# Cygwin/X User's Guide Generated 2010-08-26 17:23

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by Harold L Hunt, II

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# Chapter 1. Cygwin/X Overview

Cygwin/X is a port of the X Window System to Cygwin; Cygwin provides a UNIX-like API on the Win32 platform.

### Chapter 2. Setting Up Cygwin/X

### **Cygwin/X Contents**

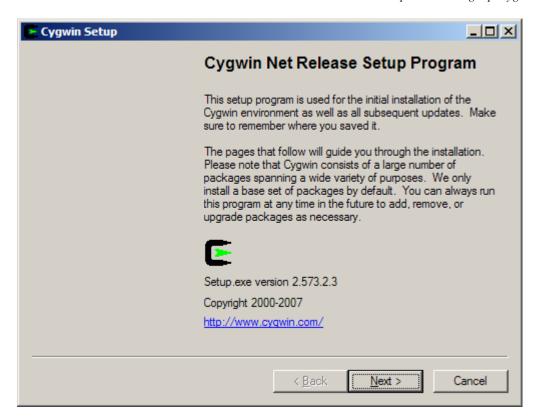
Cygwin/X consists of two parts: Cygwin, a port of the GNU tools to Win32, and Cygwin/X, a port of the X Window System to Win32. Both parts of Cygwin/X are needed to successfully run an X Server on a Win32 platform.

### **Installing Cygwin/X**

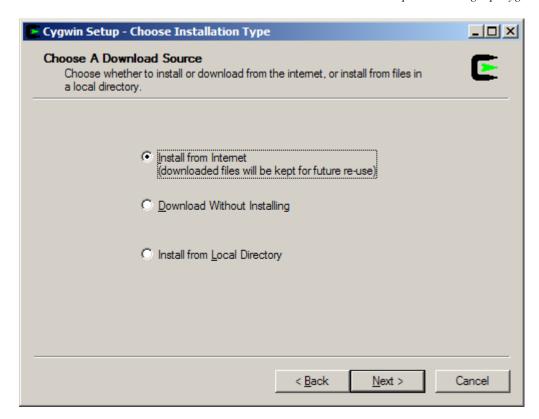
Cygwin tools are, in the words of the Cygwin development homepage, http://cygwin.com/, "ports of the popular GNU development tools and utilities for Windows 95, 98, and NT. They function by using the Cygwin library which provides a UNIX-like API on top of the Win32 API." Cygwin allows the compilation of the X Window System source on Win32; several patches were made to the X Window System source to make it actually compile and run under Cygwin.

Cygwin has a nice setup program that downloads and installs the necessary Cygwin packages for you.

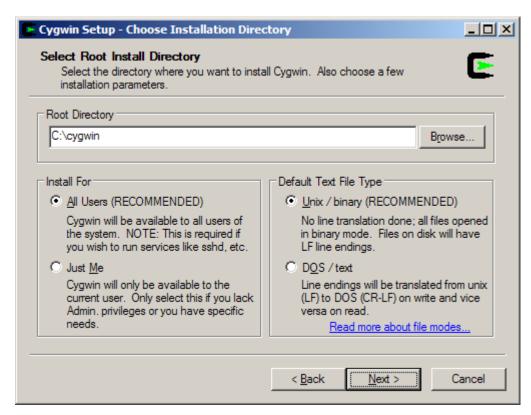
- 1. Open the Cygwin, http://cygwin.com/ page in your web browser
- 2. Click the "Install Cygwin Now" (http://cygwin.com/setup.exe) link in the upper-right hand corner of the page. This link downloads setup.exe from the primary Cygwin server; save setup.exe to the directory that you would like to store the downloaded packages in (e.g. c:\download); do not save setup.exe to c:\cygwin, as that is the default directory for the extraction and installation of the downloaded packages.
- 3. Run setup. exe, you will see the welcome screen:



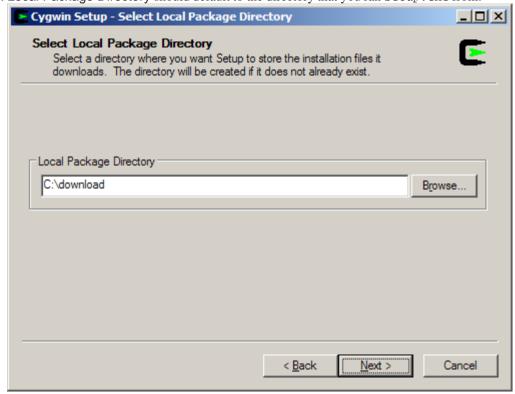
- 4. Click **Next** to proceed to the next screen.
- 5. Choose, Install from Internet, this will still save the package files to your download directory so that you can install Cygwin on any number of machines:



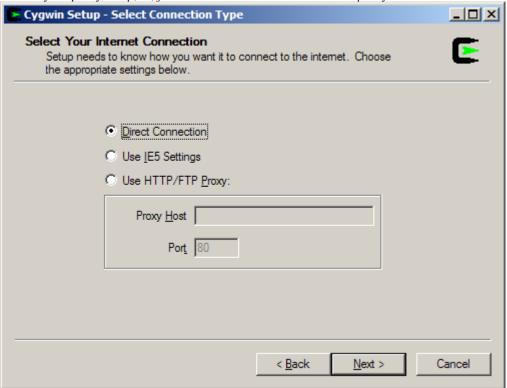
- 6. Click Next to proceed to the next screen.
- 7. The default Install Root is c:\cygwin which should be fine for most installations. Leave Default Text File Type as UNIX. Leave Install For set to All unless you lack local administrative privileges.



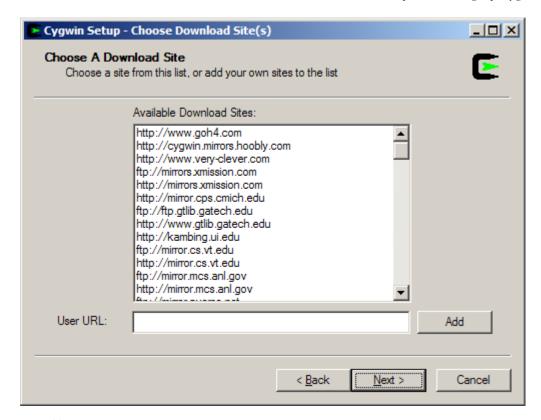
- 8. Click Next to proceed to the next screen.
- 9. Local Package Directory should default to the directory that you ran setup. exe from:



- 10. Click Next to proceed to the next screen.
- 11. Choose your proxy setup, or, just choose Direct Connection if no proxy is needed:



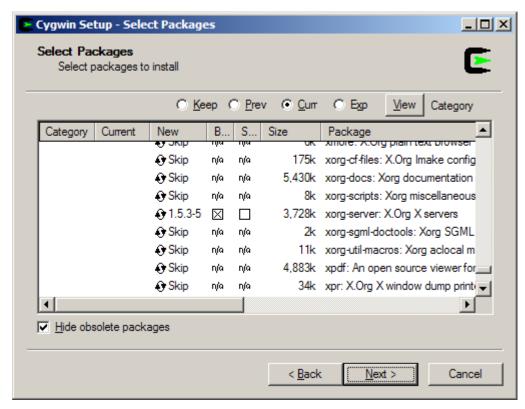
- 12. Click Next to proceed to the next screen.
- 13. Select your nearest mirror for downloading:



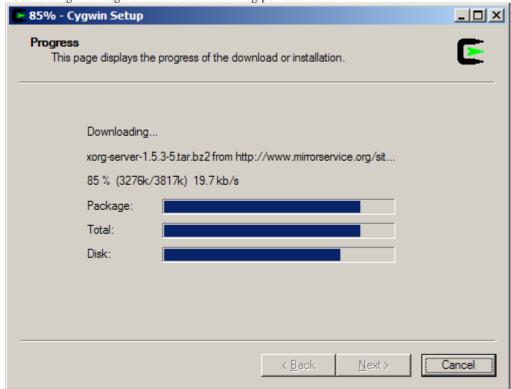
- 14. Click Next to proceed to the next screen; setup will download a list of available packages as it moves to the next screen.
- 15. On the next screen you will select the packages that will be downloaded and installed. A listing of the Cygwin/X packages is given below; a listing of the general Cygwin packages would be beyond the scope of this document.

Cygwin/X packages are located in the x11 category.

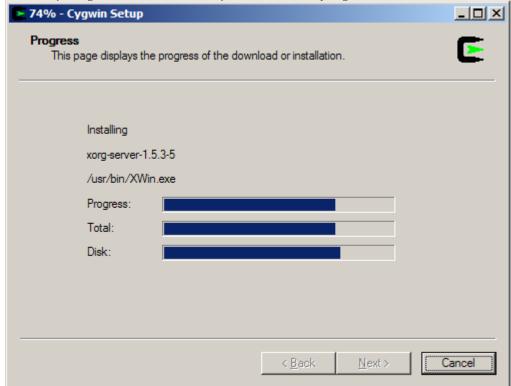
- xorg-server (required, the Cygwin/X X Server)
- xinit (required, scripts for starting the X server: xinit, startx, startwin (and a shortcut on the Start Menu to run it), startxdmcp.bat)
- xorg-docs (optional, man pages)
- X-start-menu-icons (optional, adds icons for X Clients to the Start menu)
- You may also select any X client programs you want to use, and any fonts you would like to have available.
- You may also want to ensure that the inetutils or openssh packages are selected if you wish to use **telnet** or **ssh** connections to run remote X clients.



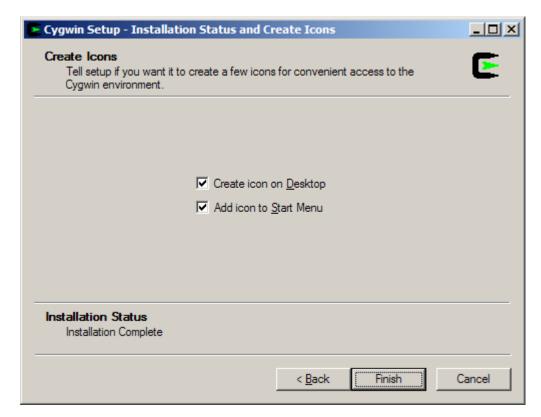
16. Click Next to begin the download process, you may want to try another mirror if you see a "Connecting" message on this screen for a long period of time:



17. After the packages are downloaded, setup will automatically begin to install them:



18. I highly recommend allowing Cygwin Setup to create Desktop and Start Menu icons for you; these icons simply launch a bash shell:



19. Click Finish to close the setup program.

You have now successfully installed Cygwin/X. Proceed to Chapter 4 for instructions on how to use Cygwin/X.

### Chapter 3. Configuring Cygwin/X

### **Configuration overview**

Cygwin/X settings are configured primarily through command-line parameters passed to XWin.exe.

A XWinrc file is used to configure the notification area icon menu, and customize window appearance in multiwindow mode.

#### Windowing mode

Cygwin/X can be configured to present X windows for an X screen in three different ways:

• Windowed or rooted mode. (default)

Each X screen appears as a single Windows window and all X windows are contained within those windows. (the Windows window contains the X root window for the screen)

**Note:** This is typically used to present a virtual full-screen X session using the X window manager of your choice, or for remote XDMCP sessions.

• Multiwindow mode. -multiwindow

Each top-level X window appears in its own Windows window.

**Note:** This is typically used to work with local or remote X applications, integrated into your native Windows desktop.

• Rootless mode. -rootless

The X root window is hidden from view, but top-level X windows are drawn.

**Note:** This is typically used to work with local or remote X applications, integrated into your native Windows desktop, but controlled using the X window manager of your choice.

Because the X root window is hidden in this mode, this is not particulally useful with X window managers with which you need to interact with the root window (for example, clicking on the root window to get a menu listing programs you can launch) <sup>1</sup>, but is more useful with X window managers which show a dock or panel window for selecting applications from.

Also note that the X window manager has no knowledge of the stacking of Windows windows, and vice versa, so raising one X window above a Windows window raises all of the X windows, and raising one Windows window above an X window raises it above all of the X windows. Exactly as if all X windows were being drawn into a hidden Windows window:-)

### **Command line parameters**

Cygwin/X, by default, runs in windowed mode with the largest window that will fit on your Windows desktop, using the best performing engine that is installed on your system; you do not need to pass any parameters to **XWin.exe** to use the default behavior.

Up to date documentation of **XWin.exe** options can be read with **man XWin** (http://x.cygwin.com/docs/man1/XWin.1.html).

### XWinrc configuration file

With the .XWinrc configuration file it is possible to:

- · Add items and submenus into the menu opened by right-clicking on the notification area icon.
- In multiwindow mode: add items and submenus into the Windows window system menu (opened by clicking on the icon in the top-left of the Windows window frame) and override the window icon and window styles for Windows windows, by window name or window class name.

Full documentation of the **XWinrc** file format and command can be read with **man XWinrc** (http://x.cygwin.com/docs/man5/XWinrc.5.html).

#### **Notes**

1. Although this can be worked around, to some extent, by using a utility like **xroot** (http://www.sealiesoftware.com/xroot.c), which provides a clickable area of root window.

### Chapter 4. Using Cygwin/X

### Starting Cygwin/X

Described below are several methods of starting up the Cygwin/X X Server with a startup utility that optionally starts initial clients (for example, a terminal or a window manager) and performs X server configuration (for example, loading a keyboard modifier map).

### Starting Cygwin/X in multiwindow mode (startxwin)

Use the custom XWin startup utility startxwin

**startxwin** is included in the xinit package (installed by following the instructions in the Section called *Installing Cygwin/X* in Chapter 2), which starts the X server in multiwindow mode along with a single X terminal. Run **startxwin** by:

- using the "XWin Server" shortcut under "Cygwin-X" on the Start Menu
- · starting it from a MS-DOS shell
- Starting /usr/bin/startxwin in a Cygwin shell:
  - \$ startxwin
- double-clicking it in Windows Explorer

#### Full documentation for startxwin can be read with man startxwin

(http://x.cygwin.com/docs/man1/startxwin.1.html). Note that the special option -- is used to mark the end of client options and the beginning of server options, so, for example, if you wish to start the X server with the -noclipboard option, as described in the Section called *Command line parameters* in Chapter 3, use the following command:

```
$ startxwin -- -noclipboard
```

You may create a ~/.startxwinrc script to customize the client programs started, rather than a single xterm.

**Note:** The MS-DOS batch file startxwin.bat and bash shell script startxwin.sh previously used to start the X server are no longer provided. Implemented as a script made it difficult to reliably wait until the the X server had started before starting any clients. Use startxwin instead.

**Note:** If you want to have a Start Menu shortcut which runs **startxwin** with custom options, you should use a copy of the Start Menu shortcut installed by xinit, so that your changes are not overwritten when the xinit package is updated.

**Note: startxwin** is a specialized version of **startx** with a few differences appropriate to running in multiwindow mode, rather than windowed mode.

- startxwin supplies the -multiwindow option to XWin.exe
- It uses a different script to start clients (~/.startxwinrc rather than ~/.xinitrc), because
   ~/.xinitrc will normally end by starting a window manager, which would be incorrect for
   ~/.startxwinrc (as it would discover the internal window manager is already running and exit immediately).
- **startxwin** exits after ~/.startxwinrc has completed and leaves XWin.exe running, whereas **startx** waits until ~/.xinitrc exits (which is usually waiting for the window manager started by it to exit) and then kills XWin.exe.

### Starting Cygwin/X in windowed mode (startx)

Use the standard X Window System **startx** command with its attendant ~/.xinitrc configuration file. Run **startx** in a Cygwin shell:

```
$ startx
```

Full documentation for startx can be read with man startx

(http://www.x.org/releases/X11R7.5/doc/man/man1/startx.1.html). Note that the special option -- is used to mark the end of client options and the beginning of server options, so, for example, if you wish to start the X server with the -emulate3buttons option, as described in

the Section called *Command line parameters* in Chapter 3, use the following command:

```
$ startx -- -emulate3buttons
```

You may create a  $\sim$ /.xinitrc from the template in /etc/X11/xinit/xinitrc and then customize  $\sim$ /.xinitrc as required

```
$ cp /etc/X11/xinit/xinitrc ~/.xinitrc
[edit ~/.xinitrc as desired]
```

Alternatively, if you just want to start a single client program (perhaps a window manager), you don't need to use a ~/.xinitrc, and can start the client directly from **startx**, e.g.

```
$ startx /usr/bin/fvwm2
```

**Note:** The client name supplied to **startx** must begin with / or ., otherwise it is treated as options to the default **xterm** client.

### Other startup methods

Advanced users may wish to start the X server by invoking **X** directly, for example, to start XDMCP sessions.

### Switching out of Cygwin/X

Press **Alt-Tab** to switch from Cygwin/X to your Windows desktop or other running Windows applications.

### Stopping Cygwin/X

When you are done using Cygwin/X, press **Alt-F4** to shutdown the X Server; this is the default key combination to shutdown the X Server. The -[no]winkill and -[no]unixkill parameters can change the set of key combinations that will shutdown the X Server. Using the -unixkill allows the **Ctrl-Alt-Backspace** key combination to shutdown the X Server, in addition to the default **Alt-F4** key combination.

### Window managers

A window manager is required in order to decorate, move, resize, and perform other operations on individual X windows.

Cygwin/X works with window managers in a couple of different ways:

- Internal window manager for multiwindow mode. The internal window manager that creates a
  Windows window for each top-level X window is automatically started when using the
   -multiwindow command-line parameter to XWin.exe. See
   the Section called Command line parameters in Chapter 3 for more information on the
   -multiwindow command-line parameter.
- External local window managers (e.g. twm, mwm (part of the lesstif package)). These local window
  managers must be installed on Cygwin; they are run locally and cannot be used together with the
  internal window manager.
- Remote window managers via an XDMCP session, which you can read more about in the Section called *Remote sessions via XDMCP*.
- Remote window manager launched through an **ssh** tunnel. This is not Cygwin/X-specific, so you should be able to find information about launching remote window managers from other sources. See the Section called *Secure ssh* for more information on using **ssh**.

### **Windows Clipboard integration**

The X Window System, and thus Cygwin/X, uses its own internal clipboard system that is distinct from the clipboard system used by Windows. Copying and pasting text between these two clipboard systems requires a clipboard integration program that watches for updates to either clipboard and copies data between them when either one is updated.

Cygwin/X has an internal clipboard integration system that is invoked via the -clipboard command-line parameter. See the Section called *Command line parameters* in Chapter 3 for more information on the -clipboard command-line parameter.

### **Shared memory support**

Shared memory support is needed by the MIT-SHM and XFree86-BigFont extensions.

Shared memory is provided by the **cygserver** Windows service.

To install cygserver run the **cygserver-config** script. It will install the service.

Note: for Cygwin 1.5 only

XWin.exe will not use shared memory if the CYGWIN environment variable does not contain the server keyword. Starting **XWin.exe** with

CYGWIN=server XWin.exe

will enable shared memory support if the cygserver service is running.

#### Remote sessions via XDMCP

Cygwin/X can be used login to one or several remote sessions using XDMCP (X Display Manager Control Protocol).

Start Cygwin/X with a command similar to the following to login to a single remote session using XDMCP:

```
XWin.exe -query remote_hostname_or_ip_address
```

You may login to several remote sessions with a single or multiple hosts using XDMCP. Each session will need a seperate display number, specified by the <code>:display\_number</code> parameter, such as <code>:0</code>. A display number is not the same as a screen number, as a single display can have multiple screens associated with it. Each display listens on a different network port number, so each display can connect to multiple machines. Start Cygwin/X with command lines similar to the following to login to several remote sessions using XDMCP:

```
XWin.exe :0 -query remote_hostname_or_ip_address_0
XWin.exe :1 -query remote_hostname_or_ip_address_1
```

Note that the <code>:display\_number</code> parameter is a general X Server parameter, not specific to Cygwin/X. Further documentation of the <code>:display\_number</code> parameter can be found in the X Server manual page (http://www.x.org/archive/X11R6.8.1/doc/Xserver.1.html). XDMCP is a complex system that is not specific to Cygwin/X; further discussion of XDMCP is beyond the scope of this document. You may wish to read the Linux XDMCP HOWTO (http://en.tldp.org/HOWTO/XDMCP-HOWTO/) or the X Server XDMCP Options (http://www.x.org/archive/X11R6.8.1/doc/Xserver.1.html#toc6) for more information.

### **Displaying remote clients**

Displaying remote X clients with Cygwin/X is nearly identical to displaying remote X clients with any other X Server. You may use the secure **ssh** method, or the insecure **telnet** method (not recommended).

#### Secure ssh

On your Windows machine:

- 1. Make sure you have the openssh package installed.
- 2. Launch Cygwin/X
- 3. Run the following in an X terminal:

```
$ ssh -Y username@remote_hostname_or_ip_address
```

- 4. Enter your password when prompted by ssh.
- 5. Your **ssh** session should now show you a shell prompt for your remote machine.
- 6. You can now launch remote X clients in your **ssh** session, for example, **xterm&** will launch an xterm running on your remote host that will display on your Cygwin/X screen.
- 7. Launch other remote clients in the same manner. I recommend starting the remote clients in the background, by appending & to the command name, so that you don't have to open several **ssh** sessions.

#### Insecure telnet

On your Windows machine:

- 1. Make sure you have the inetutils package installed.
- 2. Launch Cygwin/X
- 3. In an X terminal type /usr/bin/xhost remote\_hostname\_or\_ip\_address
- 4. In an X terminal type /usr/bin/telnet remote\_hostname\_or\_ip\_address. Use the explicit path to ensure that Cygwin's **telnet** is run instead of Microsoft's **telnet**; Microsoft's **telnet** will crash on startup when run from Cygwin/X.
- 5. Login to your remote machine via your **telnet** session

- 6. In your telnet session type, DISPLAY=windows\_hostname\_or\_ip\_address:0.0
- 7. In your **telnet** session type, **export DISPLAY**
- 8. You can now launch remote X clients in your **telnet** session, for example, **xterm&** will launch an xterm running on your remote host that will display on your Cygwin/X screen.
- 9. Launch other remote clients in the same manner; I recommend starting the remote clients in the background, by appending & to the command name, so that you don't have to open several **telnet** sessions.

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