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 “DYNEX” brand and specifically their model DX-UBDB9 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 a User’s Manual.
The following steps will walk you through setting up the adapter.

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. The following icon will appear in the corner of the taskbar.

3) This window will appear, asking about using Windows Update. Click the option that says, “No, not this time.”
Insert the CD into your CD-ROM. This window may appear. Close it.

4) Click the “Next” button on the Found New Hardware Wizard window.
5) In the next screen, click “Install from a list or specific location (Advanced).”

Click the “Next” button.
6) When the next screen appears, click the “Next” button.

The drivers will then install.

7) After the drivers are done installing, the final window will appear. Click the “Finish” button to complete the driver installation.
8) 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.

This table will open up. 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 Prolific USB-to-Serial Comm Port (COM 5).

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

**Answer: COM5**

If your computer shows a port number that is 4 or less (e.g. COM3), then 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 Adapter.

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.