101Cats Quick Start Guide

101Cats is a complex application with many functions and evolves rapidly at times. This document is intended to help the user get a copy installed rapidly and working with a minimum of pain – it does not attempt to be an exhaustive user guide. There is a Wiki maintained on the GitHub repository which attempts to cover many of the more complex aspects of the application. It is accessible through a link on the 101Cats home page : www.101cats.co.uk. Please remember that 101Cats is distributed free of charge and nobody is paid anything for its development – if you find it useful, please consider contributing to the development effort to whatever extent you can. If you have any programming skills, consider joining the development team. If you can write, consider adding to or improving the documentation.
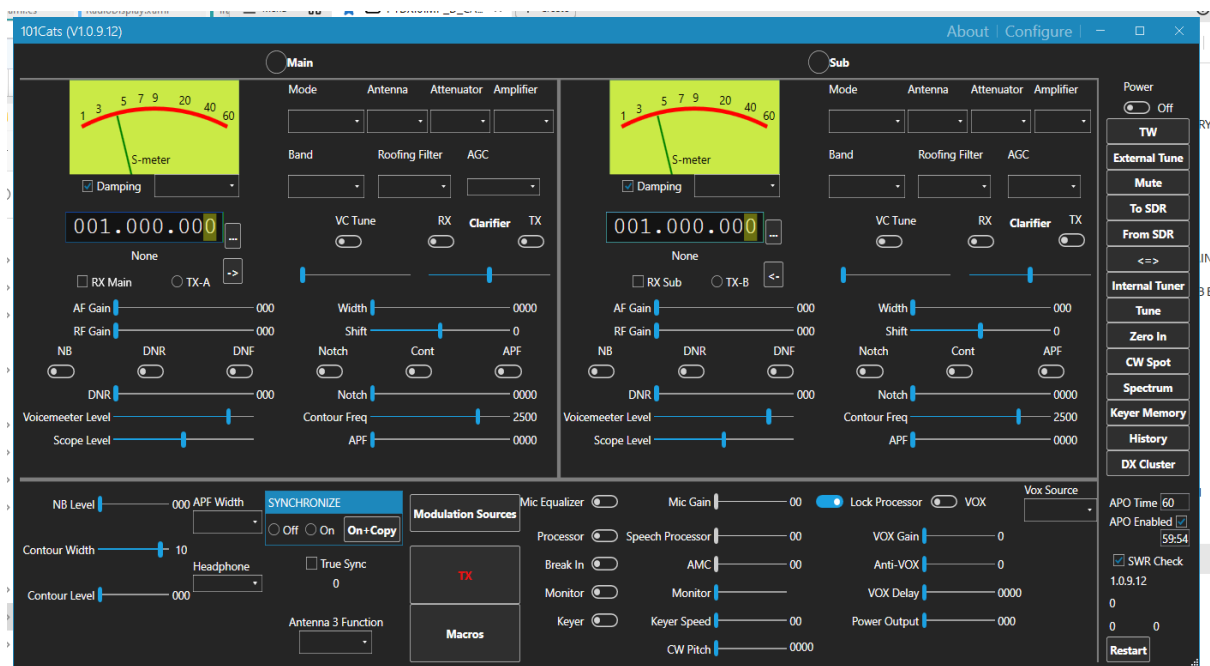
Installation

101Cats is distributed via its home page at www.101cats.co.uk. That will normally contain a link to the installation package – currently packed into a zip file with a name of the form "setup Vn.n.n.n.zip" where "n.n.n.n" is the version number. There will usually be a link to a list of one or more earlier releases just in case I've introduced a serious bug and you want to backstep. Download the zip file and extract its contents to a temporary directory. You should see two files – "setup.exe" and "setup2.msi" – run setup.exe. At this point, you may be presented with a security warning from Windows or whatever other virus protection software you use. I'm careful to avoid viruses on my development systems and have Norton Anti-virus installed and regularly updated, so I'm pretty confident that the executables are clean, but 101Cats has a small number of users and new versions are often released quite frequently – this has the effect of making anti-virus scanners suspicious because the program does not have time to build up a reputation. Unfortunately, there is nothing I can do to counter this – you must take whatever steps you think are necessary to satisfy yourself that it is safe to run.

By default, 101Cats installs into the standard Windows applications directory – usually "C:\Program Files". There is no particular reason to move it – it does not put any files that are updated in normal use in its installation directory. Equally, there is no reason why you can't install it elsewhere. Apart from the installation directory, there are no other configurable installation options, so you can just let it through. When you execute it for the first time, it creates a couple of other directories that contain configuration files. These are two xml files under your %Appdata% directory (typically "C:\Users\{User}\AppData\Roaming\G8FXC\101Cats" and a directory within your documents directory (Documents\G8FXC\101Cats). The primary configuration file is "%AppData%\Roaming\G8FXC\101Cats\config.xml" – we'll discuss that in a bit more detail below.
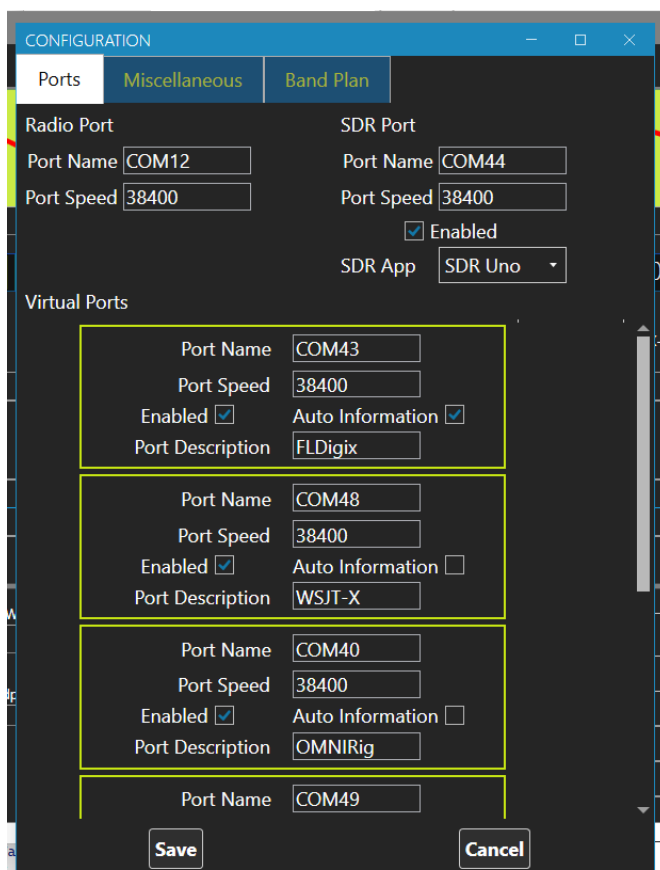
At this point, you should have a working basic installation of 101Cats and we can proceed to the initial configuration. The power of 101Cats comes from its ability to serve as an integration hub for multiple other applications and hardware – this will require further installations and configuration, but is beyond the scope of this document.

Initial Configuration

If the installation has completed successfully, you should have gained a program group "G8FXC" in your Start Menu and that should contain an entry for "101Cats". Select this and you should be presented with the following window :

Before you can run it, you need to do some basic configuration. Click the "Configure" link in the title bar towards the right hand side and you should be presented with this dialogue box:
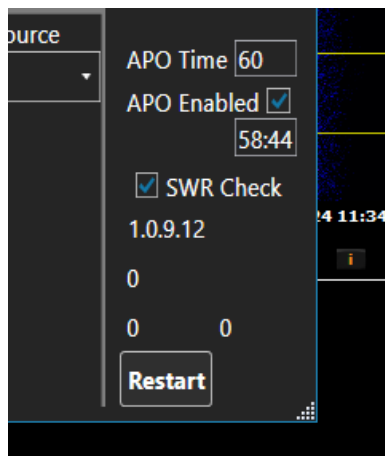

You'll need to fill in the Port Name and Port Speed for the Radio Port at the top left of the dialogue box. These are the name of the "Enhanced COM Port" created when you installed the Yaesu device drivers and the speed that is configured into the radio for that port. It's worth checking that the "SDR

Port" is disabled at this stage and all the "Virtual Ports" are also disabled. If I've built the installation image correctly, that will be the default setting, but sometimes I get it wrong!

After you make any change to the configuration, you must save it with the button at the bottom of the configuration window and restart 101Cats – it only reads the configuration file once as it is loading. You can simply close and reopen the application to do this, but for your convenience there is a "Restart" button in the lower right corner of the main window.

Having configured the Radio Port and restarted the 101Cats application, apply power to the radio and click the "Power" button in the top-right corner of the 101Cats window. Note that this is necessary even if the radio is already turned on – it instructs 101Cats to both turn the radio on and to initiate the connection, if the radio is already turned on, this step will be ignored. 101Cats will take a second or two to get up and running – the power-up sequence of the radio takes more than a second and 101Cats then needs to exchange a lot of information with the radio. There are three status digits in the lower right corner of the main window – all zero in this screen grab:

These show the lengths of three internal queues – they will be zero during normal operation, but will increase briefly during the startup process.

Assuming that everything is connected and configured properly, your radio should turn on, the S-meters of 101Cats should begin to register band activity and the various sliders and other controls should be set to match the settings of the knobs and switches on the FTdx101 front panel. You should be able to tune the radio by hovering the mouse pointer over one of the two frequency displays and rotating the mouse wheel and you should be able to adjust the other radio settings with the various sliders and buttons on the 101Cats main screen.

Clearly, there are many more options and functions in 101Cats, but this should be enough to get you running. Further notes and documents are available on the Wiki and may be added to this document later.