Processing Customer Returns

Whether due to error or a change of heart, your customers will occasionally return items. Customer Returns are transactions that show what Items are shipped by Customers back to you.

You will notice that the Customer Return form is nearly identical to that of the Ship Doc. The only difference is the direction of the shipment: with Ship Docs, Items are shipping from you to the Customer; a Customer Return merely reverses the process.

Customer Returns have 2 states:

1. RMA: Return Merchandise Authorization (RMA) is a document provided to the customer which authorizes them to return a product.   As long as the 'Returned' check box is UNCHECKED the return will be in RMA state.   By default RMA's are available for sales when the RMA is created. The logic for this is that you may want to resell the product even before its actually shipped back to you. You choose to exclude RMAs from available in Inventory Preferences.

2. Returned: The customer actually shipped you back the merchandise and the 'Returned' box is checked.

You can easily create a new Customer Return from scratch by choosing New Customer Return from the Sales menu. However, to avoid retyping of critical information, it's wise to create the return from the Ship Doc information. To do this, perform the following steps:

1. From the Shipping List screen, double-click the record from whence the return will come. This will bring up that record's Ship Doc form.

2. From this form's toolbar, click the Return button.

If created from the Ship Doc, all information from will be brought in to populate the fields. If typing a manual Customer Return, you have to fill the fields in manually. Additionally, if your company makes use of bar code scanners to keep track of Items, you can place your cursor in the following text box...

...and scan the Item (s) in. Typing the name of the Item and then pressing Tab also works.

Be sure to check the Returned checkbox when you actually receive the Item (s) back at your warehouse.


Once a Customer Return has been checked as Returned, it cannot be edited.

If you do not use QuickBooks with All Orders, be sure to check the NC Only box above. It allows you to close out a Customer Return without recording it in QuickBooks.

In addition to the standard Sales Order information, the Customer Return contains a few additional fields such as the Ship Doc Reference (a customer reference number), the number of packages in the shipment, and the total weight of the shipment.
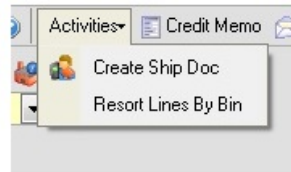
To immediately create a new shipment based on the items and information in the current return, click on the toolbar Activities --> Create Ship Doc.

Click New Refund to enter the payment method and refund amount in the Payment Method Entry screen. See receiving payments on processing the payment, or in this case the refund, also on applying a credit to the sales order or ship doc.

If you are also working with QuickBooks, when the Items are actually arrive back at your warehouse, the Customer Return needs to be closed out so that quantities can to be adjusted within QuickBooks. This is done by creating a Credit Memo. To create one, just click the Credit Memo toolbar button:

The invoice for the shipment will then be created from within QuickBooks, and you'll receive an alert that tells you the invoice number:
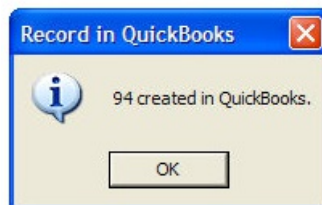
If you change your mind and wish to remove the invoice from QB, you have the option of clicking the Undo Credit Memo button on the toolbar.