

USB dongles and interfacing

Folks looking for these items discussed at the activity meeting on 2/24/2017

USB to RS-232 dongles – Use FTDI chipset only!

USB to RS-232 dongles... just make sure you purchase the ones that advertise FTDI chipset. Do not purchase those with a PLxxx chipset. PL, or Prolific Semiconductor, have issues with Windows 7 and newer and will cause blue screen.

BAD: <http://www.ebay.com/itm/RS232-RS-232-Serial-to-USB-2-0-PL2303-DB9-Plug-Adapter-for-MAC-OS-Linux-Win-7-/350665832712?hash=item51a54ff908:g:sdgAAOSw6EhUNifM>

GOOD: <http://www.ebay.com/itm/1m-USB-2-0-to-Serial-RS-232-DB9-9Pin-Adapter-Cable-FTDI-Chipset-For-Win-10-8-7-/311806675372?hash=item48992049ac:g:JggAAOSwx6pYqlso>

Interesting: <http://www.ebay.com/itm/USB-to-Serial-RS485-TTL-RS232-UART-DB9-Adapter-Converter-Module-FTDI-FT232BM-BL-/112072126129?hash=item1a1804eeb1:g:Qv4AAOSwENxXI77f>

If you see one of these molded in blue translucent plastic, stay clear, some folks are saying these have FTDI chips in them but they may have PL chips instead. Home Depot actually sells a good FTDI version for about \$15 as does Walmart.

Audio Transformer Isolation board – WF5INZ

EASY Digi is for those folks wanting to magnetically isolate audio in and out from their rig to their PC. Look for this on ebay. Its \$10 (was \$5 when I purchased it in 2014) as a kit, built it's \$16 and in a box built up with cables it's about \$35. Get your soldering iron out, it takes five minutes to build.

http://www.ebay.com/itm/EASY-DIGI-Sound-Card-Interface-PSK-RTTY-SSTV-NBEMS-JT-65-PCB-KIT-/222365408864?hash=item33c602de60:m:mIM6OajlhJ_uammVK5bZl_w

Optical Isolation board – W3YY

W3YY optical isolation board can be obtained Robert Peterson in Clifton VA.... (QRZ'd him). I thought the board was less money but as of 2015 the board as a kit \$33 and \$48 assembled (prices include shipping). You can build this up much cheaper if you're so inclined, but \$33 is pretty inexpensive and you're helping a fellow ham. He takes checks as payment.

www.w3yy.com/fsk.htm.

Robert has a wealth of connection diagrams on his web page.

C-Media External USB sound card dongle

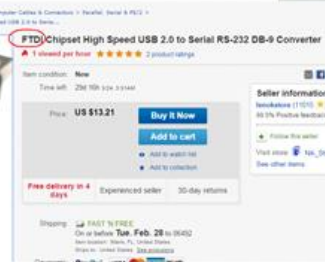
Save your PC/Laptop from damage, use a second sound card. The USB sound card is an inexpensive route to take. It uses the CM119 chip. E-bay is the best source. Price ranges from \$5 to \$10. Here's the

link for the \$5 version. <http://www.ebay.com/itm/USB-Stereo-Sound-Adapter-CMedia-CM119-2-0-/162367683587?hash=item25cdde3c03:g:J5MAAOSwt5hYhNC6>

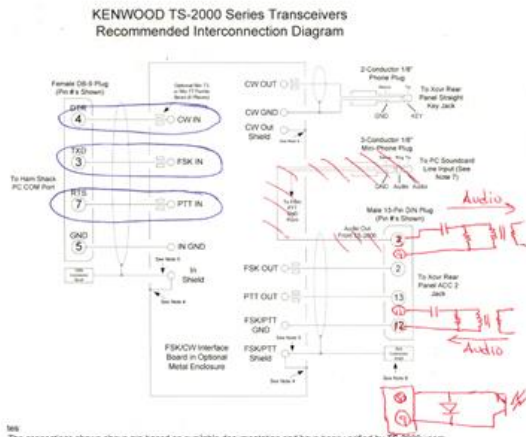
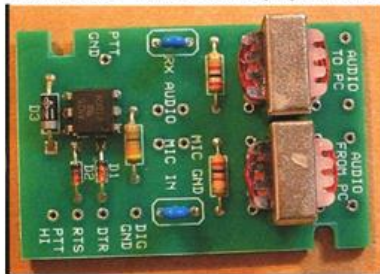
There are other versions out there as well, the CM119 chip version I use on my Win7 system without issue. One note of interest, most sound cards in your PC and these USB dongles are mono input only. You need a line input (not mic input) for stereo input to your PC. Not a big concern in our hobby but stereo recording from these devices will create mono files. Stereo (line input) versions are out there from companies like Behringer for about \$40.

Below is a snapshot of the slide I showed last night. If you build one of these up you'll need to get appropriate cabling and connectors to your rig and to your sound card. Sound card are 1/8" plugs, Radio Shack or elsewhere are good sources. Radio connectors you can check with Quick Silver Radio. Project boxes to put all this in? I crammed all this stuff into an old Linksys router that wasn't used anylonger and my cabling is old Ethernet cabling.

Actual hardware



"EASY DIGI" Board assembly by KF5INZ!



73,

KC1SA