

## Lesson 4: Creating Inventory Masters in Tally.ERP 9

### Lesson Objectives

On completion of this lesson, you will be able to understand

- ❑ The basic functions of the Tally.ERP 9 Inventory System
- ❑ Creating and maintaining Inventory Masters
- ❑ Creating and maintaining stock details
- ❑ Creating stock items and entering opening balances

Inventory accounting includes recording of stock details like the purchase of stock, the sale of stock, stock movement between storage locations or godowns and providing information on stock availability. Tally.ERP 9 makes it possible to integrate the inventory and accounting systems so that the financial statements reflect the closing stock value from the Inventory system.

The inventory system operates in much the same way as the accounting system.

- ❑ First you set up the inventory details, which is a similar operation to creating the chart of accounts although, in this case, there are **no pre-defined set of stock groups**.
- ❑ Second, you create the individual stock items, which is similar to setting up the ledgers.

In a newly created company the Inventory Info. menu comprises of four types of Masters, viz. Stock Groups, Stock Items, Units of Measure and Voucher Types.

Go to the **Gateway of Tally > Inventory Info.**

The Inventory info. menu is displayed as shown:

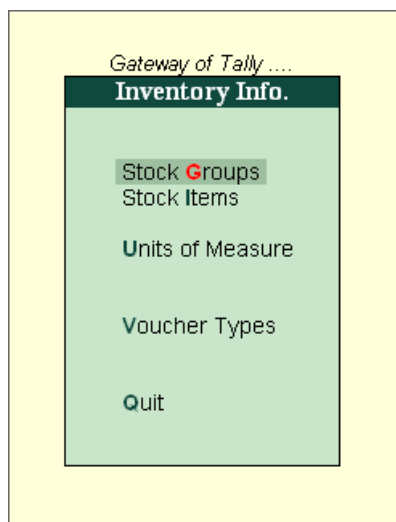


Figure 4.1 Inventory Info. Menu

The above Inventory Masters types are explained in detailed in the following sections.

- Units of Measure

Let us take the example of **Indus Enterprises** that sells **Televisions** and **Music Systems**.

Given below is the structure of items being sold.

Group A – Televisions	
A1 – Sony	A1a – Sony 29 inches TV
	A1b – Sony 25 inches TV
A2 – Philips	A2a – Philips 29 inches TV
	A2b – Philips 25 inches TV
A3 – Videocon	A3a – Videocon 29 inches TV
	A3b – Videocon 25 inches TV

Group B – Music Systems	
B1 – Sony	B1a – Sony Tape-Recorder
	B1b – Sony CD Player
B2 – Videocon	B2a – Videocon Tape-Recorder
	B2b – Videocon CD Player

The televisions are sold in numbers. Hence, the **Unit of Measure** will be **Nos.**

Indus Enterprises has **two Godowns**, the **Bangalore Godown** and the **Mumbai Godown**.

The grouping structure in Tally.ERP 9 is as follows:

### Stock Group

1. **Televisions** (main stock group)
  - Sony TV – stock group under Televisions
  - Philips TV – stock group under Televisions
  - Videocon TV – stock group under Televisions
2. **Music Systems** (main stock group)
  - Sony Music Systems – Stock Group under Music Systems
  - Videocon Music Systems – Stock Group under Music Systems

Under the stock group Televisions, let us create stock groups based on the different brands being sold viz. Sony, Philips and Videocon. This helps to find the total sales of a particular brand of televisions at any given point of time. In order to compare the total sales of the 29 and 25 inches televisions respectively, Tally.ERP 9's feature of Stock Categories for parallel classification can be used.

Experiment Creation of **Inventory Masters** in **Indus Enterprises**.

## 4.1 Stock Groups

Stock Groups are provided to help in the classification of stock items. Classification is done based on some common behaviour. Grouping stock items makes it easy to identify and report them in the statements. For example, items of a particular brand can be grouped together so that you can get the inventory details of all the items of that brand.

### 4.1.1 Creating Stock Group

#### i. Create the Stock Group – Television under Primary.

Go to the **Gateway of Tally > Inventory Info. > Stock Groups > Create** (under the Single Stock Group).

Ensure that the screen appears as shown below:

Stock Group Creation	
Name	: <b>Television</b>
Under	: <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Primary</b>
Can Quantities of items be ADDED	? <b>Yes</b>

Figure 4.2 Stock Group Creation — Television

- Press **Y** or **Enter** to accept the screen.

Similarly, create **Music Systems** under **Primary**.

**ii. Create Sony TV under Televisions.**

The screen is displayed as shown below:

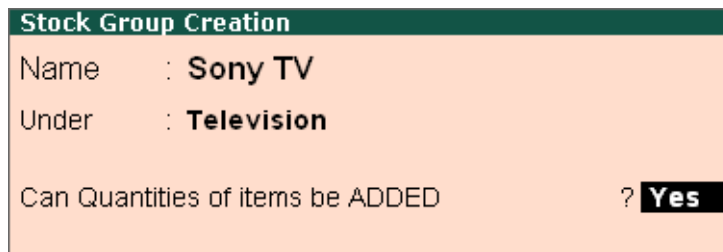


Figure 4.3 Stock Group Creation — Sony TV

- Press **Y** or **Enter** to accept the screen.

**Practice Exercise**

Create the following **Stock Groups** in the similar manner

Name	Under	Can Quantities of items be ADDED
Philips TV	Televisions	Yes
Videocon TV	Televisions	Yes
Sony Music Systems	Music Systems	Yes
Videocon Music Systems	Music Systems	Yes

**4.2 Stock Categories**

This is a feature, which offers a parallel classification of stock items. Like Stock Groups, Stock categories are also classified based on some similar behaviour. The advantage of using Tally.ERP 9 lies in categorising Stock items together, (based on functionality) across different stock groups. This enables you to obtain reports for alternatives or substitutes of a stock item.

- Set **Yes** to **Maintain Stock Categories** in **F11: Features (F2: Inventory Features)** to get an additional option **Stock Categories** under **Inventory Info**.

### 4.2.1 Creating Stock Category

Go to the **Gateway of Tally > Inventory Info. > Stock Categories > Create.**

#### i. Create Stock Category 29 inches TV Under Primary

Stock Category Creation	
Name	: 29 inches TV
Under	: <input type="checkbox"/> Primary
Accept ?	
Yes or No	

Figure 4.4 Stock Category Creation — 29 inches TV

- Press **Y** or **Enter** to accept the screen.

Similarly , create Stock Category **25 inches TV** under **Primary**.

## 4.3 Godowns / Locations

A place where stock items are stored is referred to as Godowns. You can specify where the stock items are kept. For example: A warehouse, shelf or rack etc, and obtain stock reports for each Godown and account for the movement of stock between locations/Godowns.

- Set **Yes** to **Maintain Multiple Godowns** in **F11: Features (F2: Inventory Features)** to get additional option like **Stock Categories** under **Inventory Info.**

### 4.3.1 Creating a Godown

Go to the **Gateway of Tally > Inventory Info. > Godowns > Create.**

#### i. Create a Godown – Bangalore under Primary.

Ensure that the screen is displayed as shown below:

Godown Creation	
Name	: Bangalore
Under	: <input type="checkbox"/> Primary
Accept ?	
Allow Storage of materials	Yes or No

Figure 4.5 Godown Creation — Bangalore

- Press **Y** or **Enter** to accept the screen.



- *Godowns have a main location, by default because of which the options **Display** and **Alter** are functional even before you create a godown.*

Similarly create the godown – **Mumbai** under **Primary**.

## 4.4 Units of Measure

Stock Items are mainly purchased and sold on the basis of quantity. The quantity inturn is measured by units. In such cases, it is necessary to create the Unit of Measure. The Units of Measure can either be simple or compound. Examples of simple units are: nos., metres, kilograms, pieces etc. Examples for compound units are: a box of 10 pieces etc. Create the Units of Measure before creating the Stock Items.

### 4.4.1 Creating Units of Measure

Go to the **Gateway of Tally > Inventory Info. > Units of Measure > Create.**

The **Unit Creation** Screen appears as shown below:

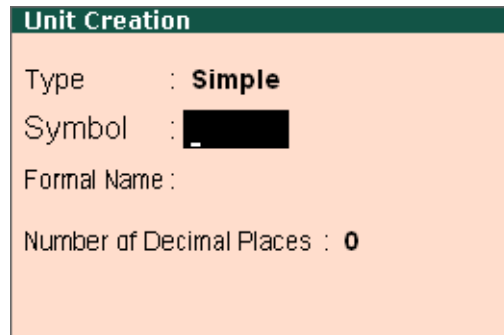


Figure 4.6 Units of Measure Creation screen

#### Type

Tally.ERP 9 has the option to create simple units as well as compound units. Examples: box, nos, pcs, etc. A Compound Unit is a combination of two simple units of measure. Example: A **box of 10 pcs** is a compound unit of measure.

#### Symbol

It is the abbreviated form by which a stock item is identified. For example, the abbreviation pcs indicates – pieces.

### Formal Name

This represents the complete or formal name of a symbol used while creating a unit. Different companies use different symbols to represent the same units. Formal names help you to match the symbols with their respective units. For example, the symbol for numbers (formal name) can be nos or num.

### Number of Decimal Places

A unit can be expressed as fractions. For example, a 3.15 Kg refers to 3Kg and 150 grams. The number of digits expressed in grams after the decimal places are three. Likewise, fractions up to four decimal places can be expressed in the same manner. For expressing numbers, without a decimal place, specify 0 in this option.

Let us create the unit **Nos**.

1. **Type: Simple**
2. **Symbol: Nos**
3. **Formal Name: Numbers**
4. **Number of Decimal Places: 0**

The **Unit Creation** screen is displayed as shown below:

Unit Creation	
Type	: <b>Simple</b>
Symbol	: <b>Nos</b>
Formal Name	: Numbers
Number of Decimal Places	: 0

**Accept ?**

Yes or No

Figure 4.7 Units of Measure Creation — Nos

5. Press **Y** or **Enter** to accept the screen.

## 4.5 Stock Items

Stock items are goods that you manufacture or trade (sell and purchase). It is the primary inventory entity. Stock Items in the Inventory transactions are similar to ledgers being used in accounting transactions. Therefore, Stock Items are important in an inventory just as ledgers are important in accounting.

### 4.5.1 Creating a Stock Item

Go to **Gateway of Tally > Inventory Info. > Stock Items > Create**.

The Stock Item Creation Screen appears as shown below:

Stock Item Creation		Indus Enterprises		
Name : <span style="background-color: black; color: black;">XXXXXXXXXX</span>				
Under	: <input type="checkbox"/> Primary	<u>Tax Information</u>		
Category	: <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable			
Units	: <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable			
		Tariff Classification	: <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable	
		Rate of Duty (eg 5)	:	
Opening Balance :		<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Rate per</b>	<b>Value</b>

Figure 4.8 Stock Item Creation screen

Enter the following details:

**Name:** The name of the stock item.

**Under:** The stock group under which you want to classify the stock item.

**Category:** The stock category you want to classify the stock item for parallel classification.

**Units:** The unit of measure for the stock item being created.

**Rate of Duty:** Enter the rate of duty charged on the item.

**Opening Balance:** The opening balance of a stock item, refers to the stock available with us. Godowns that have already been created, must have the opening balance quantity and the location specified.



**i. Create a Stock Item Sony 29 inches TV, under the Group Sony TV.**

Ensure that the details appear as shown below:

Stock Item Creation		Indus Enterprises	
Name : <b>Sony 29 inches TV</b>			
Under : <b>Sony TV</b>	<b>Tax Information</b>		
Category : <b>29 inches TV</b>	Tariff Classification : <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Not Applicable</b>		
Units : <b>Nos</b>	Rate of Duty (eg 5) : <b>0</b>		
Opening Balance :	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Rate per</b>	<b>Accept ?</b>
			<b>Yes or No</b>

Figure 4.9 Stock Item Creation — Sony 29 inches TV

- Press **Y** or **Enter** to accept the screen.

**Practice Exercise**

Similarly, create the following Stock Items under **Televisions**

Name	Under	Category	Units
Sony 25 inches TV	Sony TV	25 inches TV	Nos
Philips 29 inches TV	Philips TV	29 inches TV	Nos
Philips 25 inches TV	Philips TV	25 inches TV	Nos
Videocon 29 inches TV	Videocon TV	29 inches TV	Nos
Videocon 25 inches TV	Videocon TV	25 inches TV	Nos

Similarly, create the following Stock Items under **Music Systems**.

Name	Under	Category	Units
Sony Tape - Recorder	Sony Music Systems	Not Applicable	Nos
Sony CD - Player	Sony Music Systems	Not Applicable	Nos
Videocon Tape - Recorder	Videocon Music Systems	Not Applicable	Nos
Videocon CD - Player	Videocon Music Systems	Not Applicable	Nos

### 4.6 Creating Inventory Masters for National Traders

Before you start to create the inventory data for National Traders, there are some important functions of housekeeping that are to be taken care of.

- ❑ Make sure your screen displays the main menu of the **Gateway of Tally** and ensure that only National Traders is loaded.
- ❑ Set Tally.ERP 9's *Current Date* to **April 1, 2009** – select **F2: Date** at the **Gateway of Tally**.
- ❑ You also need to check whether the following features in Tally.ERP 9 are enabled for this module

i. In the **F11: Features (F2: Inventory Features)** set **Yes** to:

- ❑ Maintain Stock Categories
- ❑ Maintain Multiple Godowns

ii. In the **F12: Configure > Accts/Inventory Info.** set **Yes** to:

- ❑ Allow ALIASES along with Names
- ❑ Allow Language ALIASES along with Names
- ❑ Allow ADVANCED entries in Masters (Accounts)
- ❑ Use ADDRESSES for Ledger Accounts
- ❑ Use CONTACT DETAILS for Ledger Accounts
- ❑ Allow ADVANCED entries in Masters (Inventory)
- ❑ Allow Std. Rates for Stock Items

Let us now use Tally.ERP 9 to set up the basic inventory details for **National Traders** that sells computers, Printers and Peripherals. Create the stock groups and sub-groups as shown:

Stock Group	Under
Computers	Primary
Printers	Primary
Peripherals	Primary
Accessories	Peripherals
Components	Peripherals

### 4.6.1 Create Stock Groups

You will now set up the stock groups using both the single and multiple create options.

#### i. Creating single stock groups

Go to the **Gateway of Tally > Inventory Info. > Stock Groups > Create.**

Create a **Stock Group - Computers**

1. **Name: Computers**
2. **Aliases: Skip the field**
3. **Under: Primary**
4. **Can quantities of items be ADDED?: Yes**

Stock Group Creation	
Name	: <b>Computers</b>
Under	: <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Primary</b>
Can Quantities of items be ADDED	? <b>Yes</b>

Figure 4.10 Stock Group Creation — Systems



- *The field **Can quantities of items be added?** in the stock group creation screen pertains to information on measuring the units of the Stock Items that have been categorised under the Stock Group. The Stock Items categorised under the group should have similar units for them to be added up. You cannot add quantities in Kgs to quantities in Pcs.*

5. Press **Y** or **Enter** to accept the screen.

Similarly, create the following **Stock Groups**

Name	Under	Can Quantities of items be ADDED
Peripherals	Primary	Yes
Printers	Primary	No

#### ii. Creating Multiple Stock Groups

Go to the **Gateway of Tally > Inventory Info. > Stock Groups > Create.**

**Create Accessories and Components under Peripherals.**

Ensure that the **Multi Stock Group Creation** screen is displayed as shown below:

Multi Stock Group Creation			
National Traders			
Under Group : Peripherals			
S.No.	Name of Stock Group	Under	Items are Addable (Y/N)
1.	Accessories	Peripherals	Yes
2.	Components	Peripherals	Yes

Accept ?  
 Yes or No

Figure 4.11 Multiple Sock Group Creation

- Press **Y** or **Enter** to accept the screen.

**4.6.2 Displaying and Altering Stock Groups**

Once created, stock groups can be displayed and altered in both the single and multiple mode. You can delete a stock group by using the option **Alter** under the **Single Stock Group** by pressing **Alt+D**. However, you cannot delete a stock group with sub-groups or stock items. The lower levels must be deleted first.

**4.6.3 Creating Single Stock Categories**

Go to the **Gateway of Tally > Inventory Info. > Stock Categories > Create.**

Name	Under
National	Primary

#### 4.6.4 Creating Multiple Stock Categories

Go to the **Gateway of Tally > Inventory Info. > Stock Categories > Create.**

Under Category	Name of Category
Primary	HCL
Primary	IBM
Primary	HP
Primary	Samsung

#### 4.6.5 Displaying and Altering Stock Categories

Once created, stock categories can be displayed and altered in single and multiple mode. You can delete a stock category via **Single Stock Category > Alter** by pressing **Alt+D**. However, you cannot delete a stock category with sub-categories. The lower levels must be deleted first.

#### 4.6.6 Creating Units of Measure

Go to the **Gateway of Tally > Inventory Info. > Units of Measure > Create.**

Type	Symbol	Formal Name	Number of Decimal Places
Simple	Nos	Number Of	0
Simple	Box	Boxes	0

#### 4.6.7 Creating Compound Units of Measure

Go to the **Gateway of Tally > Inventory Info. > Units of Measure > Create.**

1. **Type:** Compound (press Backspace)
2. **First Unit:** Select **Box**
3. **Conversion:** Type **100**
4. **Second Unit:** Select **Nos**

**Unit Creation**

Type : **Compound**

**Units with Multiplier Factors**  
(example: Kgs of 1000 gms)

First Unit Conversion  
**Box** of **100**

**Accept ?**  
Yes or No

Figure 4.12 Compound Units of Measure Creation

5. Press **Y** or **Enter** to accept the screen.

#### 4.6.8 Displaying and Altering Units of Measure

Once created, the units of measure can be displayed and altered. You can delete a unit of measure in the alteration screen by pressing **Alt+D**. However, you cannot delete a unit of measure that is part of a compound measure. The compound measure must be deleted first.

#### 4.6.9 Creating Godowns

Ensure that **Maintain Multiple Godowns** is set to **Yes** in the **F11: Features (F2: Inventory Features)**.

The concept of **Godowns** is essentially to store the inventory and can be used as a location, warehouse, department, sub-contractor locations etc. Tally.ERP 9 permits any number of godowns that can be grouped and sub-grouped to match the structure you need.

To Create a Godown, go to the **Gateway of Tally > Inventory Info. > Godowns > Create**.

1. **Name: Warehouse**
2. **alias: Skip the field**
3. **Under: Primary**
4. **Allow Storage of materials: Yes**

Similarly, create **On-Site** as **Godown** under **Primary**.

1. **Name: On - Site**
2. **alias: Skip the field**
3. **Under: Primary**
4. **Allow Storage of materials: Yes**

#### 4.6.10 Displaying and Altering Stock Godowns

Once created stock Godowns can be displayed and altered in single and multiple mode.

Go to the **Gateway of Tally > Inventory Info. > Godowns > Alter**.

You can delete a stock Godown via **Single Godown > Alter** by pressing **Alt+D**. However, you cannot delete a stock Godown with sub-godowns. The lower levels must be deleted first.

#### 4.6.11 Create Stock Items

Go to the **Gateway of Tally > Inventory Info. > Stock items > Create**.

Create the stock items as on 1-4-2009, with the information provided below:

Stock	Cost	Ware-house	On - Site	Total Qty	Total Value	Retail Price
<b>COMPUTERS</b>						
HCL PIV	17,500	1	4	5 Nos	87,500	21,500
IBM PIV	17,100	0	4	4 Nos	68,400	24,785
<b>PERIPHERALS</b>						
<b>Accessories</b>						
CD ROM Disks 100s	450	0	5	5 Box	2,250	500
Dust Covers	35	2	8	10 Nos	350	40
USB Pen Drives 64MB	1,250	0	10	10 Nos	12,500	1,600
Wireless Keyboard	490	10	15	25 Nos	12,250	700
Wireless Mouse	250	10	10	20 Nos	5,000	430
<b>Printers</b>						
HP Laserjet 1010 Series	8,200	0	7	7 Nos	57,400	9,500
Samsung Laserjet 1500	8,100	0	5	5 Nos	40,500	9,850
<b>Total</b>					<b>2,86,150</b>	

Ensure that **Allow ADVANCED entries in Masters** is set to **Yes** in the **F12: Stock Item Configuration**.

Create the stock item **HCL PIV** with the following details:

1. **Name: HCL PIV**
2. **alias: Skip this field**
3. **Under: Computers**
4. **Category: HCL**
5. **Units: Nos**
6. **Alter Standard Rates?: Yes**
7. Enter the details in the **Standard Rate screen** as shown below:

Stock Item: <b>HCL PIV</b>					
Standard Cost			Standard Selling Price		
Applicable From	Rate	per	Applicable From	Rate	per
1-Apr-2009	17,500.00	Nos	1-Apr-2009	21,500.00	Nos

Figure 4.13 Standard Rate screen for Stock Item — HCL PIV

8. Enter other details as given in the table:

Rate Of Duty	0
Cost Method	Avg Cost
Market Valuation Method	Last Sale Price
Ignore Diff due to Physical Counting?	No
Ignore Negative Balances?	No
Treat all Sales as New Manufacture?	No
Treat all Purchases as consumed?	No
Treat all Rejection Inward as scrap?	No
Opening Balance: Quantity	5 Nos
Opening Balance: Rate	17,500

9. Allocate the items as shown below:



Allocations of : <b>HCL PIV</b> for: <b>5 Nos</b>			
Godown	Quantity	Rate per	Amount
On-Site	4 Nos	17,500.00 Nos	70,000.00
<b>Warehouse</b>	<b>1 Nos</b>	<b>17,500.00 Nos</b>	<b>17,500.00</b>
<b>5 Nos</b>			<b>87,500.00</b>

Figure 4.14 Allocation of: HCL PIV

10. The Stock Item Creation screen for **HCL PIV** appears as shown below:

Stock Item Creation		National Traders		Ctrl + M	✕	
Name : HCL PIV						
Under : Computers	<b>Tax Information</b>		<b>Behaviour</b>			
Category : HCL	Tariff Classification : <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable	Costing Method : Avg. Cost				
Units : Nos	Rate of Duty (eg 5) : 0	Market Valuation Method : Last Sale Price				
Set Standard Rates ? Yes		Ignore Diff. due to Physical Counting ? No				
		Ignore Negative Balances ? No				
		Treat all Sales as New Manufacture ? No				
		Treat all Purchases as Consumed ? No				
		Treat all Rejections inward as Scrap ? No				
Opening Balance		Quantity : 5 Nos	Rate per : 17,500.00 Nos	Value : 87,500.00	Accept ?	
					Yes or No	

Figure 4.15 Completed Item Creation screen

11. Press **Y** or **Enter** to accept.

### Explanation for Behaviour

- ❑ **Costing Method:** This is the method by which stocks are valued. The value arrived at will be the stock value in the books. This method considers **Purchase costs** only.
- ❑ **Market Valuation Method:** This method considers the **Sale price** only for the valuation of stocks. The method selected, is not however, used for standard reporting.
- ❑ **Ignore Diff. due to Physical Counting?:** This requires you to enter information on whether Tally.ERP 9 should automatically account for stock difference by passing an appropriate entry or not.
- ❑ **Ignore Negative Balances?:** This requires you to enter information on whether Tally.ERP 9 should warn you if there is a negative balance. This however does not prevent you from entering vouchers.
- ❑ **Treat all Sales as New Manufacture?:** This requires you to enter information on whether on entering a sale voucher, the item will automatically be manufactured and brought in stock.
- ❑ **Treat all Purchases as Consumed?:** This requires you to enter information on whether on entering a purchase, the item is automatically issued from stock.
- ❑ **Treat all Rejections inward as Scrap?:** This requires you to enter information on whether the goods rejected and taken into stock should be shown as issued and hence valued nil.

Similarly, Create other Stock Items.

Once you have entered all the stock items, return to the main **Gateway of Tally** menu and select the **Stock Summary**. This should show a grand total of **2,86,150**, the break-up of which is, **Computers - Rs. 1,55,900, Peripherals - Rs. 32,350, Printers - 97,900 = Rs. 2,86,150**.

Ensure that the Stock Summary appears as shown :

Stock Summary		National Traders		Ctrl + M
Particulars	National Traders For 1-Apr-2009			
	Closing Balance			
	Quantity	Rate	Value	
<b>Computers</b>	<b>9 Nos</b>	<b>17,322.22</b>	<b>1,55,900.00</b>	
HCL PIV	5 Nos	17,500.00	87,500.00	
IBM PIV	4 Nos	17,100.00	68,400.00	
<b>Peripherals</b>			<b>32,350.00</b>	
Accessories			2,600.00	
CD ROM Disks 100s	5 Box	450.00	2,250.00	
On-Site	5 Box	450.00	2,250.00	
Warehouse				
Dust Covers	10 Nos	35.00	350.00	
On-Site	8 Nos	35.00	280.00	
Warehouse	2 Nos	35.00	70.00	
Components	55 Nos	540.91	29,750.00	
USB Pen Drives 64MB	10 Nos	1,250.00	12,500.00	
On-Site	10 Nos	1,250.00	12,500.00	
Wireless KeyBoard	25 Nos	490.00	12,250.00	
On-Site	15 Nos	490.00	7,350.00	
Warehouse	10 Nos	490.00	4,900.00	
Wireless Mouse	20 Nos	250.00	5,000.00	
On-Site	10 Nos	250.00	2,500.00	
Warehouse	10 Nos	250.00	2,500.00	
<b>Printers</b>			<b>97,900.00</b>	
HP Laserjet1010 Series	7 Nos	8,200.00	57,400.00	
On-Site	7 Nos	8,200.00	57,400.00	
Samsung Laserjet 1500	5 Nos	8,100.00	40,500.00	
On-Site	5 Nos	8,100.00	40,500.00	
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>9 Nos</b>		<b>2,86,150.00</b>	

Figure 4.16 Stock Summary from April 1, 2009 to May 1, 2009

### Points to Remember

- ❑ Inventory accounting includes recording stock details like the purchase of stock, the sale of stock, stock movement between storage locations or godowns and providing information on stock availability.
- ❑ Stock Groups are provided for the purpose of classification of stock items.
- ❑ Stock Items refers to goods that you manufacture or trade.
- ❑ Godowns/Location are places where stock items are stored.