

GETTING STARTED ON WINLINK

(These instructions expect that you are familiar with downloading ham applications software on your computer and understand the download and install of driver software. If you have any problems using these instructions, we recommend that you locate someone (ham club, family, etc.) who can assist you if you run into difficulty with your installation.)

You will need:

Computer connected to the internet (Window XP or Windows 7 on up)

Ham Transceiver capable of sending and receiving on Two Meters

TNC – Preferably a Kantronics KPC3+

Cable to connect the TNC to your Computer

Cable to connect the TNC to your Transceiver

If you are missing any of these items, then you need to procure them before proceeding.

The TNC you can buy from an established ham radio retailer such as Ham Radio Outlet. Note that you will need a 12 volt DC power supply for it and a 2.1 mm cylindrical connector to power it. If in doubt we recommend you purchase the “wall wart” that Kantronics offers for sale to power the unit.

The cables are not always easy to find locally. If in doubt, we recommend that you call:

**Dan, KF0RS
Associated Radio Communications
8012 Conser Street
Overland Park, KS 66204
(913) 381-5900**

Dan has been specializing in supplying the cables required to connect Kantronics TNC's to computers and radios for many years and I have found him to be a helpful and reliable source.

Depending upon the type of cable you purchase to connect your TNC to the Transceiver, you may need an adapter cable of some sort. Associated Radio Communications sells cables with a USB connector on the computer end which makes that connection convenient. Note, however, there is a driver required to be loaded on to the computer, which is required.

Whether you use a cable that comes with a USB connector, or purchase an adapter cable, pay close attention to the instructions that come with that kind of cable as to sequence in which you should proceed. As with many such installations, be sure to install the driver BEFORE you plug the USB end into your computer.

After you have successfully installed the requisite driver on your computer, open up “Control Panel” click on “Device Manager” and look down the list for “PORTS (COM & LPT).” Click on that file and

make a note of the COM port you have just installed, example "(COM 4)". If you do not see a port installed, you have not successfully completed the installation of the required driver.

Now you are ready to download RMS Express. Go to the official Winlink2000 web site, <http://www.winlink.org/> and click on "Client Software." Click on "RMS Express" and find the application download near the bottom of the page. It will have the form "[rms express install 1-3-2-0.zip](#)".

Download the application and agree to let it be installed in the default location. The application will put a checkerboard icon on your desktop. Click on it to begin the setup process.

From the main (or HOME) screen click on "FILES" and "RMS Express SETUP."

Enter your Call Sign and Maidenhead Grid Square and fill out as much of the "Contact Information" as you are willing to provide.

Also, you will need to follow the instructions for adding a Password to your RMS Express access. Reading the HELP instructions for RMS Express are recommended.

Click on "UPDATE" and you will return to the home screen.

From the home screen, select "PACKET WL2K" from the "MODE" drop down menu.

Click on "OPEN SESSION" and find application on the "SESSION" screen.

Click on "SETUP" box and use the pull down menu to select your TNC (KANTRONICS, KPC3+)

Clicking on "SERIAL PORT" should show the COM port where your USB cable from the TNC is found on the computer. Select it by clicking on that option. (If you don't see that COM number then try entering the port number (example, COM4) that you noted from your access to the computer Device Manager. If that number is not accepted by the application, then you have not successfully installed the USB driver.)

Continuing on the "SESSION" SETUP screen, at the option "SERIAL PORT BAUD" see that "9600" is entered and at the option "TNC PARAMETERS" put a dot in the "1200 BAUD" circle.

Click on "UPDATE" and you will return to the "SESSION" screen.

Leave the "CONNECTION TYPE" as "DIRECT" and enter the tactical call of the RMS you wish to use for your Winlink access. We suggest trying one of the four RMS's available in the San Diego area:

| | | |
|-----------|---|-------------|
| W6SH-10 | - | 145.070 Mhz |
| W6IM-1 | - | 145.030 Mhz |
| W6RDX-10 | - | 145.050 Mhz |
| XE2BNC-10 | - | 145.090 Mhz |

As example, enter "W6SH-10" (of course, without the quotes).

Next, set your transceiver simplex frequency to the frequency of the RMS (example, for W6SH-10 it is 145.070 Mhz.)

Click on "START" and you should see your transceiver exchanging handshake signals with the RMS. (If you do not see this, try another RMS in the list above. You may be out of range of the RMS you selected.)

If there were any messages waiting for you on the Winlink2000 servers, they will be downloaded and you can then minimize the "SESSION" screen and return to the "HOME" screen to read the message(s).

Look carefully at the menu of "MESSAGE OPTIONS" to the left of the "MAIN" screen.

As example, if you click on the "In Box" you will see any messages that were sent to you and read them by clicking on them.

If you want to author a new message, use the options on the "HOME" screen to create it. However, you must remember to click on "POST TO OUTBOX" in order to get the message positioned in the application to be ready to be sent. Now, when you open up the "SESSION" screen, the message will be sent when you click on the "START" button.

Some reminders:

WINLINK EXPECTS YOUR MESSAGE TO BE ADDRESSED IN THE FORM w6xyz@Winlink.org OR JUST w6xyz

UNTIL WINLINK HAS PUT A REGULAR E-MAIL ADDRESS ON ITS "WHITE LIST" IT WILL NOT ACCEPT IT (see the Winlink2000 web site for white list rules)

WINLINK WILL NOT ACCEPT B.C.C.'S

THERE ARE MANY, MANY OTHER OPTIONS AVAILABLE; BE SURE TO REVIEW THE HELP FILES.

Finally, the only way to keep your Winlink skills up to date is to practice using the application. We recommend you join:

San Diego Winlink EmComm Weekly Drill and News (send a membership request to W3NRG)

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2016**