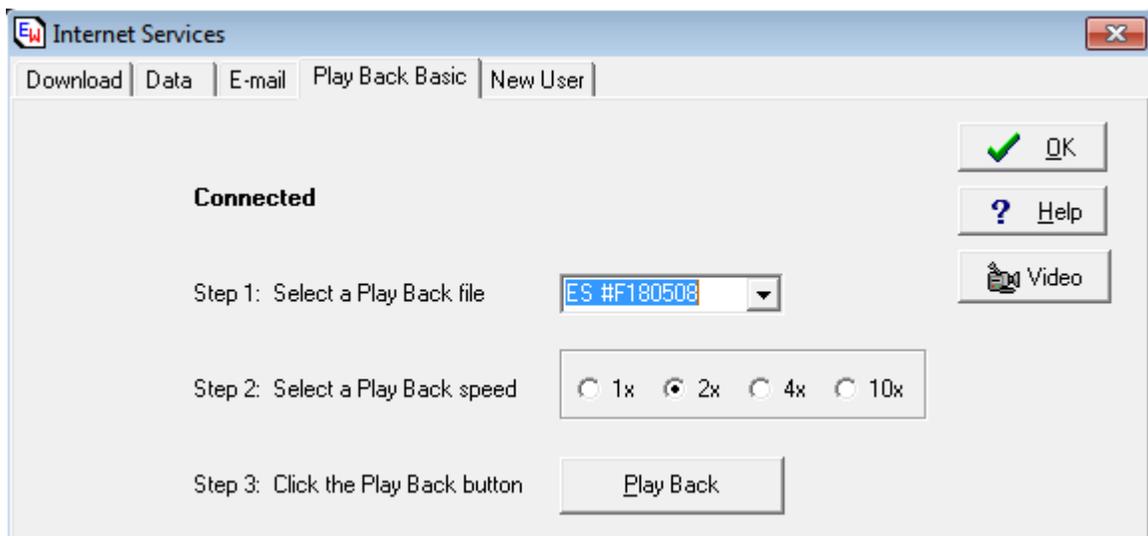# Playback

The Play Back feature allows you to replay (on a chart) the tick by tick Trading that occurred for a symbol. Tick data for the specified symbol (on a specified day) is used to create a Play Back file. The file can then be played at anytime (just like a Tape Recorder can replay its recordings). The played file will duplicate the trading day in actual time (or up to 10 x actual speed), as if you were trading the markets in real-time. This feature is a fantastic tool that allows traders to practice their trading skills with real market data.

Play Back Basic

There are 2 versions of the Play Back feature (Basic and Advanced). The easiest way to get started with Play Back is to use the Basic version. Select **Set-Up | Play Back Basic** from the menu. Select a Play Back file from the drop-down list box. Select a Play Back speed (either 2x, 4x, or 10x). Click the Play Back button to start the Play Back session. A chart will open, and the selected Play Back file day will start to update on the chart.
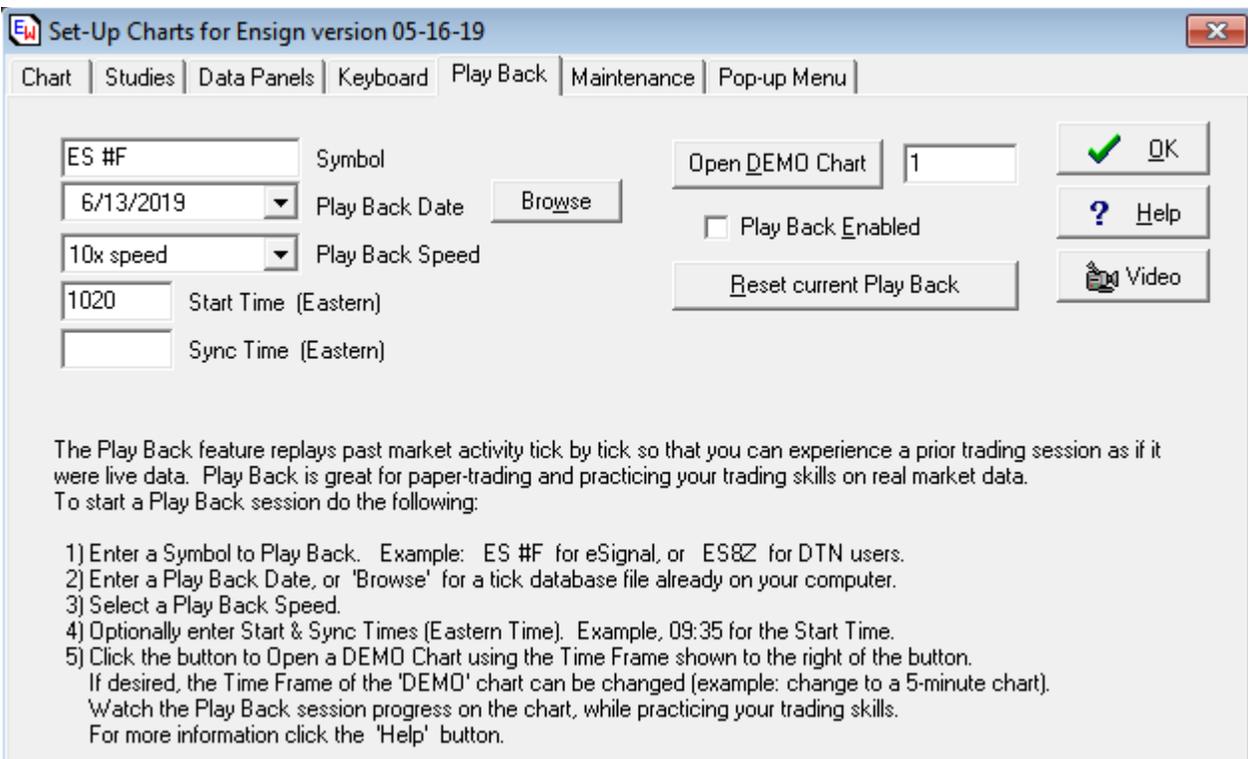

Play Back Advanced

The Advanced version of the Play Back feature allows you to specify more options, and to create your own Play Back files. Before creating or starting a Play Back file, several settings must be entered. To view the Play Back set-up window select **Set-Up | Play Back Advanced** from the menu.

Symbol: Enter a symbol in the 'Symbol' entry box (example: IBM, ES M0, NQ Z9, etc.). Tick data from this root Symbol will be used to create or run the Play Back file.

Play Back Filename: To load and play a file that is already created and saved on your hard disk, enter the Play Back filename or click the Browse button if you need to browse the hard disk and select the file. If you are creating a new Play Back file, enter a unique filename for the Play Back file. By default the filename will include the first 2 characters of the 'Symbol', and also the current Year, Month, and Day (example: IB191228). The filename can be changed if desired. Do not include a filename extension. Play Back files use .TXT as the filename extension by default. Play Back files are saved in the \ENSIGN\PLAYBACK folder.

Downloading Play Back Files: Ensign Software maintains a collection of Play Back files for the ES, NQ, and YM Futures symbols that can be downloaded from the Internet. To download a file, click the Download button. This will open the 'Internet Services' window. Click the Connect button. After connecting, a list of files can be viewed in the 'Playback File' drop-down list box. Select a file and then click the Download button. The Play Back file will automatically download and save into the \ENSIGN\PLAYBACK folder. This file will then be available to load and play.

Start Time: Enter an optional Start Time. If a Start Time is not entered, the Play Back file will start updating immediately at the current local time. For example, if a trader starts a Play Back file at 6:45 PM, the Play Back will start updating with chart bars from 6:45 PM even though the actual trading took place in the morning. The 'Start Time' entry box allows the Play Back file to simulate a specific time of the day. The entered time must be an Eastern Time Zone time. For example, the U.S. stock market opens at 09:30 AM Eastern Time. If 09:30 is entered in the 'Start Time' box, then the Play Back will begin with a blank chart and build the day's bars in sequence. An entry of 10:30 will cause the Play Back to build all the chart bars up to 10:30 AM Eastern Time, and then start updating the DEMO chart with the live ticks that occurred after 10:30. The chart would already contain the first 2 hours of trading.

Sync Time: Enter an optional Sync Time. The entered time must be an Eastern Time Zone time. This allows on-line Training Classes and groups of traders to sync all participants to the same bars. Everyone participating with the same PlayBack session will be in Sync with each other.

Play Back Speed: Select a Play Back Speed from the drop-down list. Select 'Pause' to pause the current Play Back session. Select 'Actual Speed' to play the file with the actual speed and time that the ticks occurred. Select a higher speed to play the file faster.

Pause / Resume: During a Play Back session, a new menu item will appear at the top of the Ensign screen. Click the Pause menu to temporarily stop the Play Back. Click Resume to start the Play Back again.

Play Back Enabled: Place a check mark in this box to RUN the Play Back file. When this box is checked, the DEMO symbol will be updated from the Play Back file. Open a chart for the DEMO symbol to watch the market unfold. Example, open a DEMO.1 chart to view a live updating 1-minute chart of the play back file trades. To stop a Play Back session, uncheck the 'Play Back Enabled' box.

Reset current Play Back: Click this button to rewind the current Play Back file and start over again. All the DEMO chart files will be deleted, so that they can start over. Make sure to close any DEMO charts before clicking on this button. The 'Play Back Enabled' check box will be automatically re-checked after clicking on the 'Reset current Play Back' button. You can then open a DEMO chart and watch the Play Back file proceed again. The DEMO symbol can be entered in the Symbol Properties screen. Select Set-Up | Symbol Properties from the menu to view the Symbol Properties screen. Place a check mark in the 'Day Session Only' box if you want to see only day session trading on the DEMO charts.

Open DEMO Chart: Click this button to start a Play Back session on a chart. The DEMO chart will be displayed using the Time Frame indicated in the entry box. Example, an entry of 1 will open a 1-minute DEMO chart that will be playing the Play Back file.

Where does the Play Back tick data come from ?
A Play Back file is created from tick data for the specified 'Symbol'. Tick by tick data is extracted from one of the following sources to build the Play Back file. Tick data is downloaded from the eSignal, IQfeed, or Barchart chart servers. Ticks will be downloaded for the date specified in the Play Back filename. The ticks from mid-night and onward will be included in the download. Example, if the entered filename is ES190929 then tick data for September 29th, 2019,will be downloaded for the ES symbol. Only 1 day can be downloaded for each file. The Play Back data (for this example) would be saved in the \ENSIGN\PLAYBACK\ES190929.TXT file. Note: The Play Back was designed for the ES, NQ, and YM symbols. It will also work with many other symbols, including stocks.