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Chapter 7: Using the command-line connection tool Plink

Plink (PuTTY Link) is a command-line connection tool similar to UNIX `ssh`. It is mostly used for automated operations, such as making CVS access a repository on a remote server.

Plink is probably not what you want if you want to run an interactive session in a console window.

7.1 Starting Plink

Plink is a command line application. This means that you cannot just double-click on its icon to run it and instead you have to bring up a console window. In Windows 95, 98, and ME, this is called an 'MS-DOS Prompt', and in Windows NT, 2000, and XP, it is called a 'Command Prompt'. It should be available from the Programs section of your Start Menu.

In order to use Plink, the file `plink.exe` will need either to be on your `PATH` or in your current directory. To add the directory containing Plink to your `PATH` environment variable, type into the console window:

```
set PATH=C:\path\to\putty\directory;%PATH%
```

This will only work for the lifetime of that particular console window. To set your `PATH` more permanently on Windows NT, 2000, and XP, use the Environment tab of the System Control Panel. On Windows 95, 98, and ME, you will need to edit your `AUTOEXEC.BAT` to include a `set` command like the one above.

7.2 Using Plink

This section describes the basics of how to use Plink for interactive logins and for automated processes.

Once you've got a console window to type into, you can just type `plink` on its own to bring up a usage message. This tells you the version of Plink you're using, and gives you a brief summary of how to use Plink:

```
Z:\sysosd>plink
PuTTY Link: command-line connection utility
Release 0.60
Usage: plink [options] [user@]host [command]
        ("host" can also be a PuTTY saved session name)
Options:
  -V          print version information and exit
  -pgpfpr    print PGP key fingerprints and exit
  -v          show verbose messages
```


