My Expenses User guide

Android expense tracking app

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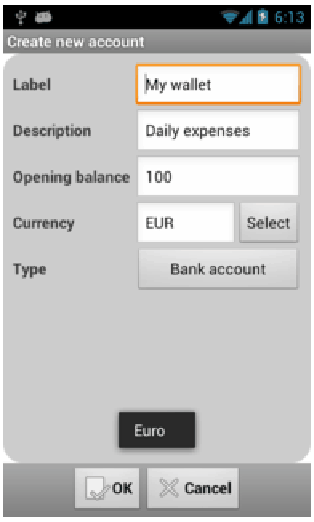
HTML [http://myexpenses.totschnig.org/?lang=en#tutorial]

Introduction

My Expenses is designed to keep track of your expenses and incomes, and to export these expenses into a desktop finance tool, like Grisbi or Gnucash. It supports multiple accounts, a two-level hierarchy of categories and creation of transactions from templates.

Its main screen displays the list of transactions for the current account. The button bar displayed at the bottom of the screen gives easy access to all functionalities. Each button executes a default action on short clicks and some (indicated by a triangle in the left upper corner) open up a menu with further actions on long clicks. Alternatively, you can configure *My Expenses* in **Use standard Android menu** to use a command interface based on the Android standard menu.

Accounts



When you launch *My Expenses* for the first time, there is one default account defined and you can immediatly start adding transactions. If you want to edit the default account, use Settings → Current account, whereas you can create a new account from Accounts → New ….

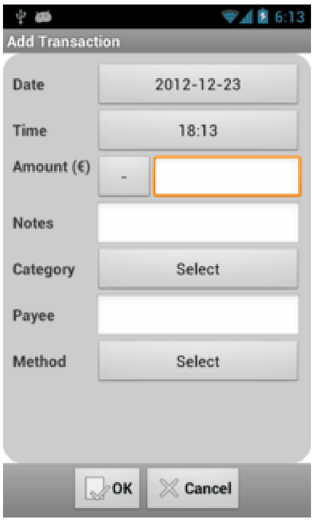
Enter a label, a description, the opening balance[1] and a currency for the account. The currency must be entered according to its three-letter code in ISO 4217, but can be chosen easily from a list by clicking on the Select button.

You can define the type of an account as one of Cash, Bank, Asset, Liabilities. Account types are associated with payment methods, as explained in **Payment methods**. Here we will define the account as bank account, in order to demonstrate the use of payment methods.

When you confirm that you are done, you get back to the transaction list. If you have created a new account, it is automatically set to be the current account. You can easily switch between accounts through the Accounts button. A long click gives access to a menu of all accounts. Based on the setting of **Behaviour of \"Accounts\" button** a short click either cycles between all accounts or switches to the last active account.

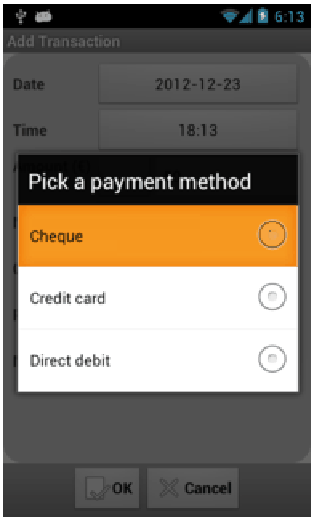
Accounts → Summary opens an overview of all accounts with current financial status. Clicking on an item, opens up the configuration. A long click on the account brings up the context menu, from where you can delete the account, unless it is the current account that cannot be deleted.

Transactions

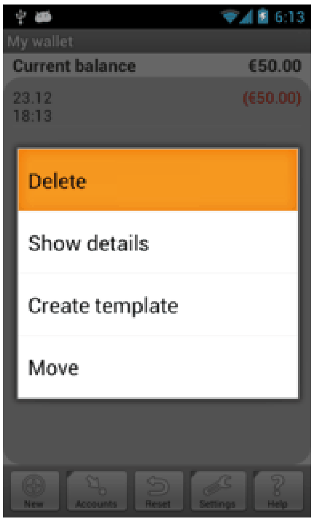


A short click on New brings up the activity for creating a transaction.

Adjust date and time, click on the - Button to toggle between expense and income, enter amount[1] and notes. The payee (or payer) field remembers the values you enter and will suggest them in the future[2]. Clicking on the Select button next to **Category**, brings up the **Select category** activity. We will explain below, how to manage categories.



If the current account is of a type, that is associated with payment methods, you can set the transaction's method through the Select button next to **Method**.



Back at the transaction list, you can edit individual entries through a short click, the context menu allows deleting a transaction, display its full details (payee, notes, payment method), and create a template from it. You can also move a transaction to a different account, provided you have set up at least one additional account.

[1] The input format for currency amounts can be configured through the **Decimal separator for input of currency amounts** setting.
[2] You can also import a list of parties for autocompleting the payee field from your Grisbi file as explained in **Import from Grisbi**. If you want to delete entries from this list refer to **Parties**.

Transfer

New → Transfer allows you to transfer money between accounts. This command is enabled only if you have more than one account with the same currency as the current one.

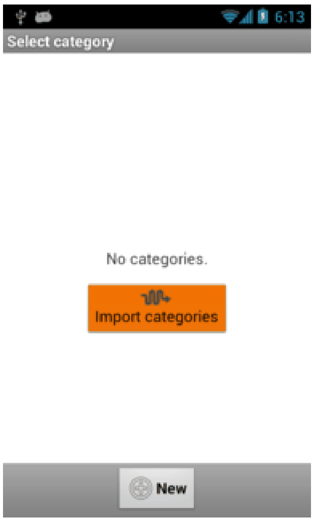
Templates

If you regularly enter identical or similar transactions, you can save some time by using templates. Templates are simply derived from an existing transaction through the Create template entry in its context menu. You need to enter a title that will identify the template.

Templates are listed in the New menu. A short click on a button creates a new transaction that is immediately saved. Through a long click, you enter the editing form where you can change the transaction before saving, or discard it.

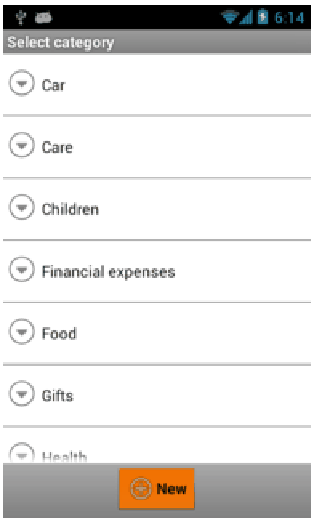
Templates are also listed from the **Templates** entry in the **Settings** screen, grouped by account. Through each template's context menu, you can access the same functionality of creating new transactions, and either save it directly (New and save) or enter its editing form (New and edit). The third entry in the context menu allows deleting the template.

Categories

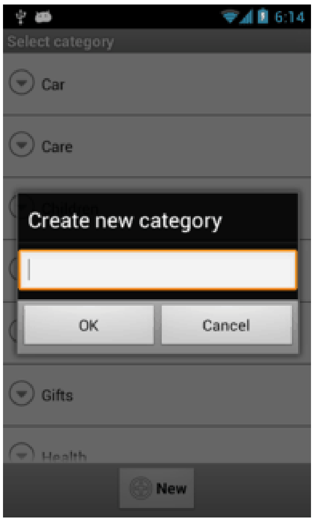


At the beginning, no categories are defined. You have two options for adding them.

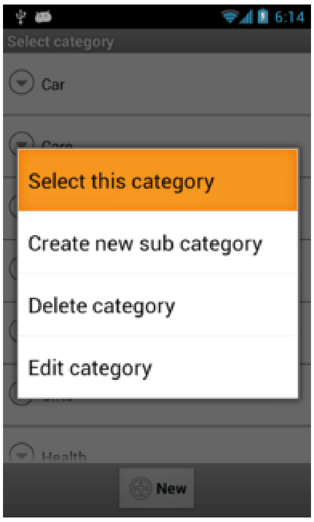
Either you click on the button Import categories which allows to select between different sources, as explained in **Import from Grisbi**. This button is visible, only as long the categories list is stil empty, later you can always access the import functionality from the **Settings** activity.



You now have a set of categories with subcategories you can associate with your transactions. By default, the primary sort criteria in the category list is the number of times you use a category (the secondary criteria is alphabetical order). This gives you quick access to the categories you use most often. If you prefer to have the categories sorted in plain alphabetical order, you can configure **Sort order for categories**.



The second option is to add your own categories. Create new main category brings up a dialog for providing a new category label.



Clicking on a main category, opens up its subcategories. You select a subcategory for mapping to the current transaction by simply clicking on it. In order to map a main category, you have to call its context menu.

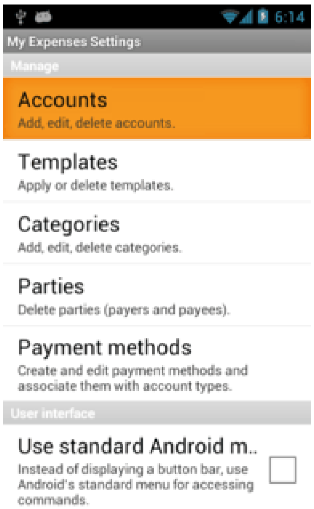
From here you can also add new subcategories, delete a category or edit it. Subcategories have also context menus for deleting and editing.

Export transactions

Finally, the raison d'être of *My Expenses* is its support for export into QIF format. Call this function through the Reset button from the transaction list. This will create a file on your sdcard with all transactions for the current account, delete them from the database, and adjust the opening balance to the last current balance. *My Expenses* can share the file immediately after the export through FTP, email or any other file sharing app, as explained in **Share QIF Export**. Transfer operations will also be deleted from the account, but still be visible in the other account they refer to.

Voilà. You can now connect your phone to your computer, open Grisbi (or Gnucash), and use its import functionality.

Settings



The **Settings** screen has five sections:

Manage
: Here you can inspect and edit all the auxiliary objects that *My Expenses* manages: accounts, templates, categories, parties and payment methods.

User interface
: Here you can alter some aspects of the interface.

Import
: Access the functionality of importing categories and parties from Grisbi.

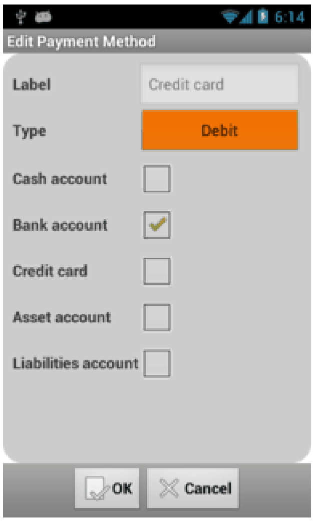
Export
: Configure the character encoding of the export and define if and how the file should be transfered.

Backup
: Store a backup of database and preferences on the SD card.

Manage

Parties
: This screen lists the parties used for the autocompletion of the **Payer/Payee** field. You can remove entries from this list, by checking the checkbox on their right side, and then clicking on the Delete button.

Payment methods
: This screen lists the predefined payment methods (Cheque,Credit card, Deposit, Direct debit) and lets you define new ones. Simply click on an entry (or select New), and you will enter a form, where you can define a label (unless for the predefined ones), and a type (is this method used for debit, income or both), and select the account types for which this method is applicable.



User interface

Use standard Android menu
If this option is checked, Android's standard menu will be used in the transaction list for accessing commands instead of displaying a button bar. You will be offered to activate the menu based interface when clicking on the hardware menu button.

Sort order for categories
By default, categories are sorted primarily by how often you associate them with your transactions. Uncheck this option if you want your categories being sorted in alphabetical order instead.

Decimal separator for input of currency amounts
By default, currency amounts for transactions (or the opening balance of an account) use the decimal separator of your locale (comma in most European countries, point in most English speaking countries)[3], here you can explicitly configure it. Alternatively you have the option to input minor units (e.g. $ cents, € cent, or £ pence) as integers.

Import

The entry **Import from Grisbi** allows to set up categories from files included from Grisbi in English, German or French. If with Grisbi you have already defined your own categories, you can also provide your Grisbi file, which is in XML. If you want, you can edit the file with an editor and remove any informa-

[3] *My Expenses* uses the point symbol (.) as default on devices running Android 2.3, since those are most heavily affected by the problem described in the FAQ [http://myexpenses.totschnig.org/en/faq.xhtml].

tion other than the `Category` and `Sub_category` elements[4]. Store this file as `grisbi.xml` in a folder `myexpenses` in the root of your sdcard[5]. You can also import the parties (payers and payees) stored in this file (element `Party`). When you choose your custom file as import source, you can decide to import both parties and categories, or only categories. Partners will be used for the autocomplete function of the payer/payee field in the transaction form.

Export

If you check option **Share QIF Export**, each time you export your transactions, your QIF file will be sent to a remote destination. Under **Upload URL QIF Export** you specify the destination:

- An URL to a directory on an FTP server, you have write access to (e.g. "ftp://login:password@my.example.org:port/my/directory/"). If available on your device, *My Expenses* will launch an external app, e.g. *Send With FTP* [http://mtotschnig.github.com/SendWithFtp/].
- An Email URL (e.g. "mailto:john@my.example.com"). *My Expenses* will launch an email application and create a message to that address with the file attached to it.
- You can also leave this field empty, and you will be presented with a chooser allowing you to select one of your installed apps that allow sharing of files (e.g. Dropbox, Google Docs, …).

Backup and restore

Backup creates a backup of database and preferences in the `myexpenses` folder on the sdcard. The database is stored in a file named `BACKUP`, the preferences in a file named `BACKUP_PREF`. Both are automatically restored when you reinstall *My Expenses*. Thus you can retrieve all your application data on a different device by copying these two files into the same location there, before installing *My Expenses*.

[4] *My Expenses* also supports the Grisbi file format 0.5.0, where the elements are named `Categorie` and `Sous_categorie` (`Tiers` for parties).
[5] Of course you can also create an XML file by your own. You can find the examples at Github [https://github.com/mtotschnig/MyExpenses/tree/master/res/raw].