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## The simple guide to setting up Winlink and VARA on a Mac via Crossover

There are several method of running Windows software on a Mac, one involves [Wine](#) directly, but the easier option I would suggest is spend the money to buy [Crossover](#) for \$39.95–\$59.95. The more expensive version includes 12 Months of Upgrades and support.

After you've got Crossover set up, you'll need to grab some files:

- [Winlink Express](#) – Click **Download** in the menu, then select **User Programs** then the most recent version of Winklink Express. The filename will look similar to: [Winlink\\_Express\\_install\\_1-5-35-0.zip](#) (Definitely go download the most recent version, not this one)
- Download **VARA HF** and/or **VARA FM** from the [EA5HVK site](#).
- From the [Crossover instructions on K6ETA's site](#), you'll need to download some [VARA Components](#).

Okay, now you've got everything downloaded, let's get it installed!

- Launch Crossover (perform any updates/upgrades it asks for)
- Create a **New Bottle** and call it Ham Radio or whatever you prefer
- I'm going to create it as a **Windows 7** (32-bit) bottle since that is the default
- Install **Microsoft .NET 3.5 Service Pack 1**. To do so, click **Install a Windows Application** and start typing the name and select it from the list. After clicking **Continue** be sure to select your new Ham Radio bottle otherwise it will install it in a new empty bottle.
- In the same way, also install **Microsoft Visual Basic 6 Runtime Service Pack 6** in the same bottle
- Install **Microsoft Visual C++ 2015 (14.0) Redistributable**
- Install **Microsoft XML Parser (MSXML) 6.0 SP2** (for unknown reasons...optional?)
- Click **Install a Windows Application** then **Select an Installer** and select your **Winlink Express** zip file.
- Select your Ham Radio Bottle and under **Select Application** it is safe to just select **Unlisted Application**. Hit **Continue** and **Install** to start the installation.
- Using those same steps, install **VARA FM** and/or **VARA HF** in to the same bottle.
- Unzip the [VARA Components](#) file and copy the contents of the **Put\_in\_System32** folder to the following location:
  - `/Users/[user name]/Library/Application\ Support/Crossover/Bottles/[bottle name]/drive_c/windows/system32` and when it asks, overwrite any of the existing files with these new ones.

You should now have the **Winlink Express** icon in the bottle, along with **VARA FM** and/or **VARA**. You'll want to open Winlink Express and set up your preferences (callsign, password, email, grid square, etc.) Also, install any updates/upgrades Winklink Express offers on each launch.

TESTING: Getting WinLink Forms to work:

I went to the [Chrome Download](#) page which of course defaulted to my host Operating System (Mac) but I wanted the Windows installer. Scroll to the bottom and open the **Chrome Family** tab and choose **Other Platforms**. There you will find the Windows installers. Since my Crossover Bottle was Windows 7 (32-bit) I chose that installer.

I then installed it to my Winlink bottle in Crossover. Visual C++ gave me lot of errors and I just kept clicking **Abort** on them.

I ran the installer a second time and it still didn't work (but no errors this time) so I switched over to trying Firefox. I went to their [alternate downloads page](#) and grabbed the 32-bit Windows installer. In the list of pre-built installers Firefox 45 was the highest version, so I selected that hoping it would add any dependencies needed, but I still selected the latest (91.0.2) version of the installer that I had downloaded.

The Crossover installer complained that Firefox 45 hadn't installed, so I skipped that step, but launching Firefox worked without a problem! I still would have rather used Chrome, but this might work.

Firefox runs, but attempting to use a Winlink Form still doesn't open in the browser.

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