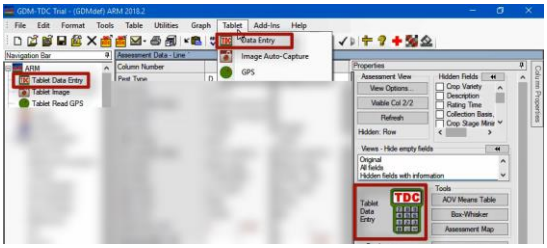
Enter Assessments with TDCx

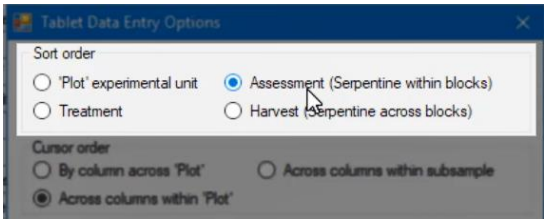
In this video...

- Tablet Data Entry options
- Data collection features

Learn the basics of entering assessment data into ARM using the Tablet Data Collector (TDCx) add-in. We describe the options for data entry mode, and the various features that are available when entering assessments.

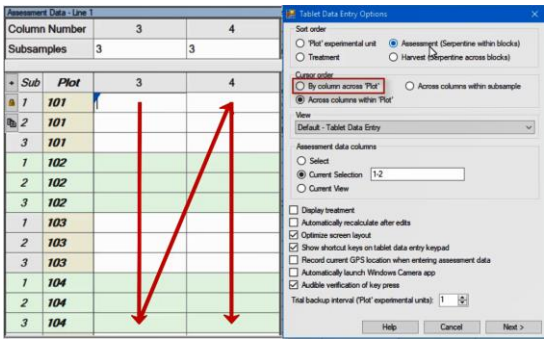


The Tablet Data Collector features are visible when a trial is open in ARM. To begin, select 'Tablet Data Entry' from either the Navigation bar, Tablet menu, or Properties panel. You can highlight consecutive assessment columns before starting, to set the default selection later on.



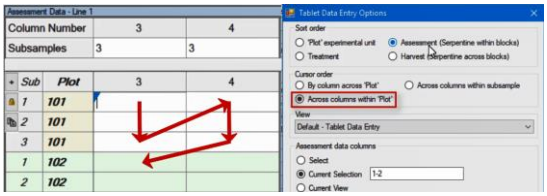
These options define today's data entry session.

First set the order that plots are sorted, to match how you travel through the trial. The Assessment and Harvest sort orders are defined on the 'Movement Arrows' tab of the Trial Map editor.

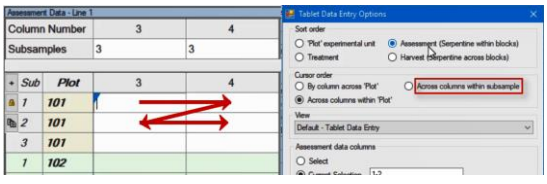


The cursor order customizes the action of the Enter key, to set what assessment cell the cursor moves to next.

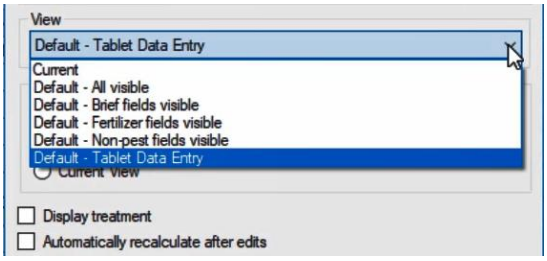
"By column across Plot" moves straight down the first assessment column, and then moves to the beginning of the next assessment column.



"Across columns within Plot" stays in the same plot and moves across all assessment columns, before moving to the next plot.

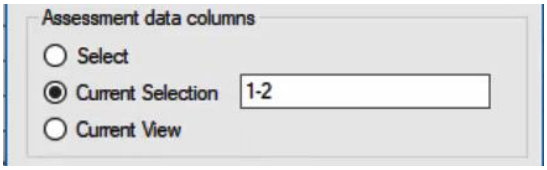


"Across columns within subsample" moves within the same subsample across all columns, before moving to the next subsample.

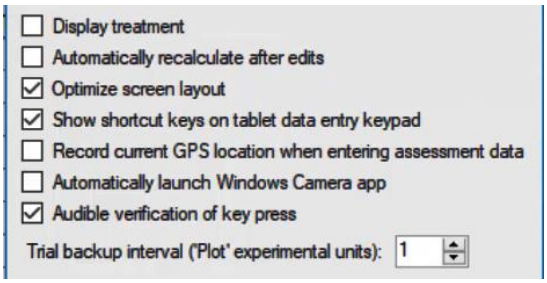


Select which assessment header rows to display in data entry mode by selecting a View file. There is a default view for TDC use, or you can create and select your own view file here.

Next, choose which data columns to rate.

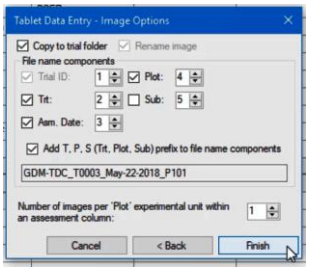


- ARM can prompt to select columns in the next step.
- You can type in the column(s) with the Current Selection option, which defaulted to the column(s) selected when we started.
- Or you can use all non-calculated columns displayed in the current view in ARM.



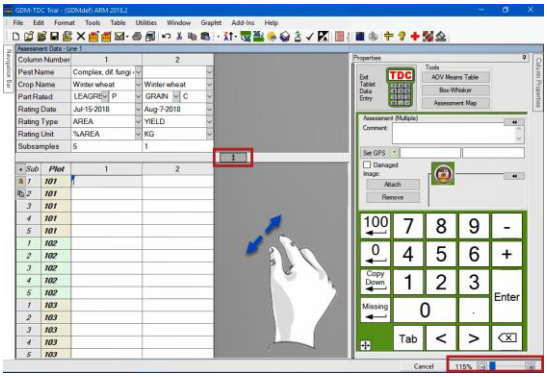
There are options to customize what displays in this mode, as well as options to automatically record GPS coordinates or launch the Windows camera app for taking plot pictures. We cover those features in different videos.

Data and pictures are saved to the backup as you enter data for each plot. Lower the frequency of these backups if you experience some lag when entering assessments.



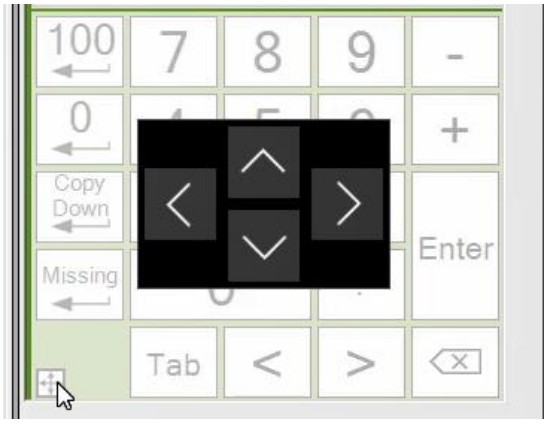
The next dialog defines the options for taking pictures and attaching them to the current plot.

Click Finish to open Data Entry mode.



This mode hides any control that is not needed for entering data, to make the best use of the limited screen size of tablets. You can pinch-to-zoom by using two fingers to pinch in or out to adjust the zoom, then let go to apply the change. There is also a zoom control in the lower corner of ARM.

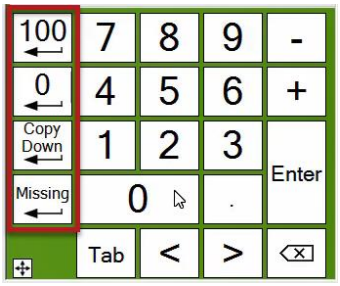
The header and data sections of the editor can be resized as well.



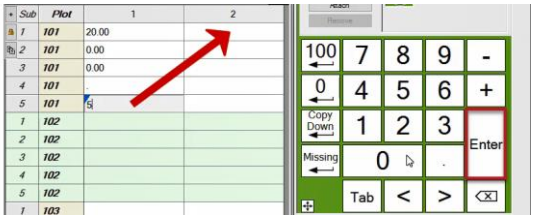
The Properties panel includes the touch-keypad for entering data.

Pressing a key enters that value into the current assessment cell, and pressing Enter advances the cursor to the next cell (in the order that we defined earlier).

The Resize icon in the corner allows for easy resizing of the panel to fit the space that you have on the screen.

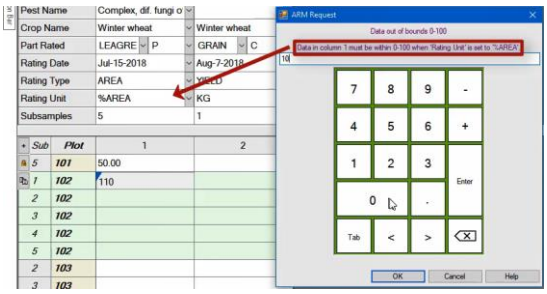


There are also shortcut keys for faster data entry. Pressing these buttons also includes the Enter action. They submit a 100 or 0, or copy the value from the cell directly above the cursor, or enter a missing value, then immediately moves to the next cell.



We chose the "Across columns within Plot" cursor order, so after we enter all subsamples for Plot 101 in this column, then the cursor moves across to the next column, within the same plot 101.

Once all columns have data entered, then the cursor moves to the next plot, back to the first column.



ARM also performs data range checking, to avoid data entry mistakes. For example, if a number larger than 100 is entered for a percent rating, then ARM prompts for a valid number before proceeding. (This check occurs when certain Rating Units or ARM Action Codes are used in that column.)

You may have noticed some small beeps when entering data. There is a small click each time a key is pressed, and a larger "ding" to signal the end of a subsample. Finally, there is a notification sound when reaching the end of a block.

These sounds can be helpful audio clues to ensure that the cursor is at the same place that you are in the trial!