If all else fails, read the manual (slowly, thoroughly, and repeatedly).

- Skim the manual at least once.

- Focus in on the introduction. It usually has a part called "How to Read This Manual", and will describe those sections of the manual that are considered essential.

- Read the essential sections, referring to the glossary (if it exists) for unfamiliar terminology.

- Finally, and most importantly, get to know the Index. Remember, this is a reference text, and you will only refer to it when you get stuck. If you can find it in the index, then the battle is almost won.

Learning Software

Software tutorials are available for most major packages such as Lotus 1-2-3 and Symphony, WordPerfect, and dBASE III. Some of these packages include their own tutorials, and other companies also produce them. Some of these third-party tutorials are available from MISX, ARF and the library.

5.7.2   Custom Software

In the Service Contract Administration Manual, guidelines have been set out covering all aspects of the development and revision of EDP systems. Some notes regarding documentation for microcomputer-based systems under $50,000 follow.

Requirements:

- Documentation requirements should be specified at the time a design and development contract is being negotiated.

- As employees are to be provided with work instruments in the official language of their choice, system manuals in one language should be translated as soon as possible.

- An English or French copy of the system manual should be provided in WordPerfect format on 5.25 double-sided, double-density diskettes.

- A Master copy of the application, on appropriate machine-readable media should be provided for restoration purposes.

Contents:

A system manual should consist of:

- a Table of Contents;

- an Introduction including:

    a brief description of the system's origins (client, background, and problem(s) to be solved;