

Valu-Basic – Frequently Asked Questions

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General

What is Valu-Basic?

A free inventory manager for the USB stick. You record your valuables with photo, purchase date, price, room and receipts – for your home contents insurance, for example, or in case something happens. Valu-Basic runs without installation straight from the stick or an external hard drive, on Windows and on the Mac (there with PHP, see below).

What does Valu-Basic cost?

Nothing. Valu-Basic is free and open source (MIT licence, like ValuSafe). There are no ads, no subscription and no registration.

How many items can I record?

Valu-Basic itself sets no limit – the only limit is the free space on the stick or hard drive. The entries take up hardly any space; photos and receipts are what counts. Valu-Basic scales photos down to at most 1920 pixels, usually a few hundred KB per picture. Because the automatic backup stores every photo a second time, a 16 GB stick holds roughly ten thousand photos. Explorer or Finder shows how much space is left.

How is it different from ValuSafe?

Valu-Basic is meant for one person and runs from the USB stick. ValuSafe runs on your own web space, a NAS or with Docker and additionally offers several users with permissions, two-factor sign-in, product lookup by barcode and ISBN, access from your smartphone and a tenth language (Irish). ValuSafe is also free: palindrom.de/valusafe. You will find a side-by-side comparison in Valu-Basic under **Vergleich** (help icon).

Installation and start

Do I have to install anything?

Not on Windows – everything you need is on the stick. On the Mac, PHP 8 must be present; if it is missing, the start window shows how to install it with Homebrew. The details are in the installation guide.

Do I need an internet connection?

No. Valu-Basic works entirely without the internet.

Can I use Valu-Basic on my smartphone?

No. Valu-Basic can only be reached on the computer the stick is plugged into. If you want to keep your inventory up to date on the go or from several devices, ValuSafe on your own server is the better choice.

Can I use the stick on different computers?

Yes. The data travels with the stick. Always quit Valu-Basic with “Windows - beenden” or “Mac - beenden” before you unplug the stick.

Why do Windows or macOS show a warning at start?

The start files are not digitally signed. On Windows: “More info” → “Run anyway”. On the Mac, the first time: right-click → “Open”.

How do I update to a new version?

Quit Valu-Basic and, to be safe, copy the contents of the stick to the computer. Then copy the contents of the new ZIP file to the stick and confirm “Replace files” – database, pictures, receipts and backups are kept. If you are coming from 2.1 or older, then delete the old start files “Valu-Basic starten” and “Valu-Basic beenden” as well as README.md. The details are in LIESMICH - README.txt.

Using it

How do I create rooms and categories?

During setup Valu-Basic creates a few rooms and categories. You add your own via the gear icon (Admin): tile **Rooms** → “Manage” (tab Rooms) or tile **Categories** → “Manage”.

Can I scan barcodes?

Yes, when adding an item, using the computer’s camera. The barcode is saved with the item. Only ValuSafe can look up product data on the internet.

Can I store receipts and several photos?

Yes. Each item can have several pictures and documents (e.g. invoices as PDF).

How do I get a list for the insurer?

Through the exports: PDF (detailed or compact), CSV for spreadsheets, HTML and a dedicated insurance export.

What do I do after a burglary, fire or water damage?

Open the damage claim assistant (warning triangle in the left bar) and click New damage claim. You enter what happened, tick the affected items and get a list for the police with photos, serial numbers and features, plus a claim report for the insurer with purchase price, current value and an editable cover letter. Photos and receipts are also available as a ZIP file. What helps most is whatever you recorded beforehand – above all the serial number.

Which languages are available?

Nine: German, English, French, Spanish, Italian, Dutch, Polish, Portuguese and Turkish. Setup and sign-in page follow your browser's language; you can change it at the bottom of the sign-in page and in the settings.

Data and security

Where is my data stored?

Only on the stick, in the folder valu-basic: the database in data/, photos and receipts in upload/. Nothing is left behind on the computer, and nothing is sent to third parties.

How is my data backed up?

Every time it starts, Valu-Basic backs up the database once a day to valu-basic/backups/auto/; the last 7 backups are kept, new pictures and receipts are backed up as well. In addition you can download the database and the pictures at any time under Admin → **Backup**.

How do I restore a backup?

Admin → **Backup** → **Restore**. Choose an automatic backup or upload a downloaded .sqlite file. Valu-Basic first makes a copy of the current state.

What happens if the stick is lost or broken?

Then the automatic backups are gone too – they are on the same stick. So now and then download the database and the pictures under Admin → Backup and keep them somewhere else, for example on the computer or a second stick.

How secure is signing in?

Passwords are only stored encrypted (Argon2id). After five wrong entries within 15 minutes, signing in is blocked for a while. Forms are protected against forged requests (CSRF), and a security log records sign-ins. Two-factor sign-in is only available in ValuSafe.

I have forgotten my password – what now?

On the stick, double-click “Windows - Passwort vergessen” or “Mac - Passwort vergessen” and enter the new password twice (at least 8 characters). A lock after too many failed attempts is lifted as well. Then sign in in the browser with the new password. It does not work by e-mail – there is no mail sending on the stick.

Can someone else call up the setup again?

No. As soon as an account exists, the setup page locks itself and redirects to the sign-in page.

Help

Where can I find the full manual?

You open the user manual and the installation guide in Valu-Basic via the help icon. They are also available at palindrom.de/valusafe under Documents.

Where do I send questions and error reports?

By e-mail to valusafe@palindrom.de. Please state which operating system you use (e.g. Windows 11 or macOS 15) and which version of Valu-Basic – it is shown at the bottom of the admin area (gear icon). For an error message, its exact wording or a screenshot helps.