



Returnables

Keeping track of pallets, crates, drums and cylinders that leave with a delivery and are expected back

Introduction

Some things go out with every delivery but were never sold: the pallet the goods are stacked on, the crate they travel in, the gas cylinder that gets swapped. They cost real money, and without a record of who has them they quietly become a free gift to your customers.

Returnables gives you that record. You mark the item as returnable, deliver it on the Sales Order as you do today, and log it when it comes back. Data Fusion then tells you, per customer and per item, how many are still out — and prints that figure on the delivery note so the driver and the customer both see it every time.

This guide covers marking items as returnable, logging returns and opening balances, reading the Outstanding by Customer view, and what the delivery note shows.

⚠ Important: Returnables is for **no-charge items that are expected back**. It is **not** a credit note. Logging a return credits nothing to the customer and changes no invoice; it only records that the items came back and puts them into stock. To credit a customer for goods they were charged for, raise a credit note in Sage.

Before You Begin — Prerequisites

1. Your user role needs **Stock Control** access. Returnables is opened from Stock Control.
2. The returnable item (your pallet, crate or cylinder) must exist as a stock item. Set it up with a selling price of zero so it never charges the customer.
3. The item must **not** be lot or serial tracked. Returns are not supported for tracked items in this version.
4. Your Stock Adjustment account should be set up in Sage, because each return posts a stock adjustment there.
5. To see who already holds pallets from before you started, have those figures to hand for the opening balances.

Key Terms — Glossary

Term	What it means
Returnable item	A stock item you have added to the returnable list: pallets, crates, drums, cylinders.
Counted from	The date the item was added to the list. Deliveries from that date onwards are counted. Earlier ones are covered by an opening balance.
Return	Items a customer has sent back. Logging a return puts them into stock and adjusts Sage.
Opening balance	The number a customer already held when you started tracking. It sets the starting figure only — no stock moves and nothing goes to Sage.
Delivered	Everything of that item delivered to that customer on completed picking slips since the item was counted from.
Still out	Opening balance + Delivered – Returned. What the customer is holding.

Where This Happens

Screen	Purpose
Stock Control > Returnables > Setup tab	Choose which items are returnable.
Stock Control > Returnables > Returns tab	Log returns and opening balances; see Outstanding by Customer and recent entries.
Sales Order and Picking Slip	Nothing new. The returnable goes out as an ordinary line on the order and is picked like any other item.
Delivery Note (Detailed layout)	Prints the customer's running "still to be returned" figure under the lines.

Step 1 — Mark the item as returnable

Open **Stock Control > Returnables** and click the **Setup: returnable items** tab.

1. Type the item code of your pallet, crate or cylinder into **Item code**.
2. Click **Add**. The item appears in the list with today's date under **Counted from**, and a message confirms it.

From that date, every delivery of that item on a completed picking slip counts as "out". Add as many items as you need; each is tracked separately.

Note: If nothing is marked as returnable yet, the screen opens on the Setup tab, because that is the only thing to do first. The Returns tab shows a reminder until an item has been added.

To stop tracking an item, click **Remove** on its row. Its history is kept, but if you add it back later it is counted from the new date, so you would need a fresh opening balance.

Step 2 — Enter opening balances

If customers already hold pallets from before you started, enter those now, otherwise the report will understate what they have.

On the **Returns** tab:

3. Set **Type** to *Opening balance – already with the customer*.
4. Pick the **Customer** and the **Item**.
5. Enter the **Quantity** they are holding, the **Date**, and a **Reference** if you have one (a stock-take sheet, an email).
6. Click **Save**.

An opening balance sets the starting figure only. No stock moves, and nothing is sent to Sage.

Step 3 — Deliver as normal

Nothing changes on the Sales Order. Add the returnable as a line on the order — for example *Returnable Pallets, quantity 10* — pick it on the picking slip and close off as usual. Because the item is in stock at a price of zero, it appears on the invoice at 0.00 and the 10 pallets leave stock like any other item.

Once the slip is complete, those 10 are counted as delivered to that customer.

Step 4 — Log a return

When pallets come back:

7. On the **Returns** tab, leave **Type** on *Return – no-charge items came back*.
8. Pick the **Customer** and the **Item**.
9. Enter the **Quantity**, the **Date** they came back, and the **store** they were received into.
10. Enter a **Reference**: the delivery note number, the vehicle registration, or who brought them back.
11. Click **Save** and confirm.

Saving does three things: records the return against the customer, puts the quantity back into stock in Data Fusion at the store's current average cost (so nothing is revalued), and posts a matching stock adjustment to Sage.

Note: A return cannot be more than the customer currently has outstanding. If they were holding more than Data Fusion knows about, add an opening balance for the difference first, then log the return.

Note: In UAT (testing) mode the Sage adjustment is skipped, like every other posting. If Sage ever fails to confirm an adjustment, the return is still saved in Data Fusion and the message tells you to check the item in Sage.

Reading Outstanding by Customer

The **Outstanding by customer** table on the Returns tab is the whole point of the feature. One row per customer and item:

Column	Meaning
Opening	What they held when you started.
Delivered	Everything sent to them since the item's "counted from" date.
Returned	Everything logged as returned.
Still out	Opening + Delivered – Returned. The figure to chase.
Last delivered / Last returned	When each last happened. A customer with a recent delivery and an old return date is the one to call.

Customers with nothing outstanding are hidden by default; tick **Show customers with nothing outstanding** to include them.

Recent returns and opening balances underneath lists the last fifty entries, so you can check what was logged and by whom it was referenced.

On the delivery note

If your company uses the **Detailed** delivery note layout (Configuration > Company > Delivery Note), every note prints a line under the items for each returnable the customer is still holding, for example *Returnable Pallets still to be returned: 14*. The figure includes the pallets on that very delivery, so the customer signs for the running total each time. Nothing prints when the balance is zero.

Things to Remember

12. This is **not a credit note**. It never credits a customer or changes an invoice.
13. Set the returnable item up at a **zero selling price**, or every delivery will charge the customer for its pallets.
14. Deliveries only count from the day the item was added to the list. Anything before that is an opening balance.
15. A return can't exceed what the customer has outstanding. Enter an opening balance first if Data Fusion's figure is too low.
16. Returns put stock back **and** adjust Sage. Opening balances do neither.
17. Lot and serial tracked items cannot be made returnable in this version.
18. Correct a mistake with another entry. Logged entries cannot be edited or deleted.
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Keywords

returnables, returnable items, pallets, pallet tracking, pallet returns, crates, drums, cylinders, gas cylinders, returnable packaging, no-charge items, opening balance, still out, outstanding by customer, pallet balance, who has my pallets, return log, stock adjustment, delivery note returnables, not a credit note