How to Install a USB to Serial Port Adapter

Explanation: When DryFire was designed in 2001 the normal Serial Port in the personal computer industry was simply called a “Serial Port.” All Serial Ports used the same 9 pin connector made in the form of the letter “D” and 99% of all personal computers had at least one Serial Port Connector. At about the same time, a new generation of the serial port was being introduced on some of the new laptops; it was called the Universal Serial Bus (commonly nicknamed USB). It had the advantage of being smaller, faster, and more versatile. During the last 4 years, this new Serial Connection Scheme has become more and more popular and today about 50% of the new computers exclusively use USB connectors. Therefore, many of DryFire’s new customers cannot connect the DryFire cable directly to their computer. This document will show you what a “USB to Serial Port Adapter” looks like, where to buy one, and how to install it.

One final issue: Almost all the computers in need of a USB to Serial Port Adapter will be running the Microsoft Windows XP operating system. Therefore, this document will exclusively deal with computers using Windows XP (either the Home Edition or Professional).

If you are installing on Windows 98SE, 2000, or ME, call DryFire at 1-877-357-1485 for more specific help. Otherwise, continue with this instruction sheet.

This document will use the “IOGEAR” brand and specifically their model GUC232A to give an example of how easy it is to connect your DryFire unit to the new “USB” connector.

Best Buy stocks the product, which is currently, prices at about $31.00.
The picture below is what the product looks like.
This is what the back looks like.
You will find three items in the package. The USB to Serial Port Cable, a CD, and an instruction sheet.
The Instruction Sheet provided by IOGEAR can be a little confusing so we suggest you set it aside and simply follow our instructions. Also, you will not be using the CD provided. It is only required when you are installing this adapter on a Windows (98SE, 2000, or ME) machine. This simplifies the process quite a bit.

1) Start with your computer turned ON and operational.

2) Pick up the USB to Serial Port Cable and plug the USB connector (the small rectangular one) in any of the USB ports on your computer. It doesn’t make any difference which one you plug it into.

3) You will very likely hear the sound of a bell and then see this image appear in the lower right corner of your computer screen.

![Found New Hardware](image1.png)

4) Don’t click on anything; just wait and this image will be replaced with this one.

![Found New Hardware](image2.png)

In the first picture Windows was informing you that it sees a USB to Serial Controller. In this second picture Windows has identified the brand and specifically calls this the (ATEN USB to Serial Bridge).

5) Believe it or not, everything is now installed, but you don’t know what “COM” port the Windows operating system has assigned to this physical port. So let’s go a little farther and find out which “COM” port it has assigned.

Let’s begin, find the “My Computer” Icon on your Desktop and right click.

![My Computer](image3.png)
This table will open. Move your cursor to the bottom item and left click on "Properties."

This table will open. Move the cursor to the "Hardware" tab and left click.
Now, on the “Hardware” tab, left click on “Device Manager”

When this screen appears, move your cursor to the plus (+) sign in front of the phrase “Ports (COM & LPT) and left click.
The screen will show all the hardware devices that fall under the “Ports (COM & LPT) category. In this example, the first line shows our ATEN USB to Serial Bridge (COM 3).

The **important part** is, we have learned what COM port Windows has assigned to our cable.

**Answer:**  **COM3**

Write this down on paper, because as you set up your DryFire system, you will need to tell the DryFire software the COM port location.

**Note:** If the COM port number is greater that 4 (e.g. COM5), you must change the COM port number manually.

To change the COM port number to a lower port, first, Double-click on the line that contains the USB to Serial Bridge.

This window will appear.
Click on the “Port Settings” tab.

Click the “Advanced…” button.
Click the drop-down arrow in the bottom right corner of the window.

Click one of the first four that is NOT marked “In Use”

The new port number appears in the box.
Click “Ok”

Click “Ok” again
Click on the “Scan for hardware changes” button to refresh Device Manager's listing.

The new port number is now displayed in Device Manager.

Write this COM port number down to use with DryFire.
Close this window out by left clicking the red “X”

The End