Starting Homer

he first time you launch Homer .93, it presents you with the screen above.   After clicking on the button, you will then be presented with the screen that follows.

When you run it yourself, the values that appear in the following areas will be something different.   For this example, this user has entered in these values.   The

f you're running the serial version, read the Serial Instructions in this help file before going any further.

Server Address: The server address is which IRC server Homer looks for to connect to.   You must use a valid machine running a IRC server for Homer to run.   If not, it will attempt to connect and quit if it's not valid.   If you do not know any local IRC servers, then do not make any changes to this field.   For now, do NOT change this information   if you don't know another server.   The default is 'irc-2.mit.edu'.

User ID: The user ID is the word that will appear before your IP address.   If you didn't change anything when you logged on, you are now known as 'newbie@your-address'.   'newbie' can be anything you want it to be.   You can use a maximum of 10 characters in your User ID.   (In the example above, momma would be used)

Username: The Username is the information that will appear after your User ID when you log onto IRC.   If you didn't change anything when you logged on, you are now known as newbie@your-address (I'm an IRC newbie!).   The part in parentheses that follows your address can be anything you type in this part.   (In the example above, 'Who WAS Staci?' would be used.)   In some cases, Homer users would like to have other IRC users know where email could be sent to to reach them.   The Username is many times used for this need.

Nick: Finally, your Nick (Nickname) is what you will be recognized as.   If you didn't change anything at startup of Homer, you are now known to other users as 'KickMe'.   You can use a maximum of 9 letters in your Nick.   (In the example above, you would be known as 'Cornum')   If Homer begins its connection, and finds that someone else on IRC is currently using the nickname you entered, it will force you to change to another nick.

Server Port: This field should rarely be needed.   It allows you to change the number of the "port" that Homer will attempt to connect to.   In 99% of the cases, this value should be 6667, but apparently there are some servers out there that use other numbers.   Note that the value you type in this field won't be saved from run to run, because 6667 should be the correct value almost all of the time.

Don't Auto-Join Old Channels: Homer keeps a preference file of your logon information in your System Folder.   It also knows what channels you were on when you quit Homer (quit as opposed to bomb) .   The next time you run Homer it will assume that you want to re-join those channels you had open on your last session.   If you do not want to rejoin any channels during the current session, click this button.

After you've entered in the applicable information and click 'Okay' it will search for the server and then connect.   After it has connected, the Console window will appear and display any messages from the IRC server.   In almost all cases there is very little information you need to be concerned with.

The next time you run Homer, the startup process will not be the same.   You will not be requested for any of the information as to username, server, etc.   Homer will read its preferences file and use the values you used the last time.   The screen you will see after the splash screen is as follows:

f you need to switch to a different server, or would like to change any of the other information, click on the large button at the bottom to access the entries you would like to alter.

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When Homer attempts to connect to a server, it tells you so.   If it is unable to connect to a server, it will not open any windows and notify you of failure.   If things go well, and you do connect to a server, you should see your console window (normal window displaying the word Homer and a timer), a input window (with words 'Link', and 'action') and your control panel (boot, magnifying glass and magic wand).   You may position these windows where they are most accessible to you.

For those with small monitors, you may find things become cluttered.   The first thing to do would be to a start arranging windows so that you can view them all easily.   Below you see the console window.   This window initially displays the number of DCC lines active (discussed later) as well as the startup messages from the server you connected to.   Many times, if there are problems with the server you use, or if the server will be going down for good, the appropriate messages will be displayed here.

Looking above, you see in the last lines a message from NickServ.   This is a irritating little program that lets people 'register' a nickname so that NickServ notifies other users that the nickname is already frequently being used by another person.   If you get this message, you are supposed to use another nickname.   This is a judgement call on your part of whether or not you want to change.   There is no penalty for continuing to use the nickname other than seeing this message displayed to you every xx many minutes, but in some cases, an individual might not take too kindly to having a nick taken.   You should probably select another nickname though since other people online will assume you are the other person and they will begin talking to you.   With the number of people on IRC, nicks can be hard to come up with sometimes, but you'll find one.

To get more information about NickServ, send a private message to NickServ.   Type the following: /msg nickserv@service.de help.   This will send you back (if NickServ is running) information.   You can continue to get more information in the same manner.