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Troubleshooting Guide

Getting Started

What is WinTalk?

WinTalk allows Windows users who have the WINSOCK DLL installed on their system to participate in real-time conversations with remote users, using the popular Unix "ntalk" and "talk" protocols. The program acts as both a talk client and server, responding to remote talk requests with a pop-up "ring" dialog, an auditory ring, or both.

The Freeware Version

This version of WinTalk is provided as FreeWare, and thus you may freely distribute it providing 1) the distribution is *not* for profit, and 2) all files are included and unchanged (including this help file). ELF Communications takes no responsibility for the results of using or misusing this software. You can click to see the full text of the disclaimer under which WinTalk is distributed. You may also be interested in WinTalk Pro, the professional version, which offers some added functionality and other benefits.

Feedback to ELF

If you have comments or questions, please do send email to "wintalk@elf.com". I'm working hard on other projects, so don't be surprised if replies take a while.

Windows does not inherently support any concept of login or user names. Since TALK was originally written for Unix systems, it requires that you identify users by both a name and an IP address (hostname). This has two repercussions - first, you need to supply a "from" name every time you talk someone remotely, so that their (potentially Unix-based) talk client can get back to you correctly. Second, other people must talk to you by using an address of the form **user@hostname**.

WinTalk deals with these issues by allowing you to configure a set of local usernames. These names will be available for selection as **from** names in the talk dialog, and they may also be used to filter incoming talk requests, responding with "that user is not logged in" for usernames that don't match any of yours (see general configuration, under "Process requests for").

Internet Resources for WinTalk Users

The Web Page

ELF maintains a WinTalk web page, which you can access by pointing your web browser at "<http://www.elf.com/elf/wintalk.html>"

The Mailing Lists

There are also two mailing lists for WinTalk users:

WINTALK-ANNOUNCE allows you to receive information about bug fixes, new releases, and any other major WinTalk news. This is a "read only" mailing list.

WINTALK-USERS is for open discussion about any WinTalk-related issues.

To join either list, send email to "listproc@elf.com", containing the text "subscribe <listname> <your name>". For instance, you might write "subscribe WINTALK-ANNOUNCE Susan Murphy". You will then receive a welcome message to the list, including information on policies and unsubscribing.

About ELF Communications

Founded in 1992, ELF Communications is a small, employee-owned company dedicated to bringing the finest new networking software to people who use the Internet. Our products are designed to be open, easy to use, and powerful without being too expensive for personal use. Through our software and activities, we strive to help the Internet be a medium for honest communication and a source for increasing world freedom and community.

To find out more up-to-date information about ELF and our projects, you can point your favorite WWW browser at "<http://www.elf.com/elf/home.html>".

The next product I am working on is ERIS, a commercial multi-user conferencing system for Microsoft Windows(tm), based upon a "virtual conference room" paradigm. If you'd like to find out more about this product when it's closer to release, send mail to "eris-info-request@elf.com" and I'll add you to the mailing list for announcements. Don't expect mail any time soon, though, as a completed ERIS is still a long ways off.

Enjoy!

--Gub (Glen Daniels, ELF Communications)

January 20th, 1995

Troubleshooting : Q & A

Question

"I get a 'Bind' error when I start WinTalk!"

"WinTalk won't start, it complains about my hostname/host info!"

"Whenever I try talking someone who's not logged in, Windows freezes up on me - I have to CTL-ALT-DEL to get out!"

"I always see the 'no remote talk daemon' message, even though I know there is one!"

"I'm getting 'Target machine does not recognize us' when I try to talk my friend!"

Answer

This means that some other program has already grabbed a UDP socket on the TALK or NTALK port. To solve this, consult your network stack's documentation or support people, and turn off their talk daemon, or any other talk software that might be running.

Note : if you're running TIA (The Internet Adaptor) or any other pseudo-SLIP connection which shares an IP address with a server, this will usually also cause this problem. WinTalk does **not** interoperate with these stacks!

Please read the [hostnames and addresses](#) section.

Are you using Trumpet Winsock version 1.0A? If so, please upgrade to version 2.0A or later, which you should be able to obtain at ftp.trumpet.com.au. Trumpet v1.0A has some known bugs which render it incompatible with WinTalk in certain situations.

You might try increasing the daemon-scanning timeout. You can do this by adding a "daemon_timeout" entry to the WINTALK.INI file with your favorite editor. The line should read:

```
"daemon_timeout = <sec>"
```

...where <sec> is a number greater than 8 (which is the default). Generally, if it takes more than 15 seconds or so to get a response, something's broken with the remote machine or the network.

Your PC probably isn't correctly registered in the DNS - see [hostnames and addresses](#) for more info.

If you're still having trouble, send email to wintalk@elf.com with a *complete* description of the problem (what isn't working, what exactly you did to get the problem to occur, the **full text** of any error boxes, etc.), and don't forget to include:

1. Which winsock / network stack you're using (winsock info is available in the WinTalk about box)
2. Windows version #
3. WinTalk version # (available in the WinTalk about box)

Handling incoming talk requests

When WinTalk is running, it continually listens for incoming requests to talk from remote users. You can place WinTalk in a variety of [answer modes](#) which will handle these requests differently depending on your desires.

The default behavior when someone tries to talk to you is to pop up a dialog and play a "ring" sound to announce the call. (See [general configuration](#) for information on how you can filter incoming talks and control the announcement style.)

[Answering via the "ring" dialog](#)

[Answering via the "Answer" command](#)

Initiating a talk session

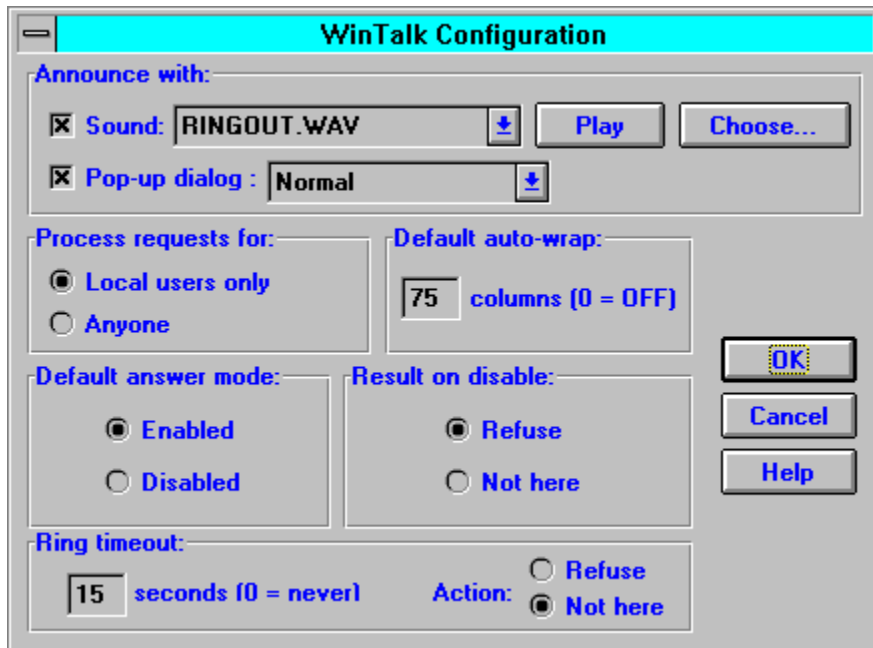
1. Select "Talk..." from the WinTalk icon menu.
2. The talk dialog will appear:



3. Fill in the "To" field with the address of the person with whom you wish to talk. For instance, the talk above is to a user "Fred" at the host "yoyodyne.com". The "To" listbox is initialized with the addresses on your hotlist, for easy access to people you frequently talk with.
4. Select a "From" name. The "From" listbox is initialized with your local usernames.
5. (optional) Enter a TTY argument, to specify a particular terminal on a multi-user host.
6. Click the "Talk" button to initiate the call. This will take you to the talk window.

General Configuration

The general configuration dialog looks like this:



Each section is described below.

Announce with:

WinTalk can let you know about incoming calls with a sound, a pop-up dialog, or both. To select either option, check the appropriate box.

Sound options:

If you have a .wav compatible sound driver, you may select any .wav file as WinTalk's "ring" noise by clicking the "Choose..." button, and test the sound by clicking "Play". Alternately, you may select "<system beep>" from the sound listbox for a standard PC speaker beep.

Dialog options:

You may choose a system-modal dialog (which will prevent you from accessing any other Windows application until the dialog has been dismissed), or a standard one.

Process requests for:

Controls who WinTalk considers "logged on" to your PC. If you select "Local users only", WinTalk will only handle incoming requests for users that are in your list of local usernames (talks for other users will return "not logged on" to the initiator). "Anyone" will cause WinTalk to handle all requests.

Default auto-wrap

Allows you to configure auto-wrap, a remote wrap size for long lines.

Result on disable

When WinTalk is disabled, anyone who tries to talk you will see this message, either "User is refusing messages" or "User is not logged in".

Default answer mode

Each time you start WinTalk, it will come up in this answer mode.

Ring timeout

If an unanswered call has been ringing for this number of seconds, WinTalk will automatically respond with a refusal or a "not logged in" message. If set to 0, this feature is disabled.

Answering Modes

The "Answering Modes" menu (accessible from the WinTalk icon) allows you to control how WinTalk will react to incoming talk requests. The two modes are described below, along with the icon for each:



In **enabled** mode, WinTalk will announce appropriate talk requests with some combination of a ring sound and a pop-up dialog (see [general configuration](#), "Announce With...").



In **disabled** mode, WinTalk will automatically refuse all incoming talks. You can configure a particular response which the foreign user will see, either "Your party is not logged on" or "Your party is refusing messages" (see [general configuration](#), "Result on disable").

Hostnames and Addresses

IP addresses and hostnames:

Any host on a TCP/IP network is identified by 32-bit number called an IP Address, which is often written as four numbers separated by periods : for instance, "192.48.232.17". This number is very useful when machines need to talk to each other, but not so nice for humans to deal with. This is where the DNS comes in. The DNS is a network directory service, translating names such as "frobozz.elf.com" into IP addresses.

Many winsock applications can get by just using your machine's IP address, but due to the particulars of the TALK protocol as implemented on most Unix systems, this is not the case with WinTalk. Hence, you need to have a couple of things configured correctly before you can use WinTalk.

WinTalk might need your hostname:

First, your machine might need to know its hostname for WinTalk to successfully start. Please refer to the documentation included with your networking stack (Trumpet, PC/TCP, NetManage, PC-NFS, etc...) to find out how to make sure your hostname is configured correctly. If you do *not* have a hostname configured, WinTalk may fail to start up in some cases.

Your hostname can live on your local machine (in your network stack's configuration), and it can (and should) also live on a DNS server. Your local DNS server will be queried for your name when you try to talk to someone on a unix machine - so if your PC is not registered on an appropriate DNS server, you will *not* be able to talk to anyone running Unix talk!! If you try, you will see the "Target machine does not recognize us" message in the status bar of the [talk window](#). Also, some implementations of the winsock DLL (Trumpet, for example) will query the DNS server for your IP address when WinTalk starts up.

To register your machine in the DNS, you need to talk to your system administrator. The specifics vary from machine to machine.

Variable IP-address systems:

In some cases, winsock users will be connecting to the internet via a SLIP connection which gives them a *variable* IP address; it can change every time they call their host systems. In these cases, you'll be fine *if* every possible address is associated with a name. If this is not the case, and for some reason your sysadmin does not want things set up that way, you're out of luck...

If you're having gethostname() or gethostname() problems...

Please make sure you're correctly registered in the DNS, then check the [troubleshooting guide](#).

Addresses in talk are of the form '<username>@<hostname>'. The <hostname> is the name of the machine where your party is logged on, and the <username> is his/her login name on that machine. For Unix hosts, the talk address is the same as the email address. For PCs, the concept of username isn't as clear - this is why WinTalk provides local username configuration.

Configuring Local Usernames



The local usernames dialog is shown above. For a description of local usernames, please click [here](#).

To add a name:

Type the new name in the edit box, and then click the **Add** button.

To delete a name:

Select the address to be deleted, then click the **Delete** button.

To edit a name:

Select the name, and then edit the text in the edit box. The **Add** button will change to read **Update**. Click **Update** and the name will be changed.

To change the ordering of names:

Click and drag the names into the order you prefer. The topmost names will be the easiest to access from the [talk dialog](#).

Auto-add:

WinTalk can automatically remember new "from" names you use in the [talk dialog](#) by adding them to your local usernames - check this box to enable this feature.

Keeping the list in most-recently-used order:

The "**move last used to top**" checkbox causes the last local username you used as a "from" name to be moved to the top of the list, thus making it the default for the next talk.

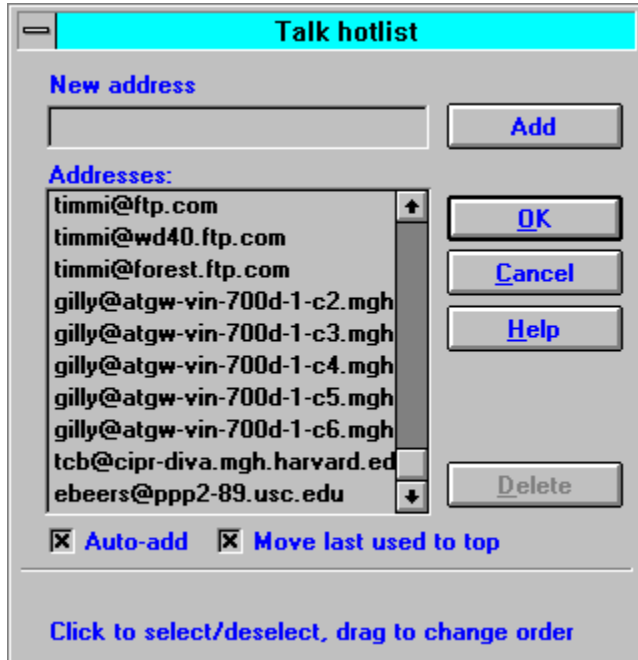
Saving your changes:

Clicking the **OK** button will save all changes and dismiss the dialog.

Cancelling your changes:

Clicking **Cancel** will leave your local username configuration unchanged and dismiss the dialog.

Configuring the Hotlist



The hotlist dialog, which allows you to maintain a list of frequently called [addresses](#), is shown above. The addresses in your hotlist will be easily available to you in the [talk dialog](#).

To add an address:

Type the new address in the edit box, and then click the **Add** button. The address must be of the form "<username>@<hostname>".

To delete an address:

Select the address to be deleted, then click the **Delete** button.

To edit an address:

Select the address, and then edit the text in the edit box. The **Add** button will change to read **Update**. Click **Update** and the address will be changed.

To change the ordering of addresses:

Click and drag the addresses into the order you prefer. The topmost addresses will be the easiest to access from the [talk dialog](#).

Auto-add:

WinTalk can automatically remember new addresses you use in the [talk dialog](#) by adding them to your hotlist - check this box to enable this feature.

Keeping the hotlist in most-recently-used order:

The "**move last used to top**" checkbox causes the last hotlist address you talked to be at the top of your list, and hence the default for your next talk.

Saving your changes:

Clicking the **OK** button will save all changes and dismiss the dialog.

Cancelling your changes:

Clicking **Cancel** will leave your hotlist configuration unchanged and dismiss the dialog.

Finger is a common TCP/IP utility program that finds out information about users, typically on multi-user machines. There are several winsock finger clients available, which you should be able to find at the standard archive sites (sunsite.unc.edu, ftp.cica.indiana.edu, etc...).

Configuring the Window Style

To change the window style for all talks:

Select "Configure..." then "Window Style" from the WinTalk icon menu.

To change the window style of an active talk:

From the talk window, select "Configure" then "Window Style".

Either of these methods will bring you to the window style dialog:



The panes to the left are a stylized view of what your talk window will look like. You can play with the various options and see what they look like before deciding to commit any changes.

Window orientation:

To change the orientation of the windows (up/down or side/side), click the **orientation** button.

Talk font:

To change the font, click the **font** button and choose a font from the dialog.

Text colors:

To change the colors, click the **edit colors** button. The dialog will expand to include a color palette. You'll also note that one of the talk panes will be highlighted with a dotted line. Clicking a talk pane will cause it to be the active one. Clicking a color with the *left* mouse button will change the text color of the active pane, and clicking a color with the *right* mouse button will change the background color of the active pane. Clicking the **edit colors** button again will collapse the dialog to its original size.

Keeping your changes:

If you are satisfied with your changes, you may click either the **apply** or the **set defaults** buttons. The **apply** button is only enabled if you brought up the dialog from an active talk - it will apply the new window style to that talk session, but any future talks will be unaffected. Clicking the **set defaults** button will cause WinTalk to remember the new window style, and use it for all future talks.

Cancelling:

Clicking **cancel**, as per usual, will dismiss the dialog and trash your changes.

Using command-line arguments

How to use command-line arguments:

Selecting "File", then "Run", from the Program Manager will bring up a dialog with a "command line" field. You may enter WinTalk's pathname here, followed by either of the argument styles described below. Alternately, you may associate a Program Manager icon with a particular set of arguments - to do this, select "File", then "New", from the Program Manager menu, select "Program Item", enter the pathname of WinTalk followed by the desired options in the "Command Line" field.

Specifying the location of the WINTALK.INI file:

Format:

```
/i <pathname>
```

Description:

If you are sharing a single copy of WinTalk with other users on a file server, you probably want to maintain a local configuration file for each user. The /i option allows you to accomplish this by specifying the pathname of the wintalk.ini file.

Example:

To specify a wintalk.ini file which lives in D:\USERS\FRED\WINTALK.INI, you would start WinTalk with a command line of:

```
/i D:\USERS\FRED\WINTALK.INI
```

Automatically talking a user on startup:

Format:

```
[/f <name>] <user>@<host> [<TTY>]
```

Description:

The <name> argument is optional, and specifies the "from" name of the call. The user will see an announcement of a talk request from "<name>@<your-pc's-address>". The <user>@<host> argument tells WinTalk who to talk to, and the optional <TTY> specifies a particular terminal at which to call them.

You may create program manager icons to talk to specific people this way, or you might activate WinTalk from another program (a WWW browser, for instance) and pass it arguments.

Example:

To automatically talk to "reed_richards@FF.ORG" with a from name of "spidey", you'd use the following command line:

```
/f spidey reed_richards@ff.org
```

Assuming your PC is "pc.cyberspace.org", Reed would see "Talk request from : spidey@pc.cyberspace.org" on his terminal.

Doing both:

You may combine the arguments above to specify a user to talk with *and* a non-standard ini file location.

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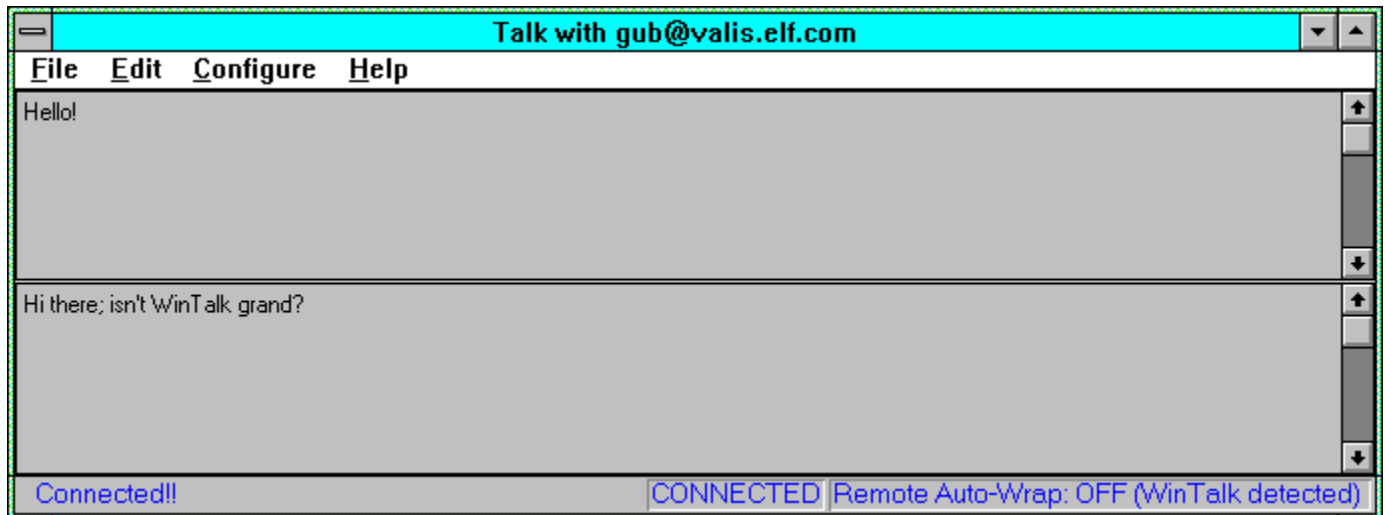
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The Talk Window

The talk window is where it all actually happens. It looks something like this:



The status bar:

When the window appears, various messages will appear in the status bar. These (generally self-explanatory) messages indicate the progress of the talk connection.

Trying again on failure:

If your party is not logged on, refusing messages, or times out, you may retry the talk request by selecting "Try again" from the "File" menu, or hitting ^T.

Talking:

One pane (the top or left one) is where you type, and the other is where you see what your partner is typing. Each character you type in your pane will be instantly echoed to your partner's terminal, and vice versa.

Scrollbar and cut/paste:

You may scroll back through either pane to see earlier parts of the conversation, and copy text from either pane to the clipboard with the Edit->Copy command (or ^C). You may paste (^V) text from the clipboard to your edit pane, and it will be automatically sent across the net to your partner.

Configuration options in a talk:

The "Configure" menu offers two in-conversation configuration options - window style changes the look of the talk window, and auto-wrap adjusts the wrap column so WinTalk can format your text nicely on the remote machine.

Ending your talk:

To close a connection, you may either close the window, select "File->Exit", or hit ^Q. The first two options will destroy the window, while ^Q will leave the window visible so you may review the text of the conversation.

Using the Ring Dialog

The ring dialog looks like this:



Clicking **talk** will open a connection to the caller, and a new talk window will appear.

Clicking **refuse** will dismiss the dialog, and the caller will see either a "refusing messages" or a "not logged in" message (see general configuration for information on configuring this option).

Clicking **ignore** will dismiss the dialog, and it will appear to the caller that your terminal is continuing to ring until they decide to hang up.

Using the Answer Dialog

If you've disabled the pop-up dialog notification for rings, you may deal with incoming talk requests by listening for the WinTalk "ring" sound, and then selecting "Answer" from the icon menu.

A dialog will appear listing all currently active incoming "rings". To handle each one, simply select it by clicking or hitting the arrow keys, and then press one of the buttons below the listbox:

Clicking **talk** will open a connection to the caller, and a new talk window will appear.

Clicking **refuse** will dismiss the dialog, and the caller will see either a "refusing messages" or a "not logged in" message (see general configuration for information on configuring this option).

Clicking **ignore** will dismiss the dialog, and it will appear to the caller that your terminal is continuing to ring until they decide to hang up.

Just as Windows edit controls will word-wrap your text for you, the autowrap feature allows WinTalk to do the same for your remote partner. This is *very* handy when talking to Unix users, and makes your text look a lot nicer for them. Most Unix terminals are 80 columns in width, so WinTalk defaults to a 75-column wrap. If you are talking to someone with a wider or narrower screen, you should set the auto-wrap appropriately. Auto-wrap automatically disables if you're talking with another WinTalk user.

WinTalk Pro

WinTalk Pro

There is also a commercial version of this program available from ELF Communications for \$20. WinTalk Pro provides the following benefits:

1. **Call Answering**, which acts as a TALK answering machine. You can configure an outgoing message, and optionally accept incoming messages. The icon's eyes flash to indicate new messages, and you can talk anyone who's left a message with the click of a button.
2. **Call Screening**, which allows you to mark certain users on your hotlist as VIPs. In screening mode, VIP users ring through to you, while everyone else gets either a refusal, an indication that you aren't logged on, or your answering machine.
3. Your very own WinTalk floppy in the mail (should you desire it - WinTalk pro will also be available across the net)
4. Free copies of all maintenance releases until the release of v2.0
5. A copy of WinTalk Pro version 2.0 when it's released for just \$5
6. The warm fuzzy feeling of supporting the development of software you use and enjoy!

Ordering

To obtain a copy of WinTalk Pro, please send a check or money order for \$20 to:

WinTalk Pro
ELF Communications
1212 Boylston Street #221
Chestnut Hill, MA 02167

Please include:

Your name

Your USMail address

Your email address

Your phone # (optional)

Whether you'd prefer a floppy or to pick up WinTalk via the net (if you'd like to pick up your copy of WinTalk Pro over the net, make sure you include an email address or a phone number so I can get in touch with you to give you instructions.)

Although not available at the time of this release, we may also be introducing on-line ordering sometime in 1995 - for more up-to-date information, check out the WinTalk web page or the WINTALK-ANNOUNCE list (see [internet resources](#) for details).

The **TTY** field may contain an option argument to specify exactly which terminal on a multi-user host you would like to ring your party at. This information is generally gleaned from the output of the finger program - if a user is logged in more than once, you generally wish to talk them at the terminal which has been idle for the shortest amount of time. WinTalk will remember (for the course of a WinTalk session) which terminals you've used to talk to users on your hotlist, and present you with those terminals as options in the **TTY** listbox.

