedural questions please consult the **EZ Start Guide,** video doc and the *Nova Chartwheels* Forum (accessible from within *Nova Chartwheels* by selecting **Help menu > Online Support Forums**, or otherwise by visiting http://alabe.com/forums/).

Moving Your Old Charts and Settings to *Solar Fire Gold*

If you have *Solar Fire Gold v7* and are upgrading to *Solar Fire Gold v8* on the same computer, there is no need to transfer your charts and settings. You can uninstall your *Solar Fire Gold v7* before *or* after installing *Solar Fire Gold v8.* As long as you have not also uninstalled your v7 chart files and settings, they will remain in your **Documents\Solar Fire User Files** folder ready for use in *Solar Fire Gold v8.*

If you still have *Solar Fire* v6 or earlier installed

If you will be installing *Solar Fire Gold v8* on the same computer, leave your older version of *Solar Fire* installed for the time being. Then:

1. From the *Solar Fire Gold* v8 main screen, select **Utilities menu > Import Charts and Settings**.

2. Check off the items you want. If you aren't sure, check all the file types and select **Rename and Keep Existing Files**. (For more help with this, press the **F1** key.)

3. Click on **Import**, and the charts and other files that you designated will be copied into your **Documents\Solar Fire User Files** folder where *Solar Fire Gold v8* will be able to find them.

If you *don't* still have your older version of *Solar Fire* installed

If you've uninstalled your old *Solar Fire* but have not taken the final step of deleting its chart and settings files (which are deleted separately from the uninstallation), it's easiest to transfer your old *Solar Fire* data by **reinstalling your older *Solar Fire*** and then using *Solar Fire Gold*'s easy import utility as above.

If you're installing your *Solar Fire Gold* v8 upgrade on a different computer

Leave your older *Solar Fire* on your old computer for the time being, and install *Solar Fire Gold v8* on the new computer. Then you can use a CD, USB flash memory stick, network or other media together with Astrolabe's free *Astrobackup* utility to transfer your chart and settings files to your new *Solar Fire Gold v8*. Here is how to do this using a memory stick (the easiest way):

1. On the "source" computer (the computer where your older *Solar Fire* resides), install the free *Astrobackup* utility from the Astrolabe CD or from http://alabe.com/dlpage.htm .

2. You can launch *Astrobackup* as you finish installing it, or open it later by clicking the *Astrobackup* shortcut that gets installed on your Windows desktop. Now you're ready to back up your charts and settings onto the memory stick.
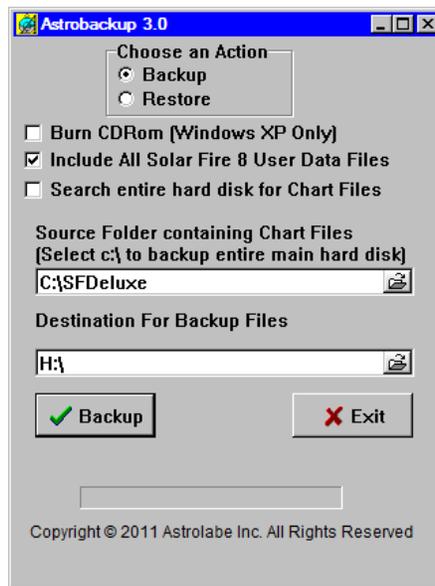
3. In the Astrobackup window, under "Choose an Action" select "Backup." Then,
   - To transfer your settings as well as your charts, put a check next to "Include All User Data Files."
   - If you've stored chart files in other folders besides the main Solar Fire Charts folder, check "Search entire hard disk for Chart Files."
   - If your transfer medium is a CD instead of a memory stick, check "Burn CDRom."

4. The "Source Folder" should be where your old charts and settings are stored. *Solar Fire Gold v7* and *v8* store their charts and settings in **\Documents\Solar Fire User Files**. Earlier versions of *Solar Fire* store their charts along with the program in **C:\SFDeluxe** (for *Solar Fire v6*) or (for earlier versions) another folder on C: drive with Solar Fire or SF in its name. If these are not showing in the "Source Folder" field, click at the right of this field and browse for the correct source folder.

5. The "Destination for Backup Files" should be the drive letter for the slot where your memory stick is plugged in. If you're not sure which drive this is, click to the right of this field and then in the "Select Directory" window click next to the "Drives" field to see the available drives. Usually the memory stick will be shown as the drive with a removable disk. Depending on how many drives, networks and USB slots you are connected to, it could be drive E:, F:, G:, H:, etc.

6. Click the "Backup" button, wait for the files to be compressed (zipped) onto the removable media, and then click the "Exit" button. Now you're ready to "restore" your charts and settings into their proper place on the other computer.

7. As in steps 1 and 2, install *Astrobackup* on the other computer and then open *Astrobackup*.

8. Insert the memory stick into a slot on the other computer.

9. Under "Choose an Action" select "Restore."

10. If you are transferring settings as well as charts, put a check next to "Include All Solar Fire User Files."

11. Under "Source Folder" make sure that this field is set to the drive letter for the memory stick.

12. Under "Destination For Backup Files" make sure that this field is set to **c:\Users\[user's name]\ \Documents\Solar Fire User Files**.

13. Click on the "Restore" button, and wait as your *Solar Fire* files and settings are unzipped and transferred to their proper place on the other computer.

14. When you are sure that the transfer is finished, remove the memory stick and click "Exit" to close *Astrobackup.* You're now ready to use Solar Fire Gold v8.

Note: If more than one person uses *Solar Fire* on a computer and they log onto Windows using different user names, then each person will have his own personal collection of user files. In that case you would need to log on as each user and then do the transfer procedure for each user.

Using *Astrobackup to Back Up or Copy Your Charts and Settings*

You can also use *Astrobackup* to back up your *Solar Fire* charts and settings for safekeeping onto a CD, memory stick or network. Or you might want to copy them onto another computer that you use, such as a laptop or netbook.

(Just remember that your software license only permits you to install an Astrolabe program on more than one computer *as long as both computers are yours and the Astrolabe program won't be used on both machines at the same time*. Also remember that if you are discarding your old computer you are responsible for uninstalling *Solar Fire* (and any other Astrolabe programs) from that computer before it leaves your possession.)

Astrobackup compresses all your files into a Backup.zip file. To unzip individual folders or just see what folders the zip file contains, you can double-click on the Backup.zip filename to display its contents.

Using *Solar Fire Gold* and *Solar Fire 6* Charts in Other Programs

Solar Fire Gold v8 can save its charts in either of two chart-file formats.

Solar Fire versions 4 and 5 saved all charts in a file format (with a **.Cht** filename extension) that was compatible with a number of outside programs. However, in order to accommodate the new life-event lists, from version 6 onward *Solar Fire* kept the **.Cht** format but added a new **.SFcht** chart-file format as the default format for storing charts. The newer **.SFcht** files are not readable by (and do not even show up in the menus of) *Nova Chartwheels, Astrolabe Reports* and many other programs.

If you'll only be using your *Solar Fire* charts within *Solar Fire*, just go ahead and let *Solar Fire Gold* save charts in the newer **.SFcht** format. However, if you want your *Solar Fire* charts to be freely usable with the other programs without any extra conversion steps, you can tell *Solar Fire Gold* to save charts in the older *Solar Fire 4/5* **.Cht** format as follows:

> From the main screen of *Solar Fire Gold v8*, select **Preferences menu > Edit Settings > Charts tab**. Under **Chart Conversion to SFv6/v7 Format** select **Never convert – keep existing older chart formats.** This will then be the default setting (which you can override on an individual basis if you wish).

Also, whenever you create new chart files you will be asked if you want to use the new *Solar Fire v6/v7* format. To create the older, more compatible *Solar Fire v4v/5* format files, answer "No" to this question. Later, to add life-event lists to your natal charts for use within *Solar Fire Gold,* you can always make copies of your charts in the newer **.SFCht** format. Here's how:

> From the main screen of *Solar Fire Gold v8*, go to the **Utilities menu > Chart Import/Export > Options tab.** To convert the files to **.SFCht** format, **s**elect **Create v6/7 format chart files.** Then, while still in the **ET Chart Conversion Utility** window, go to the **Import From** and **Save To** tabs to specify the folders you want your *Solar Fire* charts to come from and be saved into. Then click on **Convert.** A copy of your **.Cht**-format charts will be made in the newer **.SFCht** format, and then you will be able to attach a list of life events to a natal chart.

7-21-11