

Virtual COM ports over USB

The Prolific USB to Serial cables create an RS232 Serial COM port using a USB port. If your computer has a serial port you do **NOT** need a Prolific USB to Serial Cable. However, some people **WILL** need a USB to serial cable.



Step #1: Installing the driver

The cable needs a driver (some Windows machines have the driver built in but most do not).
You will need to be localmgr for this to work properly.

To download the drivers do a Google search for:

prolific usb serial driver download

The Google search should go to: <http://www.prolific.com.tw/eng/downloads.asp?ID=31>

Download (save) the .zip, extract the contents, run the .exe. This should install the driver that you need. Then when you plug in the USB to serial cable it should automatically install the USB device. As with all things, there have been many people that it didn't exactly work that slick for on the first try. 😊

Step #2: Plug in the USB to serial device

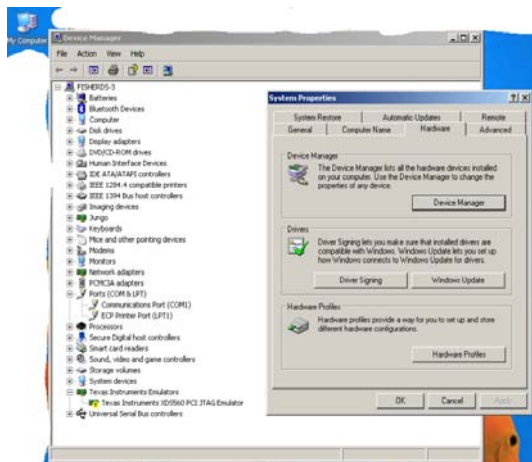
Plugging in the cable is a pretty easy step. I just wanted to make it clear that you install the driver **before** plugging in the USB to serial device. Your computer should say something like 'Found new Hardware' Installed and ready to use.

Step #3: Finding the COM port

If you are lucky Windows 7 will say the COM# in a pop-up window when the USB to serial cable installs. If you are not so lucky you will need to open the Device Manager. There are a few ways to open the Device Manager.

Windows XP

One option is to right click the 'My Computer' icon on your desktop and select Properties from the context menu. This brings up the System Properties. You can also get to System Properties via the Control Panel. Once in the System Properties, go to the Hardware tab, then click Device Manager.



Windows 7

Just click the Start circle in the lower left and start typing "Device Manager" in the Search box. When you type enough letters you can select it from the list.

Once in the Device Manager, expand **Ports**, then find the USB to Serial port virtual com port.

For the Prolific device it should say somewhere in the Ports:

Prolific USB-to-Serial Comm Port (COM#)

The # of the COM# is the important piece of information to you. You will need that for SecureCRT and MATLAB. Presto! Your computer now has a virtual com port that you can use for serial communication!