

Windows X10 Controller Program

X10WIN

Version 1.1

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This is the initial release of a Windows program for interfacing to an X10 light/appliance controller via the serial port. To install the program, copy modules VBRUN100.DLL and VBCOMM.VBX to libraries in the DOS path. Also copy the files X10WIN.EXE, ITEMS.X10, and EVENTS.X10 to a directory to be used for all X10 files. To run the program, just execute X10WIN.EXE with no parameters.

The first time the program is run, it will create a file X10WIN.INI in your windows directory. You will be prompted for two setup items: The serial port to be used, and the path where all X10 files are to reside. To change these specifications later, just delete X10WIN.INI and restart X10WIN.EXE (or select the SETUP Menu Command).

I will only attempt to give a brief description of how this program works; you will need a basic knowledge of the X10 system. Hopefully, the program is intuitive enough to allow you to get by without a detailed user guide. I will be glad to answer any questions, and would appreciate any comments you might have concerning the program. I will be completing this project over the next several months, and all input is appreciated.

The program opens two windows initially: A menu window, and a display window that shows all transmissions to and from the X10 controller. This window can be closed (and later, re-opened) using the WINDOW menu item. The program allows you to define DEVICES that consist of: One or more modules within the same house code, and descriptive text. You must use these DEVICE definitions to either execute commands to the controller for immediate action (EVENTS IMMEDIATE menu item) or to define EVENTS to be downloaded to the controller for later execution. The DEVICE definitions are saved in ITEMS.X10 in the X10 Directory.

The program allows DEVICES to be defined, and saved/restored from the disk. It also allows the user to execute commands to DEVICES immediately. The program also allows you to define and upload EVENTS to and download EVENTS from the controller for later execution. The current EVENT definitions can also be saved to and restored from the file EVENTS.X10 in the X10 Directory.

The Day and Time (and Base House Code) from the X10 controller is initially displayed on the menu bar during initial startup. To update the Day/Time or Base House Code, just click on the values displayed on the menu bar.

I am very interested in feedback on program interaction with both the X10 controller, and the program user. Please direct all questions to me via Compu-Serve. Although I have distributed the source code, the add-on programs in VBCOMM.VBX are the runtime only version. Trying to load VBCOMM.VBX into the design environment will result in an OUT OF MEMORY error, by design. The VB runtime library VBRUN100.DLL is not included, in order to save space. It is available in library 6 of the MSLANG Forum on Compuserve, and many other places.

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Version Level Enhancements

Version 1.1

The Setup Dialog Box now uses Drive and Directory Controls to specify the X10 Directory.

The FILE_EXIT Menu Command no longer lists sub-menus of YES and NO, but exits immediately.

A new menu command, SETUP, has been added that allows changing of setup options stored in X10WIN.INI (Comm Port and X10 Directory).

The Xmit/Receive Display window has been converted from a special text window written to using VBCOMM routines, to a regular VB text window with no add-on library routines required for display.

After a 'successful' OPEN of the COM Port, the status of the modem interface is checked to try and determine if the port is actually attached to the X10 controller (as opposed to, say, a modem). If the Modem Status byte was not X'00', the only options were to ABORT or to RETRY. This version adds the option to IGNORE. The title bar of the Open Error dialog box now displays the number of the Com Port.