



YCARES Winlink Training

Registering For a Winlink Express Account

Prerequisites

- A valid amateur radio license
- Winlink Express Compatible Computer
 - Microsoft-supported 32- or 64-bit Windows OS, including Windows 7, 8, 10, and 11.
 - Apple Mac and Linux machines using a virtual machine engine or dual boot setup.
 - Older operating systems like Windows XP are not supported.
 - A computer with at least 700 MHz Pentium/Celeron class and 2GB of memory for modes using sound card modems.
 - For concurrent use with multiple applications, a modern computer or Windows tablet, with faster processors and 4-8GB RAM recommended
 - For radio modes, a free USB port, or a powered USB hub for connection of a sound card modem
 - Recommended: A free USB port for a GPS dongle for position reporting.
 - If possible, make sure you have the most recent drivers and updates for the OS by running Windows Update prior to installing.
 - Windows updates regularly compact the USB Devices database as part of the update. If possible, perform an OS update prior to installing new USB devices.

Creating a Winlink Account

A Winlink account must be created within the Winlink Express software, you will need to download and install the software. Some administration of your account can be performed at Winlink.org, but you must create it via the Winlink Express application's Setup page.

- Download instructions
 - In your favorite browser navigate to
 - Winlink.org
 - On the Winlink.org home page
 - Click on the **Download** Tab
 - On the downloads.winlink.org page
 - Click on the **User Programs** List Item
 - Click on the zip file starting with Winlink_Express_install_
 - The numbers following are the version number of the application
 - As of this writing it is 1-7-10-0
 - Save File to your downloads folder or other preferred location.
- Install Instructions
 - Extract Files from zip file
 - Open a File Explorer window and move to the directory to which you downloaded the Winlink_Express_install zip file.
 - Right click on the install zip file and select **Extract All..** in the pop-up menu.
 - Use the provided folder name for the location of the extraction.
 - Select the option box for showing the extracted files
 - Click on the **Extract** button
 - When the new window with the folder with the Winlink Express_install executable is displayed,
 - Move the previous window showing the Zip file
 - Delete the Winlink_Express_install zip
 - Close that File Explorer window
 - Run the install
 - If necessary, make your active window the File folder with the Winlink Express_install executable file
 - Right Click on the Install file and select **Open** from the pop-up menu
 - You can use the default directory provided by the install, or a specific location

- I often will run two instances of Winlink each in their own directory. One for my VHF radio and one for my HF radio
 - I export/import files between them
- Creating a Winlink Express Account
 - Start the Winlink Express application
 - If no short cut is available go to the directory within which you installed the application.
 - Right click on the **RMS Express.exe** and select **Open**.
 - The Winlink Express main window should open and if no RMS Express.ini file exist, the Winlink Express Properties window will pop-up. Key fields to fill out on the application's properties form.
 - My Callsign
 - Your Callsign
 - My Password
 - Your Password, make it something easy to remember as you may not have internet when trying to setup on a different computer
 - Password recovery e-mail
 - The only way to reset password if you don't know it.
 - My Grid Square
 - Maidenhead Grid Square locator identification for your QTH
 - For the mapping related features of Winlink this will be your default location unless otherwise specified within the mapping features.
 - Service Code
 - Keep this to the default **PUBLIC**
 - Name
 - City
 - State
 - Postal Code
 - Use your back up email additional address
 - If you want to pick and select from a list of you emails pending downloading (handy with slow connections) make sure the **Display list of pending incoming messages prior to download** is selected
 - Click **Update**. Your account is created!

Creating, Downloading, Receiving Messages

Send or receive any pending messages via the telnet protocol:

- From the Winlink Express main window click on the options box next to the text *Open Sessions*:
 - Select Telnet Winlink.
 - Click on the *Open Sessions*: text to open the session for telnet exchange:
 - This will open the Telnet Winlink Session window
 - Clicking on the **Start** text will start up the connection to the Winlink CMS to download any messages waiting for you and it will post any messages you have in the Outbox.
 - The **Settings** item will open a window for configuring additional telnet features
 - Use RMS Relay
 - RMS Relay is a feature of RMS Gateways that when there is no internet, will allow it to receive radio-based session emails and store it in a local repository that if a Winlink client connects to it will allow the message to be downloaded
 - Telnet Session AutoConnect Time
 - If not disabled, on the specified interval the Telnet session will connect and download or send any pending messages.
 - Automatic Background Monitoring and Message Uploading.
 - The AutoConnect feature will run in the background. Be careful with this option as there is minimal indication this is set and folks wonder why messages disappear from their Outbox
 - Typically, when sending or receiving the messages the session window will display the Subject line of the incoming and outgoing messages
 - The transfer occurs in up to 5 messages at a time depending upon the transfer speed and size of messages.
 - The Message ID of each message within the block will be listed
 - For each message ID, there will be a Y or an N. Y means the message will be transferred.
 - As transferring, the messages there will be a status for each message. If there was an associated N for a message, the reason for not being transferred will be listed

- At completion of message transfer a summary of the exchange is listed'
- Strings like FF, FQ, & FS are internal statements related the Winlink Express exchange protocol.

Creating Messages

- In the main Winlink Express window click on **Message -> New Message**
- Within the *Enter a New Message* window
 - Enter the callsign of any registered Winlink User(s) separating multiple addressees by semicolons.
 - Or from any Winlink Session (not P2P or Radio Only sessions), you can send to an Internet Email addresses as well.
 - Once you have completed composing the message contents click on **Post to Outbox**
 - Items to note
 - Since this is designed for Amateur Radio, all messages are sent in a simple published compression scheme managed by the client software.
 - Your message may get picked by the recipient via a radio session mode, so follow the Part 97 rules for messaging and third-party message and other codes of conduct
 - Any message that is sent via a radio session mode is viewable in plain text via the US Message Viewer on the Winlink.org site by any Winlink registered licensed amateur radio operator.
- Follow the instructions within "Send or receive any pending messages via the telnet protocol" to send messages within your Outbox.