hledger Plain-text accounting

CONCEPTS

Everything is read from a plain text journal; hledger never edits it except add and import. Set LEDGER_FILE to point at yours (default ~/.hledger.journal).

Bank CSV downloaded
↓ import
Journal plain text
↓ query + report
Reports bal, reg, is, bs
↓ -O csv/json
Other tools spreadsheet, scripts

Account types come from top-level names (assets, liabilities, equity, revenues, expenses) or from account directives; bs and is rely on them.

JOURNAL FORMAT

A transaction

```
2026-10-22 * Grocer | weekly
shop  ; food:
    expenses:food        $45.20
    assets:bank:checking
# amount inferred
```

2026-10-22 * desc
Date, optional status (* cleared, ! pending), description

; note tag:value
Comment with a tag

= $100
Balance assertion after a posting

10 AAPL @ $150
Unit price (cost)

10 AAPL @@ $1500
Total price (cost)

account assets:bank
Declare an account

commodity $1,000.00
Declare commodity format

include *<file>*
Include another journal

QUERIES

acct:*<regex>*
Match account names

desc:*<regex>*
Match description

QUERIES (cont.)

amt:'>100'
Match amount

date:2026-10
Match a date range

tag:*<name>*=*<value>*
Match a tag

status:*
Cleared only (also -C, -P, -U)

not:*<query>*
Negate a query

depth:2
Limit account depth

BALANCE REPORTS

hledger bal
Account balances

hledger bal *<query>*
Balances for matching accounts

hledger bal -t
Show as indented tree

hledger bal --depth 2
Roll up to depth 2

hledger bal -M
One column per month

hledger bal -H
Historical balances, include earlier postings

hledger bal -T
Add a row total column

hledger bal -S
Sort by amount

hledger bs
Balance sheet

hledger is
Income statement

hledger cf
Cash flow

REGISTER AND PRINT

hledger reg *<acct>*
Postings with running total

hledger reg -M *<acct>*
Monthly totals for an account

hledger print
Show transactions in journal format

TIME AND VALUATION

-p 'last month'
Report period

-b 2026-01-01 -e 2026-04-01
Start (inclusive) and end (exclusive)

-D / -W / -M / -Q / -Y
Daily to yearly interval

INPUT AND ENTRY

hledger -f *<file>* *<cmd>*
Read a specific file (repeatable)

hledger add
Enter transactions interactively

hledger import *<file.csv>*
Add new CSV records to the journal

hledger import --dry-run *<file.csv>*
Preview what would be imported

hledger -f *<file.csv>* **--rules** *<rules>* **print**
Convert CSV with a rules file

CSV RULES

bank.csv.rules

```
skip 1
fields date, description, amount
date-format %d/%m/%Y
currency $
account1 assets:bank:checking
if grocer
  account2 expenses:food
```

fields *<a>*, *<b>*, ...
Name CSV columns

CHECKS AND INFO

hledger check
Run basic checks

hledger accounts
List accounts

hledger *<cmd>* **-h**
Options of a command

RECIPES

Import a bank export

```
hledger import --dry-run bank.csv
hledger import bank.csv
hledger check -s
```