

# **SerPrefs**

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**COLLABORATORS**

	<i>TITLE :</i> SerPrefs		
<i>ACTION</i>	<i>NAME</i>	<i>DATE</i>	<i>SIGNATURE</i>
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**REVISION HISTORY**

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# Chapter 1

## SerPrefs

### 1.1 SerPrefs Guide - Contents

SerPrefs v40.4 created by Roger Hågensen at Msi Software.  
Compiled using AmigaE v3.3a from Wouter van Oortmerssen.  
GUI created with EasyGUI v3.3b4 from Jason R. Hulance.

- Introduction - What is this all about?
- Compatible - Will old/new stuff work?
- Features - What can it do?
- Installation - How do I put it on my disk?
- Problems - What problems could I get?
- Tips - How do I get the most out of it?
- Note - Is there anything important I should know?
- Iconsupport - Does it support default icons?
- Disclaimer - What is the warranty/copyright?
- Registration - How do I register?
- History - What has happen since older versions?
- Future - What do you plan for the future?

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### 1.2 SerPrefs Guide - Problems

SerialPrefs - Another serial.prefs program (not by me) similar to SerPrefs. Seems to have trouble with serial.prefs files saved by (my) SerPrefs, my SerPrefs follows the IFF85 standard and there's nothing WRONG with the files SerPrefs save, so WHY SerialPrefs fail I have no idea, other than that the author of it has on purpose chosen to ignore prefs saved by my program (that's a bit weird so I doubt that) So you have to contact the author of SerialPrefs about this. But the other way around all is okay, SerPrefs is able to read prefs saved by SerialPrefs without any problems.

Internal (ROM) devices

Some serial cards have a serial device on a rom chip (on the card),

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it is possible SerPrefs do not recognize all these devices,  
if this happens, contact me.

#### Internal (soft) devices

Some software use internal devices stored inside the software itself.  
One such software is Miami, however that serial device  
is connected/part of Miami in such a way I doubt it would  
be usefull with anything else at all.  
Plus it is not added to the system device list AND  
you need Miami up and running to use it anyway.  
If you like Miami's serial device contact the Miami author  
and tell him to make a new disk based serial device based on Miami's  
internal device.

#### Serial device headaches.

Check you have the latest version of the device you are using,  
these are the latest (that I know of) at the time of writing this text:

```
serial.device v37.4 (last official, on AmigaOS disks)
serial.device v37.6 (unofficial patch, on Aminet)
v34serial.device v39.1 (alternative, on Aminet)
8n1.device v43.5 (alternative, on Aminet as New8n1)
```

#### Serial Prefs.

SerPrefs may have trouble with a bad/corrupt prefs file,  
there is little I can do to fix that.  
If this happens then remove the prefs file,  
and set all the options and save the new prefs.

#### Can't start program.

Hmm, no idea really, as long as you have AmigaOS 2.04 or later  
and asl.library (for the filerequester) things should be okay.  
Even if asl isn't there or if there is no ENV: or ENVARC:  
to store the prefs, things should still not cause any problems.  
Contact me if things like this is discovered so I can check what's wrong.

## 1.3 SerPrefs Guide - Tips

If you want to choose a device on disk then use the "Select" button  
to get the filerequester.  
The device textgadget is ment for internal (stored in ROM or on serialcards)  
devices and will thus check internally first then "try" to check on disk  
if it fail, you must also remember to enter the full path to the device,  
if not SerPrefs will assume it is an internal device.  
The device textgadget will always check in this order:  
Internal,CurrentDirectory,DEVS  
So if you have duart.device in ROM,  
but want to use a replacement stored in DEVS:  
then either use the "Select" button,  
or enter something like DEVS:duart.device  
The path will be stored in the prefs (but not shown in the textgadget :-)

IMPORTANT! The text gadget is CASE sensitive,  
for devices on disk this do not matter since AmigaDOS ignores case.  
BUT internal device search IS case sensitive, just as an example:  
duart.device is okay but Duart.device or DUART.DEVICE etc is NOT ok.

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Usually system files are always lowercase, so try that first.  
SerPrefs won't accept a non-existing device.

The default settings are pretty good,  
and suggested for 68020 or better CPU with a 28.8 or 33.6 modem.  
8n1.device (New8n1) is suggested as a serial.device,  
and can be set without need to change any of the prefs.

Please remember that 8n1.device (New8n1) only handle 8 databits,  
no parity and 1 stopbit (hence the 8n1 name :-)

With 8n1.device (New8n1) and a baudrate of 57.600 on a 68030 25MHz machine  
a 33.6 modem should work without trouble, but an A1200/A3000 at 50MHz  
or better with OS3.1 and fastram is strongly advised.

In fact if you use fastram you will get much better results,  
but then again, fastram is always an advantage :-)

8n1.device (New8n1) can be found on Aminet: comm/misc/New8n1.lha  
And is currently the most modern device,  
it is NSD compliant (New Style Device),  
which is a standard the next AmigaOS will use.

serial.device is getting old these days, there is however a  
patch on Aminet that fix some bugs in serial.device.  
There is also an alternative to serial.device called v34serial.device,  
there is also some devices that come with serial cards,  
I will come back to that later.

Here are some general prefs combinations all with 8 bits,  
no parity and 1 stop bit, commonly know as 8N1, and RTS/CTS handshake,  
and naturally some fastram :-)

Modem	Baud	CPU	Buffer
slower	see below	000+	512
14.4	19200	000/020	1024
28.8	38400	020+	2048
33.6	38400	020/030	4096
33.6	57600	030+	8192
56	57600	030+	16384
56	76800	030/040	32768
ISDN	115200	040+	65536
faster	see above	040/060	131072

Please note that slower machines and modems,  
may have problems if the baud is above 19200.

Also note that even fast machines may get trouble,  
if the baud is above 57600.

This is a limitation of the internal serial port.  
For very fast modems like ISDN or the new X2 type of modems  
with 33.6 Send and 56 Read, it is strongly suggested you use a

dedicated serial card since the internal serial port can not reliably take advantage of anything faster than 33.6 modems. For the A600/A1200 there is the Squirrel Surf (SCSI device with serial port) it is capable of speeds up to 115200 baud, more than enough. And should give nice performance on ISDN also. There is also the Whippet (a serial device) that may be a nice alternative, the Squirrel and the Whippet have PCMCIA connectors. For big Amiga's there are several ZORRO-II/ZORRO-III serial cards, capable of baud speeds way up to 460800 like the HYPERCOM cards (that is available for box Amiga's as well as A1200 :-)

Also note that 8n1.device (New8n1) may be needed to use the bauds in the table above especially if your system is under a lot of work (lot of multitasking). If speeds are too high you will get lots of errors and bad data, if that happens set the baud to something lower. Also note that some modems may not support all the speeds SerPrefs support, so check the modem manual for supported speed (and suggested speeds etc).

When it comes to buffers, well the numbers in the table above are just suggestions.

To small and the machine will be busy trying to keep up, to large and the machine will have to wait a lot.

1KB to 16KB is a nice range, the faster the modem and the slower the machine, the larger buffer you will need. The faster the machine and the slower the modem, the smaller buffer you need.

So if the machine seems to be a bit slow when you are surfing, increase the buffer or lower the baud speed. If the machine seems to wait a lot then lower the buffer or increase the baud speed. If you get a lot of errors lower the baud and/or use a larger buffer. If you think things can be faster increase baud rate until you like the settings, but too high will cause errors.

You should always set the baud to something higher than the modem, so a 28800 modem should have something like 38400.

With 8n1.device (New8n1) you may need 60ns fastram to use baud 57600 or faster since it may be too fast for 70ns/80ns fastram :-)

PS! The buffer size info is also usable when deciding buffer sizes for disk/harddisks and other devices :-)

The Amiga's built-in serial port can generate any baud rate in the range 108 to 1,000,000 baud. However, off-the-shelf serial chips usually only support the standard rates so check the serial card/modem manuals first. Also, standard serial chips usually do not support the MIDI baud rate (31250).

Since most multiple serial port cards will be using standard serial chips, the extra ports will not support all the different baud rates that the built-in serial port does. There is no way for a serial.device client to find out the capabilities of a specific serial unit (serialcard port) at present time, but with NewStyleDevices "NSD" things are improving.

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## 1.4 SerPrefs Guide - Introduction

SerPrefs is an improvement on the old Serial prefs util.

SerPrefs extends several settings/options of the original, to do this effectively a new serial.prefs format have been created. Currently SerPrefs only support the use of a serial device name, and Sharedmode. Other extensions will be added later.

SerPrefs allow (as of v40.2) the entering of both internal (ROM) and external (DEVS:) devices into it's text gadget, please note that internal will be checked first, if an external is used the full path must be entered. Internal is always checked first if no path : or / is found in the name, if it is a path (has : or / in it) then internal is not checked (only disk), this will allow overriding ROM devices with new disk based updates :-)  
(PS! This will only be possible if the new OS and the device has support for this "kinda setpatch/flashram thing really" ;-D

SerPrefs will even show the version of your serial.device, and have the standard prefsmenu items most prefs utils have. Everything is in a single GUI with shortcuts, that is very easy to use. And you can choose the serial device to use, along with unit number etc.

All normal (plus some extra) baud rates are supported, along with a buffer range that is more than enough. It also have separate output/input settings, for future support and special software/hardware.

If you think that a lot of information is missing in this guide, it is because this is a replacement for the original Serial prefs. And thus the original Workbench/DOS documentation apply, and since SerPrefs work the same way as the old, there is hardly anything new you need to learn. If there is, then you will find such info in this guide :-)

## 1.5 SerPrefs Guide - Compatible

OS 2.0 or higher is needed, the original serial prefs need the same.

The new serial.prefs can use prefs by old programs like the ORIGINAL "Sys:Prefs/Serial" found on the Workbench disks, and to convert from old to new simply load the old prefs into SerPrefs, then save it. And that's all you need to do! :-)  
Old serial.prefs software will still be able to read the new prefs, but unable to use the extra information stored.

Also note that hardly any software/hardware use separate input/output settings, this is mainly due to that not being supported completely by the OS, hopefully they will improve things in the next OS.

There is a tooltype called INISOUT, you can set this to tell SerPrefs that input and output is same, this will allow you to set just input prefs,

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and output will be set at the same time.  
There is also a CLI option that do the same,  
plus a toggle in the SerPrefs menu that do this also :-)

## 1.6 SerPrefs Guide - Features

All versions of SerPrefs (Evaluation and Registered):

- o All normal baud rates (75-921600 Baud)
- o Input and Output Buffer (range 0-64 MB)
- o Input and Output Xon/Xoff, RTS/CTS
- o Sharedmode, selectable device and unit
- o Parity Even/Odd/Mark/Space, 5-32 data bits, 0-2 stop bits
- o Makes use of custom prefs/serialprefs icons if found.
- o All the functions of the original Serial (and then some ;-)
- o Locale support and Installer script!

Evaluation versions only:

- o Selectable device can only be external (disk)

Registered versions only:

- o Selectable device can be internal (ROM) as well as external (disk)

## 1.7 SerPrefs Guide - Installation

Just copy it to the "SYS:Prefs/" drawer,  
you can replace your original "Serial" with SerPrefs.  
To do this just copy SerPrefs over the original Serial,  
SerPrefs support all tooltypes etc, that Serial do.  
And copy the language file of your choice to Locale:

But using the install script may be nicer :-)  
The installer script will (hopefully) detect the language  
you use and will use your language for the installer text  
and will put the catalog for your language on your system.  
If your language is not supported, let me know.

The catalog translator for YOUR language can be seen in the  
"About" requester by selecting about from the SerPrefs menu!  
Any questions etc regarding the translation should be directed  
to the respective translators.

A note from Marcin Orłowski <carlos@amiga.com.pl> the Polish translator:  
"As polish language was not supported by AI, user needs  
WFMH LocalePL v2! package (<http://www.amiga.com.pl/pl/>),  
so it would be nice if you could mention that"  
And so I have Marcin :-)

Hopefully AmigaOS 3.5 will have standard catalog (system) files  
for more languages than currently available in AmigaOS 3.1

Other than that the SerPrefs Installer script should be faster  
and much easier than reading this Installation info :-)

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English is built into SerPrefs, and do not actually require the Locale system for the English text to be shown. SerPrefs will fall back to English if there is a problem with the catalogs etc, so it should remain usable until you find the problem!

## 1.8 SerialPrefs Guide - Note

PLEASE NOTE!

The new settings will not work unless programs, are aware of the new serial.prefs  
As of 24th June 1997 SerPrefs is the first program to support the new SERN chunk (the way the serial name is stored), and the SharedMode option.  
Hopefully more will follow later.

Also note that some older software may have trouble with new baudrates, this is caused by Intuition (internal prefs system is very old) or by the programs etc. The only way to fix this is to get a updated version of those programs, and for those programs to not use Intuition's internal prefs, but rather read the serial.prefs file directly (intuition is able to notify programs about prefs file changes :-)

The original Serial only had the UNIT in the GUI if specified when starting it (from WB/CLI). SerPrefs always let you choose the UNIT. The Amiga always have a "default" serial port, this is usually the internal serial port. And when changing the UNIT number there is some things you should know:

Unit 0 is ALWAYS the default port (usually the internal one),  
Unit 1 is ALWAYS the internal port, even if Unit 0 point somewhere else.  
Unit 2 and up ALWAYS point to extra serial ports,  
like perhaps the ports on a serial card.

The serial.device or any of it's replacements also follow this rule (at least they should do that).  
Chosing a different device driver do not change the way Unit (ports) are chosen, but rather "the way" those ports are used.  
If you only have one port (the internal one) then choosing unit 0 or 1 will be okay, but if you have more than one port, then you should check if Unit 0 (default port) points to the internal port or somewhere else.

Just remember that Unit 1 is always the internal port.  
And that Unit 0 is always the default port (can point to 1 or higher)  
Information on what unit and so on for your serial card is, should be found in the cards manual, or the install software for the card.

That was the general information, here is something that is very important to remember.  
Unit 0 in fact, points to the unit you set with SerPrefs, so if you enter 1 as unit in SerPrefs.  
Then Unit 0 will point to 1.

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Why? Because the Unit in SerPrefs is in fact the default unit setting, in other words the unit number saved by SerPrefs will to the system be Unit 0, thus a program that use unit 0 will infact use whatever unit YOU SET in SerPrefs.

This is why SerPrefs will ignore you if you enter 0 as unit number, since it is in fact Unit 0 you are editing :-)

Unit 0 is not a physical port, it's just a away to reference the default port. And the default port is set via SerPrefs :-)

So the next time you tell a program to use unit 0, the program will actually use the unit number you set in SerPrefs :-)

## 1.9 SerPrefs Guide - Iconsupport

SerPrefs will use "ENV:sys/def\_prefs.info" as a icon for the user prefs files to save, if you don't want SerPrefs to use your standard prefs icon, then make a icon called "ENV:sys/def\_serialprefs.info" SerPrefs will use this instead, don't forget to also copy that icon to "ENVARC:sys/" so it is available after a reboot.

All the icon tooltypes from the original serial prefs are supported.

In addition there is a CREATEICONS tooltype, when set to CREATEICONS=NO SerPrefs will start with the menu "Settings/Create Icons?" disabled.

So now you don't have to turn it off each time, if you don't like saving icons :-)

If this tooltype is not used or set to YES instead, then the "Settings/Create Icons?" is enabled.

## 1.10 SerPrefs Guide - Disclaimer

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SerPrefs is ShareWare, and no warranty is given.

This software is freely distributable, and may NOT be sold for profit by anyone unless the author (me) agree to do so.

See License for more...

## 1.11 SerPrefs Guide - History

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- v1.0 - (25.3.1997)  
First release!
- v2.0 - (4.4.1997) Not public!  
Removed variables that weren't really needed.  
Changed the GUI some!  
Internal code cleanup/hand optimising.  
Added a BUNCH of new settings.  
SerPrefs introduce the new serial.prefs format,  
the new format is backwards compatible.  
Let us hope that developers out there will use it.  
New serial.prefs developer files included with SerPrefs.
- v2.1 - (24.6.1997)  
SerPrefs can now be used as a Serial prefs replacement fully.  
Changed serial.prefs, previous one was a bit overkill.  
Used a better way to store serial name.  
Created static buffer range, redesigned gui just a bit.  
Restore works from somewhere else than ENV/ENVARC,  
thanks to "Andreas R. Kleinert <Andreas\_Kleinert@t-online.de>"  
for unknowingly getting me to check it :-)  
New include files for developers.  
(Please read the note on the IFF SERN chunk)  
SerPrefs still don't save "Prefs" icons,  
next version perhaps (if I have the time).  
Currently the default Project icon is used for now.  
There is some minor internal improvements also.  
The executable is now called Serial :-)
- v2.2 - (5.7.1997)  
Reworked the sourcecode,  
now most of the code not directly related to SerPrefs  
has been moved to separate source files (modules).  
This means easier maintaining of SerPrefs for me :-)  
SerPrefs now support custom prefs icons,  
ENV:Sys/def\_prefs.info is used as icon if found,  
but ENV:Sys/def\_serialprefs.info will be used instead  
if found, if none of the above is found  
then ENV:Sys/def\_project.info is used.  
If that fail then the ROM project icon is used.  
Besides this, only minor changes have been done.  
I also updated the developer docs a bit.
- v2.3 - (30.8.1997) Large and small changes, from a certain point of view!  
Improved the version check module (the same that DVC use :-)  
serial.prefs frozen, meaning that the format as it is  
is the default standard for future SerPrefs versions.  
An extension is planned for the future (see developer docs),  
suggestions on what to put in it are most welcome.  
Minor internal cleanup, looked thru all the code zzzzz.  
Found a bug in GUI update routine, shared and devicename was not  
updated when changing prefs (they where loaded and saved though :-)  
SerPrefs seems very good now, if ANY bugs are found  
LET ME KNOW and they will be fixed at once,  
if there are any to find at all :-)  
If all is okay, this version will be the base for SerPrefs v3.0
-

Other SERIAL developers are encouraged to contact me,  
for discussion of the new System Default serial.prefs format...

v2.4 - (4.10.1997) Minor changes!

Made the GUI look a bit nicer, and the main document is now  
in AmigaGuide, plus I also updated main documentation now  
when I had the chance, I even added a big TIPS/NOTE section :-)  
Added INISOUT switch to tooltypes, cli and menu.  
Fixed a bug with the menu "Create Icons" switch (was always on).  
There is also some other minor changes, but can't remember them :-)  
Improved the Msi Version module, I hope I never have to see that  
damn code again, these version strings drive me crazy :-)  
Unit 0 will be ignored if set in SerPrefs,  
mainly due to that Unit 0 is the default unit,  
in other words Unit 0 point to whatever you set in SerPrefs :-)

v40.1 - (17.11.1997) Major changes!

Changed the NOICONS tooltype/cli option to CREATEICONS,  
to keep it Style Guide conform :-)  
There is also some other minor changes again,  
mainly some changes to the Amiga menu keys.  
And best of all, SerPrefs now have Locale (YEAH! :-)  
And that's not all, with the locale there is a fully  
automatic language sensitive Installer script (brag brag :-),  
the only thing you need to choose is where to put the guide :-)  
Bumped version to v40.1 to simplify installation,  
and to make clear it is an replacement for v39.2 etc:-)  
SerPrefs is from now ShareWare, added "DEX-II Keyfile System!"

v40.2 - (31.12.1997) New Year Release ;-)

Now you can choose devices stored in ROM (like duart.device etc)  
on serial cards, thanks to Kimme Utsi <kimme@arcticnet.no>  
for reporting this oversight :-) (for registered users only)  
Improved the version checking a bit, made SerPrefs handle both  
internal/external device names entered into the text gadget.  
Added dynamic version check buffer depending on filesize.  
Fiddled around trying to make that thing a tad smarter :-)  
Internal checked first if no path : or / in name,  
if a path is used then internal is not checked (only disk),  
this allow overriding ROM devices with disk updates :-)  
Changed the GUI a little, aligned things to retain layout  
a lot better on different resolutions/fonts etc.  
Improved the Install script, it should now be fully Style Guide  
compliant except for deinstallation (next version perhaps?).  
Added a bunch of translations (see translation part of guide).  
Added a link in the guide to the license and shareware files!

v40.3 - (5.1.1998) Just-love-when-things-like-this-happen-release

Forgot to recompile SerPrefs with the new versionchecker :-)

v40.4 - (9.5.1998) Minor update!

Updates of some catalogs, and added Spanish catalog.  
Some minor internal improvements,  
including better checking of bad/corrupt keyfiles.  
Plus some other minor polishing of the SerPrefs code.  
Updated the guide a bit.  
Added info about the "Msi Software - Official US Registration Site"

It appears SerialPrefs refuse files by my SerPrefs (!)  
I doublechecked my code and my SerPrefs follow the IFF85 standard,  
plus it is fully compatible with Intuition Prefs regarding  
the serial.prefs file, the shared mode is currently not  
supported by Intuition, however since the byte used in the prefs  
file is actually ignored (read SerPrefs dev docs for more info),  
there is no problem, also the prefs saved have a id themselves as  
Type1 rather than Type0 as the original prefs,  
this way a possible conflict will be avoided in i.e OS 3.5  
I have also submitted a copy to Amiga Inc. for evaluation,  
and Petro at Amiga Int. thanked me for notifying them.  
I will continue to stay in touch with Amiga Inc/Int  
about the progress of SerPrefs, and any OS 3.5 changes  
will be handled as soon as I receive info on any new serial.prefs  
standards, since the device name is stored as a IFF85 chunk  
there is a good chance it will be adopted in a future Amiga OS.  
This may be the last update/release for some time,  
since I need time to focus on other projects as well.  
However SerPrefs by Msi Software will still be fully supported  
and development will resume when new things need to be added.  
All suggestions are welcome.

## 1.12 SerPrefs Guide - Translation

Catalog and Installer translators! (thanks guys :-)

Czech - VĚt indl <sindlar@jackal.cis.vutbr.cz>

Danish - Thomas Petersen <thomaslp@post1.tele.dk>  
Ole Friis <ole\_f@post3.tele.dk>

Finnish - Marko Honkanen <Marko.Honkanen@mail.suomi.net>  
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Italian - Roberto Agria <roagria@freenet.hut.fi>

Norwegian - Roger Hagensen <emsai@online.no> (that's me :-)

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Swedish - Georg Hazianastasiou <haz@geocities.com>

Turkish - Bur Sade <bsade@usa.net>

Spanish - Damaso D. Estvez <amidde@arrakis.es>

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## 1.13 SerPrefs Guide - Future

- Expand the current serial.prefs (I need suggestions on what to add!)
  - I don't know, ADD SOMETHING :-), do you have any suggestions?
-