

README.md - Grip

NTP time with GPSD and PPS-enabled GPS GlobalSat MR-350P-S4

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ToC created by [gh-md-toc](#)

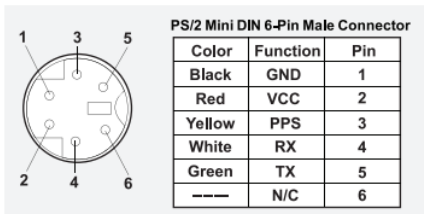
Operating environment

- Ubuntu Bionic 18.04.3
- Linux kernel 5.4.3 (Vanilla kernel from kernel.org - no patches required or used)

Things you may need to buy

1. [Buy GlobalSat MR-350P-S4 on Amazon.com \(US\)](#)
2. [Buy DB9 D-SUB RS232 Adapter \(Female with Screw\) on Amazon.com \(US\)](#)
3. [Buy PS/2 Mini-DIN Male-to-Female cable on Amazon.com \(US\)](#)
4. [Amazon search for DB9 D-SUB RS232 Adapter \(Female with Screw\)](#)
5. [Amazon search for PS/2 Mini-DIN Male-to-Female cable](#)
6. [Amazon search for GlobalSat MR-350P-S4](#)
7. [Buy Garmin 18x LVC GPS on Amazon.com \(US\)](#) - not required if you are using / buying the GlobalSat MR-350P-S4

GlobalSat MR-350PS4 PS/2 pin-out



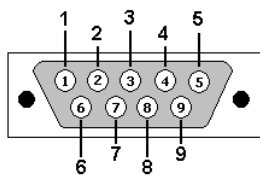
The diagram above is from [GlobalSat MR-350PS4 Technical Specifications](#)

Note that this is **NOT** the standard PS/2 pin-out.

Pin Function

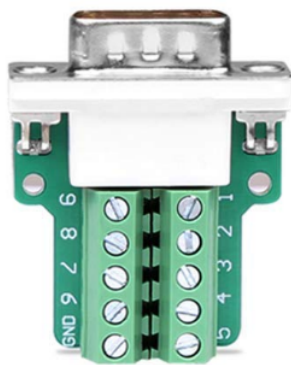
- 1 GND
- 2 VCC
- 3 PPS
- 4 RX
- 5 TX
- 6 NC

DB9 RS232 serial port pin-out



Pin	Function	Direction
1	DCD	Into computer from GPS
2	RX	Into computer from GPS
3	TX	To GPS from computer
4	DTR	To GPS from computer (unused here)
5	GND	-

DB9 D-SUB RS232 Adapter (Female with Screw) screw pins



Check the pin numbering at the screw terminals - may be different from this image !

MR-350P-S4 PS/2 PIN Function DB9 PIN USB cable wire			
1	GND	5	Black
2	VCC	-	Red
3	PPS	1	-
4	RX	2	-
5	TX	3	-
6	NC	-	-

Notes:

- PS/2 Pin 2 (VCC) goes ONLY to USB cable
- PS/2 Pin 1 (GND) goes to DB9 Pin 5 AND to USB cable

NTP time with GPSD and PPS-enabled GPS Garmin 18x LVC GPS

NOTE: I have not personally tried the Garmin 18x LVC. I am only including this section in the hope that the wiring tips may help others who have or buy the Garmin 18x LVC

Note that you MUST buy the LVC version, and not the USB version(s).

Comparison with the GlobalSat MR-250P-S4:

Garmin 18x LVC	GlobalSat MR-250P-S4
More expensive	Less expensive
Reviews say it will not work indoors (1)	Reviews say it works indoors in wood buildings (1)
1 microsecond PPS accuracy - worse (1)	50 ns PPS accuracy - better (1)
Do not need PS/2 Male-Female cable	Recommend PS/2 Male-Female cable
Casing is flat at the botton with a magnetic base	No magnetic base, more clumsy to mount

(1): [GPSD Compatible Hardware](#)

2.2 GPS 18x LVC & GPS 18x -5Hz WIRING DIAGRAMS

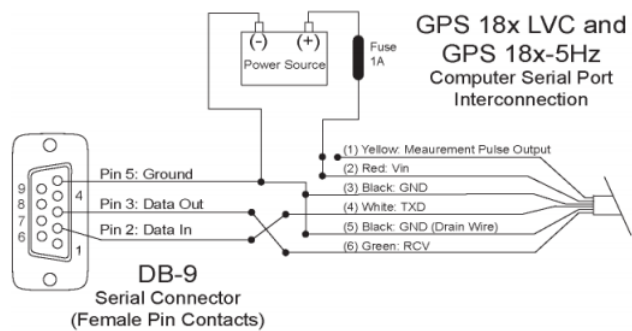


Figure 1: Computer Serial Port Interconnection

The diagram above is from [Garmin 18x Technical Specifications](#)

Note: the diagram above does not show PIN 1 (Yellow) (PPS) wire connected anywhere, but it **SHOULD** be connected to DB9 Pin 1 (DCD). Without that PPS will **NOT** work !

Garmin 18x LVC PIN (Color) Function DB9 PIN USB cable wire

1 (Yellow)	PPS	1	-
2 (Red)	VCC	-	Red
3 (Black)	GND	5	Black
4 (White)	TX	3	-
5 (Black)	GND	-	-
6 (Green)	RX	2	-

Package installation

```
apt install gpsd chrony setserial gpsd-clients pps-tools
```

Package versions

Package	Version
gpsd	3.17-5
setserial	2.17-50
pps-tools	1.0.2-1
chrony	3.2-4ubuntu4.2
gpsd-clients	3.17-5

Assumptions

This guide assumes GPS device is connected on SECOND serial port - `ttys1` If this is not the case substitute `/dev/ttyABC` for `/dev/ttyS1` in following files

- `var/lib/setserial/autoserial.conf`
- `etc/default/gpsd`

Do this before proceeding further

Configure GPSD

- Make sure you have modified `etc/default/gpsd` to reflect serial port being used (if modification is required)
- Copy `etc/default/gpsd` to `/etc/default/gpsd`

Enable kernel PPS

Check kernel config

```
grep '^CONFIG_PPS' /boot/config-$(uname -r) Output should contain:
```

```
CONFIG_PPS=m
CONFIG_PPS_CLIENT_LDISC=m
```

Enable loading of `pps_ldisc` modules on boot

- Copy etc/systemd/system/pps_ldisc.service to /etc/systemd/system
- Run systemctl enable pps_ldisc.service
- Run systemctl start pps_ldisc.service
- Technically this is not **REQUIRED** just to test GPSD, but if not using this service you need to do the following:
 - modprobe pps_ldisc before starting gpsd or restart gpsd after the modprobe
 - Do this after every reboot
 - Without module pps_ldisc, PPS capabilities will not be available

Configure serial port

- Strictly **NOT REQUIRED** just for testing PPS with gpsd. All setserial is used for is setting the serial port into **low_latency** mode - may improve PPS latency / accuracy
- Make sure you have modified var/lib/setserial/autoserial.conf to reflect serial port being used (if modification is required)
- Run dpkg-reconfigure setserial and set configuration mode to **MANUAL**
- Copy /lib/setserial/autoserial.conf to /var/lib/setserial/autoserial.conf
- for op in stop start; do systemctl \$op setserial.service; done

Disable systemd-timesyncd.service

- systemd-timesyncd.service conflicts with chrony and if systemd-timesyncd.service is enabled, chrony will not autostart
- for op in stop disable mask; do systemctl \$op systemd-timesyncd.service ; done

Setup chrony

- copy etc/chrony/chrony.conf to etc/chrony/

Testing

Stop gpsd (systemd variant)

```
systemctl stop gpsd.socket gpsd.service
```

Restart gpsd (systemd variant)

```
for op in stop start; do systemctl $op gpsd.socket gpsd.service
```

Run gpsd in foreground for testing

- [Stop gpsd](#)
- gpsd -b -n -N -D3 /dev/ttyS1 /dev/pps0 (**IMPORTANT:** replace /dev/ttyS1 with path to serial port you are using)

Find pps device

```
ppsfind --help
```

```
pps0: name=serial1 path=/dev/ttyS1
```

Testing PPS capabilities

```
sudo ppswatch /dev/pps0
```

```
trying PPS source "/dev/pps0"
found PPS source "/dev/pps0"
timestamp: 1577777203, sequence: 83886, offset: 1984
timestamp: 1577777204, sequence: 83887, offset: -31306
timestamp: 1577777205, sequence: 83888, offset: 5836
timestamp: 1577777206, sequence: 83889, offset: 3027
timestamp: 1577777207, sequence: 83890, offset: -24220
timestamp: 1577777208, sequence: 83891, offset: 2041
```

Testing PPS with ntpshmmon

```
ntpshmmon -n 5
```

```
ntpshmmon version 1
#      Name Seen@      Clock      Real      L Prec
sample NTP2 1577776857.467580012 1577776856.999992825 1577776857.000000000 0 -30
sample NTP2 1577776858.000449336 1577776857.999980312 1577776858.000000000 0 -30
sample NTP2 1577776859.000728372 1577776858.999985236 1577776859.000000000 0 -30
sample NTP2 1577776860.000141189 1577776859.999987295 1577776860.000000000 0 -30
sample NTP2 1577776861.000665371 1577776861.000004892 1577776861.000000000 0 -30
```

Testing GPS NMEA

1. cgps
2. gpsmon

```
chronyc -m 'sources -v' tracking 'sourcestats -v'
```

PPS details highlighted in **BOLD**

```
chronyc -m 'sources -v' tracking 'sourcestats -v'
```

210 Number of sources = 7

```

|-- Source mode  '^' = server, '=' = peer, '#' = local clock.
/  -- Source state '*' = current synced, '+' = combined , '-' = not combined,
/  -- '?' = unreachable, 'x' = time may be in error, '-' = time too variable.
||
||               Reachability register (octal)  --.      |      xxxx [ yyyy ] +/- zzzz
||               Log2(Polling interval)  --.      |      xxxx = adjusted offset,
||               \      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
||               \      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
||               \      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
||               \      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
MS Name/IP address          Stratum Poll  Reach LastRx  Last sample
=====
#* PPS                      0   4   377    18  +1318ns[+2225ns] +/-  502us
^ 162.159.200.1             3 10  377    56  +8603us[+8606us] +/-   46ms
^ time4.google.com          1 10  377   983  +1242us[+1189us] +/-   24ms
^ time-a-b.nist.gov         1 10  377   128  -2043us[-2039us] +/-   22ms
^ gpstime.la-archdiocese.n> 2 10  377   32m  +848us[ +667us] +/-   41ms
^ clock.fmt.he.net         1 10  377   209  -1836us[-1831us] +/-  4597us
^ clock.sjc.he.net         1 10  377    39  -507us[- 507us] +/-  3927us

```

210 Number of sources = 7

Name/IP Address	NP	NR	Span	Frequency	Freq Skew	Offset	Std Dev
PPS	13	8	194	+0.001	0.062	+13ns	2834ns
162.159.200.1	10	8	155m	-0.431	0.820	+6442us	1354us
time4.google.com	14	7	223m	-0.400	0.569	-1817us	1802us
time-a-b.nist.gov	34	14	568m	-0.328	0.070	-1429us	1134us
gpstime.la-archdiocese.n>	20	12	327m	-0.342	0.123	-691us	799us
clock.fmt.he.net	17	10	276m	-0.429	0.198	-507us	1020us
clock.sic.he.net	13	5	224m	-0.407	0.115	-933us	419us

```

Reference ID      : 50505300 (PPS)
Stratum          : 1
Ref time (UTC)   : Tue Dec 31 01:59:17 2019
System time      : 0.000000606 seconds fast of NTP time
Last offset      : +0.000000953 seconds
RMS offset       : 0.000001683 seconds
Frequency        : 25.250 ppm slow
Residual freq    : +0.001 ppm
Skew             : 0.068 ppm
Root delay       : 0.001000000 seconds
Root dispersion  : 0.000021925 seconds
Update interval  : 16.0 seconds
Leap status      : Normal

```

1. [GPSPD Time Service HOWTO by author of GPSPD](#)
2. [GPSPD Compatible Hardware](#)
3. [Troubleshooting by author of GPSPD](#)
4. [chrony with GPS for Time Synchronization](#)
5. [Not quite 5 minute guide to making an NTP Server](#)
6. [Chrony and GPSPD \(Archlinux\)](#)
7. [Synchronizing ntpd to a Garmin GPS 18 LVC via gpsd](#)
8. [GlobalSat MR-350PS4 Technical Specifications](#)
9. [RS232 Serial Cable Wiring](#)
10. [Crossover or "Null Modem" vs. Straight Through Serial Cable](#)
11. [Garmin 18x Technical Specifications](#)
12. [The Raspberry Pi as a Stratum-1 NTP Server](#) - Uses a Raspberry Pi "hat" module, but otherwise contains a wealth of information

File list

```

.
├── etc
│   ├── chrony
│   │   └── chrony.conf
│   ├── default
│   │   ├── gpsd
│   │   └── systemd
│   │       ├── system
│   │       └── pps_ldisc.service
├── var
│   └── lib
│       └── setserial
│           └── autoserial.conf

```

etc/default/gpsd

IMPORTANT Change /dev/ttyS1 to path for serial port you are using

```

# Default settings for gpsd.
# Please do not edit this file directly - use `dpkg-reconfigure gpsd' to
# change the options.
START_DAEMON="true"
GPSD_OPTIONS="-b -n -D1"
DEVICES="/dev/ttyS1 /dev/pps0"
USB_AUTO="false"
GPSD_SOCKET="/var/run/gpsd.sock"

```

etc/systemd/system/pps_ldisc.service

```

[Unit]
Description=Modprobe pps_ldisc
After=setserial.service

[Service]
Type=oneshot
ExecStart=/sbin/modprobe pps_core
ExecStart=/sbin/modprobe pps_ldisc

[Install]
WantedBy=gpsd.service

```

var/lib/setserial/autoserial.conf

IMPORTANT Change /dev/ttyS1 to path for serial port you are using

```

#
###AUTOSAVE-ONCE###
###AUTOSAVE-ONCE###
###AUTOSAVE###
#
# If you want to configure this file by hand, use
# dpkg-reconfigure setserial
# and change the configuration mode of the file to MANUAL. If you do not do this, this file may be overwritten automatically the
# package.
#

# dpkg-reconfigure setserial ... set configuration mode to MANUAL
# Added next line for ttyS1 for Garmin 18 LVC GPS
# From: http://www.rjssystems.nl/en/2100-ntpd-garmin-gps-18-lvc-gpsd.php
# Only needed to add 'low_latency' to default port configuration
# Print out current port configuration:
# setserial -G /dev/ttyS1
/dev/ttyS1 uart 16550A port 0x02f8 irq 3 baud_base 115200 spd_normal skip_test low_latency

```

etc/chrony/chrony.conf

The extra server lines in chrony.conf are totally irrelevant to using PPS

For PPS, only the line reading refclock SHM 1 offset 0 delay 0.001 refid PPS is important.

```

# This the default chrony.conf file for the Debian chrony package. After
# editing this file use the command 'invoke-rc.d chrony restart' to make
# your changes take effect. John Hasler <jhasler@debian.org> 1998-2008

# See www.pool.ntp.org for an explanation of these servers. Please
# consider joining the project if possible. If you can't or don't want to
# use these servers I suggest that you try your ISP's nameservers. We mark
# the servers 'offline' so that chronyd won't try to connect when the link
# is down. Scripts in /etc/ppp/ip-up.d and /etc/ppp/ip-down.d use chronyc
# commands to switch it on when a dialup link comes up and off when it goes
# down. Code in /etc/init.d/chrony attempts to determine whether or not
# the link is up at boot time and set the online status accordingly. If
# you have an always-on connection such as cable omit the 'offline'
# directive and chronyd will default to online.
#
# Note that if Chrony tries to go "online" and dns lookup of the servers

```

```

# fails they will be discarded. Thus under some circumstances it is
# better to use IP numbers than host names.

# -----
# Use a local GPS device and gpsd as Staratum 0 GPS source
#
# Disable systemd-timesyncd.service - conflicts with chrony autostart !
# for op in stop disable mask; do systemctl $op systemd-timesyncd.service ; done
#
#
# For Globalsat MR-350PS4 PPS GPS on SERIAL port
# From https://wiki.alpinelinux.org/wiki/Chrony_and_GPSD
# Commenting out NEMA and SOCK -:
# - NEMA is too inaccurate and chrony will not use anyway!
# - SOCK - does not seem to get any values !
#
#refclock SHM 0 delay 0.5 refid NEMA
refclock SHM 1 offset 0 delay 0.001 refid PPS
#refclock SOCK /var/run/chrony.ttyS1.sock delay 0.0 refid SOCK

# C(20180207) Settings for using USB non-PPS GPS device and GPSD
# NEMA is too inaccurate and chrony will not use anyway!
# Need to fiddle with offset (seconds) to make sure refclock is considered
# watch the output of 'chronyc sources' to see 'Last Sample'
#
# refclock SHM 0 offset 0.05 refid NMEA

server clock.fmt.he.net iburst
server clock.sjc.he.net iburst
server time.cloudflare.com iburst
server time.google.com iburst
server time.nist.gov
server gpstime.la-archdiocese.net

#server time1.google.com iburst
#server time2.google.com iburst
#server time3.google.com iburst
#server time4.google.com iburst
#pool 0.ubuntu.pool.ntp.org iburst
#pool 2.debian.pool.ntp.org offline iburst

# Specify IP address (interface) that chronyd CLIENT will bind to
# The bindacqaddress directive sets the network interface to which
# chronyd will bind its NTP client sockets
# bindacqaddress 0.0.0.0

# Allow other NTP clients in our zone to query time
# allow 10.3/16
# allow 10.30.0/24

# (CHANGED): chronyd version 3.2 commandkey directive is no longer supported
# This directive sets the key ID used for authenticating user commands via the
# 'chronyc' program at run time.
# commandkey 1

# End of customized settings - EXCEPT lines labeled with (CHANGED)
# -----

# Look here for the admin password needed for chronyc. The initial
# password is generated by a random process at install time. You may
# change it if you wish.

keyfile /etc/chrony/chrony.keys

# I moved the driftfile to /var/lib/chrony to comply with the Debian
# filesystem standard.

driftfile /var/lib/chrony/chrony.drift

# Comment this line out to turn off logging.

log tracking measurements statistics
logdir /var/log/chrony

# Stop bad estimates upsetting machine clock.

maxupdateskew 100.0

# Dump measurements when daemon exits.

dumpnexit

# Specify directory for dumping measurements.

dumpdir /var/lib/chrony

# This directive lets 'chronyd' to serve time even if unsynchronised to any
# NTP server.

```

```
#local stratum 10

# This directive designates subnets (or nodes) from which NTP clients are allowed
# to access to 'chronyd'.

#allow foo.example.net
#allow 10/8
#allow 0/0 (allow access by any IPv4 node)
#allow ::/0 (allow access by any IPv6 node)

# This directive forces 'chronyd' to send a message to syslog if it
# makes a system clock adjustment larger than a threshold value in seconds.

logchange 0.5

# This directive defines an email address to which mail should be sent
# if chronyd applies a correction exceeding a particular threshold to the
# system clock.

# mailonchange root@localhost 0.5

# This directive tells 'chronyd' to parse the 'adjtime' file to find out if the
# real-time clock keeps local time or UTC. It overrides the 'rtconutc' directive.

hwclockfile /etc/adjtime

# This directive enables kernel synchronisation (every 11 minutes) of the
# real-time clock. Note that it can't be used along with the 'rtcfile' directive.

rtcsync
```