

ELECRAFT Application Note

What do I do after I put my K3 or KX3 on the air?

Top 3 Good Housekeeping activities for your rig

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What should I do after I get my KX3 or K3 built and on the air?

Congratulations on getting your rig up and running. At Elecraft, we are proud to have you and your shack join the Elecraft community of dedicated hams. To assist you in keeping your rig up and running for the long haul, we have engineered some "Good Housekeeping" features to ensure your radio can talk to your computer, back up your configurations and update your firmware.

Top 3 Activities you need to do:

- ⤴ **Prepare your computer to work with your KX3**
- ⤴ **Check and, if needed, update your firmware from the Elecraft website.**
- ⤴ **Create a back up of your radio's configuration on your computer.**

What is involved with getting the KUSB cable to work?

The KUSB allows you to connect your rig to a computer. The cable contains a converter to do this that must be installed on your computer. In order to complete this installation, you need to know what type of operating system you have on your computer. Then, follow the procedures from the table below:

What Operating System are you running?	Find the procedure to install the drivers
Windows XP	Installing FDTI drivers on Windows XP
Windows Vista	Installing FTDI drivers on Windows Vista
Windows 7	Installing FTDI drivers on Windows 7
MacIntosh	Installing FTDI drivers on MacIntosh OSX
Linux	Installing FTDI drivers on Linux

How do I download the K3 or KX3 Utility?

Next, will want to download the [K3](#) or [KX3](#) Utility software from the Elecraft web site.

Why download the Utility?

The K3 or KX3 Utility software provides a number of valuable services with your rig:

- ⤴ **An easy to use configuration system:** configure your roofing filters and other operating parameters without having to use the front panel of the K3. You can also inspect the configuration you now have if you have made changes and did not document them.
- ⤴ **Back up of your Configuration:** You can also create a copy of the entire rig's configuration and store it on your computer. In this way, you do not have to remember or write down all of the settings you have

made to the rig. Further, you can store different configuration that might be optimized for DXing or Contesting.

- ⤴ **Update the radio's firmware:** Elecraft continues to develop new features for existing customers. These are delivered via new firmware which is downloaded in to the rig. The Utility takes the complexity out of this procedure, however. In this way, customers can stay up to date with the latest features as if their rig had just left the factory.
- ⤴ **Tune up and optimize settings:** From time to time, you may be asked by Elecraft support to run a series of calibration procedures. These are easy with the built-in testing gear in the rigs and the procedures contained in the Utility. These may include receiver calibration (K3 only) and transmitter calibrations (K3 and KX3).

As you can see, then, it is worth your time and effort to prepare your computer to work with your Elecraft rig.

How do I check to see if I need to update my firmware?

You can check on the status of your firmware at any time with the K3 or KX3 Utility. Here are the steps to do so:

- ⤴ Load up your Utility: If it has been installed, you will have an Elecraft logo on your PC's desktop.
- ⤴ Confirm that the Utility is connected to your computer: You can confirm this by the text found at the top of the Utility window or with a pop-up window confirming that the Utility has connected to the radio and at what speed it has done so.
- ⤴ Select the Firmware tab at the top of the Utility window.
- ⤴ Locate the button labeled, "Copy New Files from Elecraft" and press it.
 - There will be some lines of text showing up in the Activity Log at the bottom of the window.
- ⤴ When complete, press the "Check Versions Now" button.
- ⤴ Now, compare the two columns of numbers labeled, "Installed" and "Available".
 - If these versions are all the same, your radio is up to date with the latest firmware.
- ⤴ If these versions show that there is new firmware available, proceed to update your radio by pressing the, "Send All New Firmware to K3" button.
 - This procedure will initiate clicking sounds and some lights to flash on the radio as the firmware parts are loaded.
 - Be prepared to see the radio appear to shut itself off and then back on again. This may happen more than once.
 - **Warning:** Do not attempt to change anything on the K3 or KX3 while this procedure is being conducted.
 - If, for any reason, the firmware load hangs or does not complete, contact k3support@elecraft.com or kx3support@elecraft.com for help. There are ways to recover from a failure like this with their help.
 - **Note to KX3 Users:** Perform the firmware updates on your KX3 while connected to a known-good power supply. Do NOT depend on internal or external batteries to operate the radio while doing a firmware update.

How do I perform a back up of my radio's configuration?

The K3 has a number of configuration menu items that are reset to their default values during the "Parameter Initialization" process (EE INIT) described in the Troubleshooting section of the *Elecraft K3 Owner's Manual*. You may find it convenient to save the original configuration settings before performing this procedure and then

restore the configuration settings after Parameter Initialization.

³⁵/₁₇ Click to show a "Save As" dialog where you may provide the name of a new file that will receive configuration data.

³⁵/₁₇ A suggested file name is generated from the K3's serial number and the local date and time, but you may overtype this with any valid file name.

³⁵/₁₇ Click "Save" to begin saving configuration data.

The *K3 Utility* creates a folder intended for configuration files, located under the current user's Application Data folder. You can locate the current user's Application Data folder by entering "cd %APPDATA%" from a Windows command prompt.

³⁵/₁₇ On *Windows* 7* and *Windows* Vista* this folder is usually

"c:\Users\username\AppData\Roaming\Elecraft\K3 Configuration".

³⁵/₁₇ On *Windows* XP*, *Windows* 2000* and *Windows* NT* this folder is usually "c:\Documents and Settings\username\Application Data\Elecraft\K3 Configuration".

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You may use this folder, or use the Save As dialog to navigate to a different folder for saving configuration files.

What is saved

The saved configuration includes the areas that are reset by the Parameter Initialization (EE INIT) process, such as general configuration parameters, option module enables, crystal filter setups, transmit calibration data, and other menu settings; and control settings (last-used selections for switches, knobs, VFOs, etc.)

What is not saved

These settings are not saved, as they are not disturbed by the Parameter Initialization (EE INIT) procedure:

³⁵/₁₇ Frequency memories

³⁵/₁₇ Power on Banner

³⁵/₁₇ CW Message memories

³⁵/₁₇ K3 Macros

³⁵/₁₇ RF Gain calibration data

³⁵/₁₇ VCO calibration data

Firmware is not preserved in the saved configuration file.

How often should I make a backup of my rig's configuration?

You should always make a back up of your configuration whenever you make permanent changes to any of the operating parameters or when you perform any recalibration procedures. By doing this, you can be assured that you can recover from most any problems you may have with the rig.

Thank you for choosing Elecraft products for your shack!