

VEX Drivers – Serial Communication

The VEXnet v3.0 and newer firmware allows your PC to communicate using a serial link with VEXnet products. This serial communication link requires a Driver to be installed on your PC. The install process is simple.

Which VEX Components require the new Driver?

Any Cortex or Joystick that is running Master Code version 3.0 or higher, will require the new Driver installed on your PC before communication can be established between the device and your PC. In addition, if you use a version of the 276-2186 Programming Hardware Kit with the gray and orange plastic case, you will need the serial drivers.

Will one Driver work with all PCs?

No, but there are only 2 Drivers to choose from depending on your system type (32-bit or 64-bit). Install the one that matches your OS.

Unfortunately, these drivers are not compatible with Linux or Mac OSX.

Where can I find the Serial Driver?

The new drivers for both the 32-bit and 64-bit versions can be found in a "VEX Driver Installer.zip" file on our VEX Robotics Downloads web page at: <http://www.vexrobotics.com/downloads/>. These drivers are also being packaged with the installer of the latest version of your programming software.

I heard something about a new programming hardware kit?

The version of the Programming Hardware Kit (276-2186) to be released in early 2012 takes advantage of the serial communication protocol. This version of 276-2186 requires the VEX Drivers to be installed. You can recognize the new version of 276-2186 because its plastic case is gray and orange, instead of all orange.

What if I have the all orange programming hardware kit?

The all orange programming hardware kits are not compatible with the new Serial Communication link. You will need to load the Prolific USB drivers included in the VEX Drivers package. There is one driver for Windows XP and one for Windows 7.

How can I tell if I am running a 32-bit or 64-bit version of Microsoft Windows?

Refer to the guide on the Page 3 for more information.

Limited 90-day Warranty

This product is warranted by VEX Robotics, Inc. against manufacturing defects in material and workmanship under normal use for ninety (90) days from the date of purchase from authorized Innovation First dealers. For complete warranty details and exclusions, check with your dealer.

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For More Information, and additional Parts & Pieces refer to:
www.VEXrobotics.com

VEX Drivers – Serial Communication, continued

Should I connect VEX hardware to my PC before driver installation?

NO. Do not connect any of the VEX Components to your PC until you have completed the Driver installation.

How do I install Drivers?

After you have downloaded the "VEX Driver Installer.zip" file from our web site, extract all the files to a known folder. Navigate your Windows Explorer to the known folder and double click on the appropriate *.exe file that matches your system type (32 or 64 bit). After double clicking on the appropriate *.exe file, use the steps below to complete the Driver installation:

- Click on **Yes** to allow changes to your PC if required.
- Click **Next** to continue in the Wizard.
- Click **Install** to begin the installation in the Wizard.
- Click **Install** or **Continue Anyway** to continue the installation in the Windows Security.
- Click **Finish** to exit the installation Wizard.

In general, just follow the on-screen instructions. Click "yes", "install", and "allow" when necessary!

Once everything is installed you'll be ready to use your PC to communicate with a VEXnet device.

The first time you plug a VEXnet device into your PC it will display a "New Hardware Found" message. This is normal. If necessary allow your PC to look for and install drivers for the VEXnet device. Approve your PC to connect to the device. Click "yes", "install", and "allow" when necessary!

VEX Drivers – Serial Communication, continued

How can I tell if I am running a 32-bit or 64-bit version of Microsoft Windows?

Use the appropriate steps below depending on your PC's operating system: Windows XP, Windows Vista, or Windows 7:

Windows XP – Option 1:

1. On your desktop, Right-Click on "My Computer" and choose "Properties" If you do not have "My Computer" on your desktop, skip below to "Windows XP - Option 2".
2. On the navigation pane, select the "General" tab. The operating system is displayed as follows

Note: <Year> is a placeholder for the date your version of Windows was released):

- For a 64-bit version operating system: "Windows XP Professional x64 Edition Version < Year>" appears under System.
- "For a 32-bit version operating system: Windows XP Professional Version <Year>" appears under System.

Windows XP – Option 2:

1. Click **Start > Run**.
2. Type "msinfo32.exe" then click **OK**.
3. On the navigation pane, select **System Summary**.
4. Locate **Processor** under Item in the details pane. Take note of the value.
 - If the value that corresponds to Processor starts with **x86**, the computer is running a 32-bit version of the Windows operating system.
 - If the value that corresponds to Processor starts with **ia64** or **AMD64**, the computer is running a 64-bit version of the Windows operating system.

Windows Vista:

1. Click on the Windows orb (**Start**).
2. Type "system" in the "Search programs and files" field, and then click **System** in Programs list.
3. The operating system appears as follows:
 - For a 32-bit version of the operating system: "32-bit Operating System" appears as the System type under System.
 - For a 64-bit version of the operating system: "64-bit Operating System" appears as the System type under System.

Windows 7:

1. Click on the Windows orb (**Start**).
2. Type "system" in the "Search programs and files" field, and then click **System** in Programs list.
3. The operating system appears as follows:
 - For a 32-bit version of the operating system: "32-bit Operating System" appears as the System type under System.
 - For a 64-bit version of the operating system: "64-bit Operating System" or "64-based PC" appears as the System type under System.