



WINLINK P2P

PEER
TO
PEER

Created for the July 2025 LWRA QRP/Tailgate Tech

TAILGATE TECH

What is Winlink P2P?

Winlink P2P (aka Peer to Peer) allows two amateur radio stations to connect directly to each other without using an intermediate server or internet gateway. This direct connection enables the exchange of email messages and files over radio frequencies, typically using packet radio or VARA FM modes.

Definition aside, how is it different from how I do Winlink today?

If you have been using Winlink locally through our local WC4PEM-5 RMS (Radio Message Server), you're used to using the Winlink software to generate your messages, post them to your outbox, opening a Packet Winlink session, and transferring your file directly to the WC4PEM-5 RMS.

Using this system on a regular basis and participating in the Message Monday Winlink sessions with Polk ARES will keep you in good practice in case an emergency need arises.

However, what will you do in a situation that our local RMS is not available? Just as we practice for repeater outages and shift into a simplex plan we may have to do the same when it comes to Winlink and that is where Winlink P2P comes in.

No, it's not a different program and in fact is quite easy to do. There are just **two things** you have to do when using the Winlink program.

The first comes into play when you are composing your outbound message. You still click on Message, select New Message, and compose your message as usual. However, **before** doing a "Post to Outbox," be sure to use the pull-down window next to "**Send as:**" and select "**Peer-to-Peer Message.**" Once that is done, you can Post to Outbox as you are used to doing and it will remain there until you connect to the station you will have a Winlink P2P session with.

Your second change from doing Winlink with an RMS server is the session open when you are ready to send your message(s). When you do an "**Open Session,**" you will choose "**Packet P2P**" as opposed to the "Packet Winlink" you are used to using.

After making your session choice of Packet P2P, a dialog box will open similar to that of the Packet Winlink Session dialog box you are used to seeing. In the Packet Peer-to-Peer session dialog box you may have WC4PEM-5 in the station to direct connect to. Simply change this to the station callsign you are trying to connect to directly, be sure your radio is on the frequency you have chosen with the other station. Be sure that the person you are going to make the connection with is online and also on the same frequency. Once you've done this, you're ready to connect by pressing **Start** at the top of the dialog box.

Tips for Winlink P2P

- Like simplex, you will need to be close enough to the other station to make the connection.
- If you're not close enough, you can use other stations as digipeaters to "hop through" to make your connection. This is why packet operations are on the same frequency so other stations can also be used even if they're not being connected to.
- To use another station as a digipeater to hop through, change the Connection Type box from Direct to Digipeater. Then, simply plug the station(s) callsigns in the boxes to the right of the Via after the callsign you are connecting to.
- You can use the Bartow WC4PEM-5 as a digipeater if you can't make a direct connection with the station you want to practice P2P messages with.
- There is a great video on YouTube from AG6AG titled "Using Packet P2P for EMCOMM. It's a good, concise video on the entire process and can be viewed at <https://tinyurl.com/winlinkp2p>