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How To Check and Use Serial Ports Under Linux

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How do I check and configure serial ports under Linux for various purposes such as modem, connecting null modems or connect a dumb terminal?

Linux offers various tools. Linux uses ttySx for a serial port device name. For example, COM1 (DOS/Windows name) is ttyS0, COM2 is ttyS1 and so on.



[1]

Task: Display Detected System's Serial Support

Simple run dmesg command

```
$ dmesg | grep tty
```

Output:

```
[ 37.531286] serial8250: ttyS0 at I/O 0x3f8 (irq = 4) is a 16550A
[ 37.531841] 00:0b: ttyS0 at I/O 0x3f8 (irq = 4) is a 16550A
[ 37.532138] 0000:04:00.3: ttyS1 at I/O 0x1020 (irq = 18) is a 16550A
```

setserial command

setserial is a program designed to set and/or report the configuration information associated with a serial port. This information includes what I/O port and IRQ a particular serial port is using, and whether or not the break key should be interpreted as the Secure Attention Key, and so on. Just type the following command:

```
$ setserial -g /dev/ttyS[0123]
```

Output:

```
/dev/ttyS0, UART: 16550A, Port: 0x03f8, IRQ: 4
/dev/ttyS1, UART: 16550A, Port: 0x1020, IRQ: 18
/dev/ttyS2, UART: unknown, Port: 0x03e8, IRQ: 4
/dev/ttyS3, UART: unknown, Port: 0x02e8, IRQ: 3
```

setserial with -g option help to find out what physical serial ports your Linux box has.

Linux serial console programs

Once serial ports identified you can configure Linux box using various utilities:

1. [minicom](#) ^[2] - The best friendly serial communication program for controlling modems and connecting to dump devices
2. [wvialdial or other GUI dial](#) ^[3] **up networking program** - a PPP dialer with built-in intelligence.
3. **getty / agetty** - agetty opens a tty port, prompts for a login name and invokes the /bin/login command.
4. **grub / lilo configuration** - To configure serial port as the system console

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