how to post special journals to the general ledger and subsidiary ledger and why using computerized bookkeeping simplifies the process

Special journals are posted to the general ledger by transferring either individual entries or end-of-period column totals into the relevant control accounts, while detailed customer or supplier entries go into subsidiary ledgers; computerized systems automate these postings, reduce errors, and update all ledgers instantly. This automation makes reporting faster and more accurate than manual bookkeeping. [1] [2] [3] [4]

What special journals do

- Special journals (sales, cash receipts, purchases, cash payments) group similar, high-volume transactions to simplify posting and reduce writing the same account titles repeatedly. [3]

- The general ledger then carries only **summary** information (via control accounts), while subsidiary ledgers hold the detailed balances for customers, vendors, or inventory items. [5] [6] [7]

Posting to the general ledger

Manual posting from special journals usually happens daily for exceptions and monthly for totals. [4] [8]

- Identify columns to post individually:

  - Credits to Accounts Receivable in the sales journal total to the Accounts Receivable control account in the general ledger. [3]

  - Credits to Sales Revenue, debits to Inventory and Cost of Goods Sold, or other column totals are posted to their respective general ledger accounts. [8] [3]

- For each posting:

  - Record date, journal name/page, and amount in the general ledger account (T-account or running balance format). [8]

  - Place the general ledger account number or reference back in the journal column to show it has been posted. [8]

Posting to subsidiary ledgers

Subsidiary ledgers provide the detailed breakdown that supports a single control account in the general ledger. [6] [7] [5]

- For accounts receivable:

    - Each credit sale is posted from the sales journal to the individual customer's account (e.g., "Customer A") in the accounts receivable subsidiary ledger. [6] [3]

    - At period end, the total of all customer balances must equal the Accounts Receivable control account balance in the general ledger. [7] [5]

- For accounts payable and other subledgers:

    - Each purchase on credit is posted from the purchases journal to the individual vendor's account in the accounts payable ledger. [6] [3]

    - The sum of vendor balances equals the Accounts Payable control account in the general ledger. [5] [6]

Why computerized bookkeeping simplifies posting

Computerized accounting systems remove most manual posting steps by updating ledgers automatically once a transaction is entered. [1] [4]

- Automatic simultaneous posting:

    - Entering a sale updates the sales journal view, the Accounts Receivable control account in the general ledger, and the specific customer's subsidiary ledger at the same time. [4] [6]

    - This eliminates end-of-month posting of special journal totals and speeds up access to current balances. [1] [4]

- Speed, accuracy, and reporting:

    - Systems automate calculations, reduce arithmetic errors, and provide built-in checks that debits equal credits before posting. [2] [1]

    - Real-time general ledger and subsidiary ledger balances allow instant financial statements and detailed reports without re-entering data. [2] [4] [1]

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