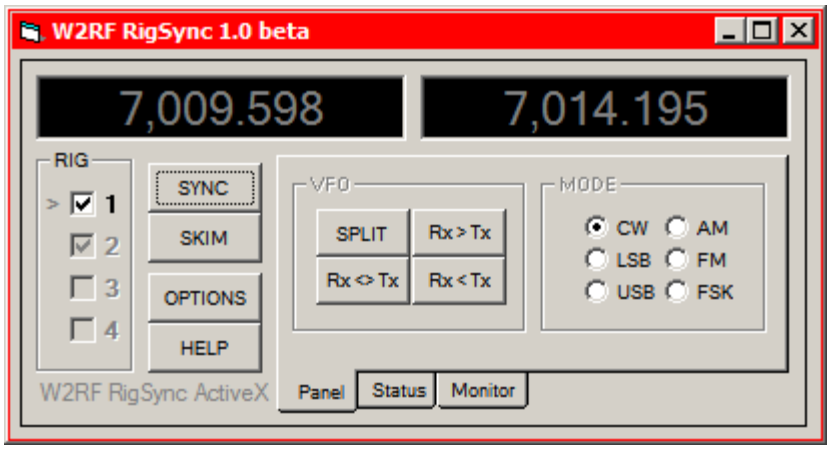
QuickStart Guide to Using RigSync with CW Skimmer

RigSync is a freeware application written by Ed Russell, W2RF, to facilitate interoperation between CW Skimmer and station transceivers. He felt (and I agree) that the most effective way to use Skimmer is with a separate SDR, but if you do that, there's no way to click on a station on the Skimmer bandmap and move your radio there. RigSync fills that gap.

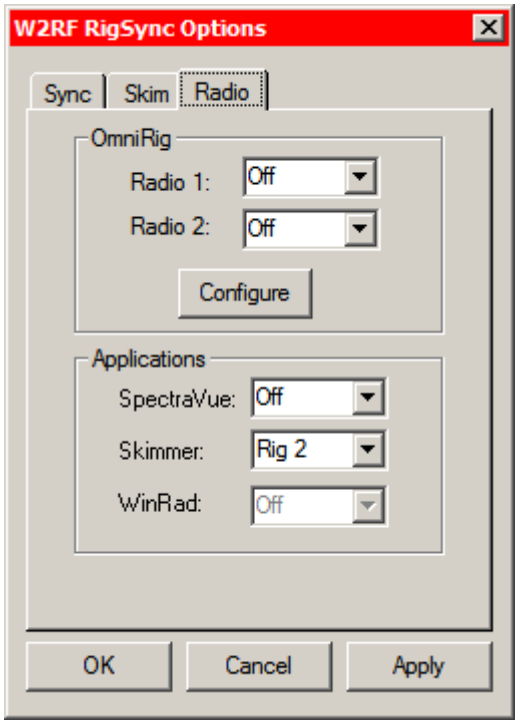
This is RigSync in its startup condition.



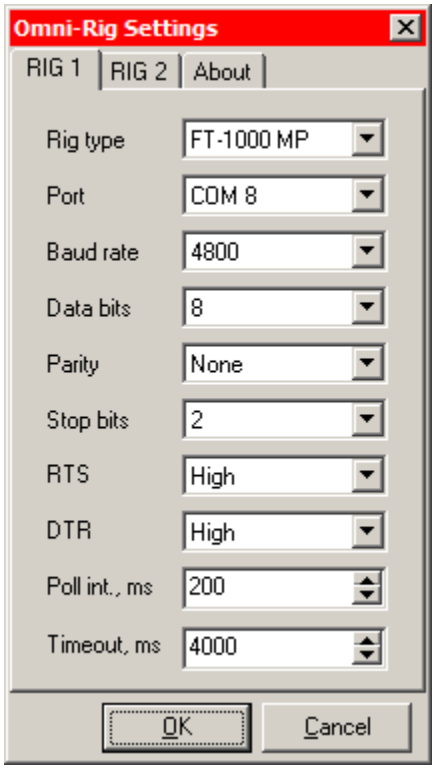
Before we go any farther, let me clarify one point. When Ed uses the term "Rig", he is referring either to a traditional transceiver or to a software application controlling an SDR. When he says "Radio", he means a traditional transceiver.

Now that we have that clear … ahem … let's turn to setting up RigSync for your station. I'm assuming that you have one transceiver and CW Skimmer controlling an SDR, providing spots for you via Telnet.

Click the Options button, and let's go first to the Radio tab.



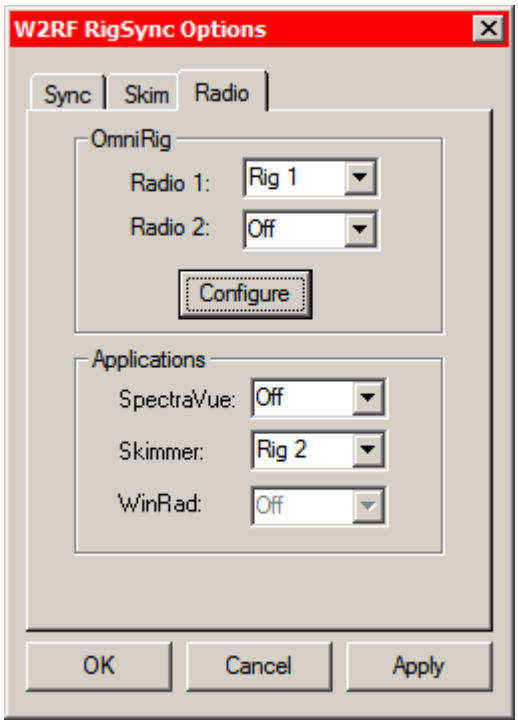
Click the down arrow for the dropdown list, and select Rig 1. Now Click Configure. The Rig 1 tab will be on top. Run down through the various rig choices and select yours.



This screen will be familiar if you have used OmniRig. Note that because Ed has used VE3NEA's whole rig control engine, there are some terminology problems – on this screen, and this screen only, "rig" means "transceiver".

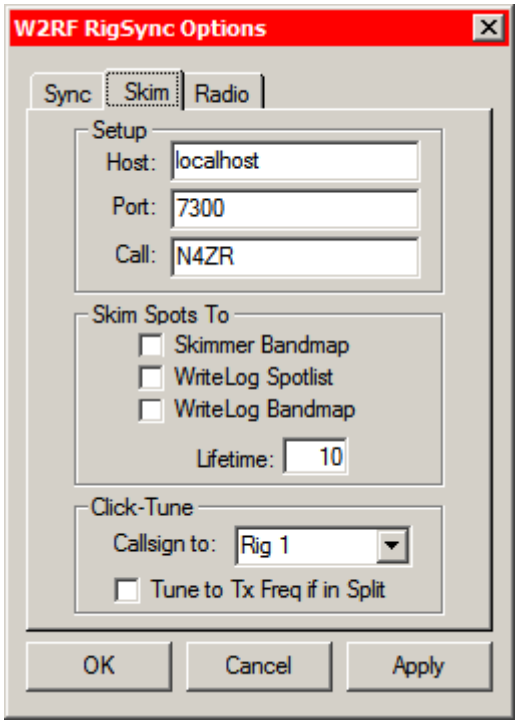
Anyway, your first task is to find your radio, and then check the suggested communication parameters to make sure they fit your understanding of what your radio needs. Generally they do – OmniRig is pretty well debugged.

Set your radio up as Radio 1 and then OK out of the "configure" dialog.



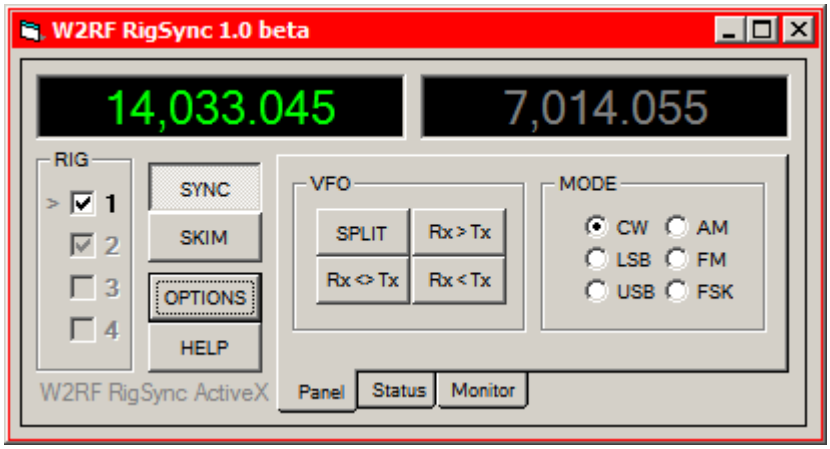
Assuming you're going to run CW Skimmer with RigSync and a single radio, define Skimmer as Rig 2. The only other software program RigSync works with currently is SpectraVue; the interface to WinRad is a future project.

Now click on the Skim tab.

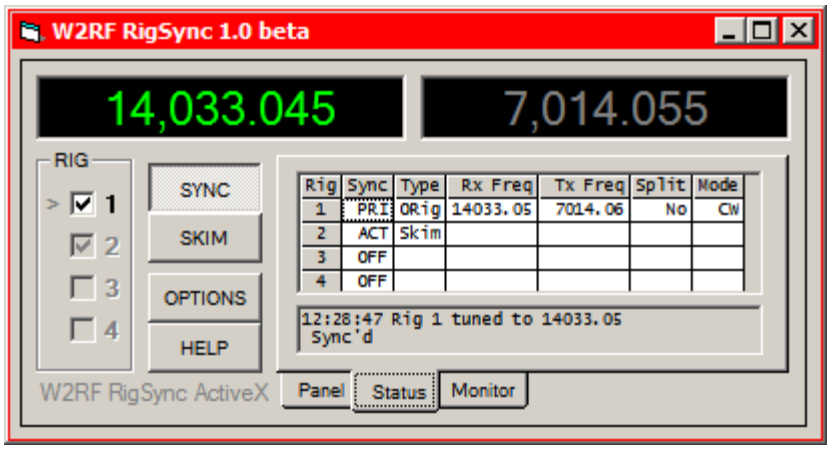


These are the default settings. For someone just getting started, I'd leave them all alone, except to insert your own call, of course.

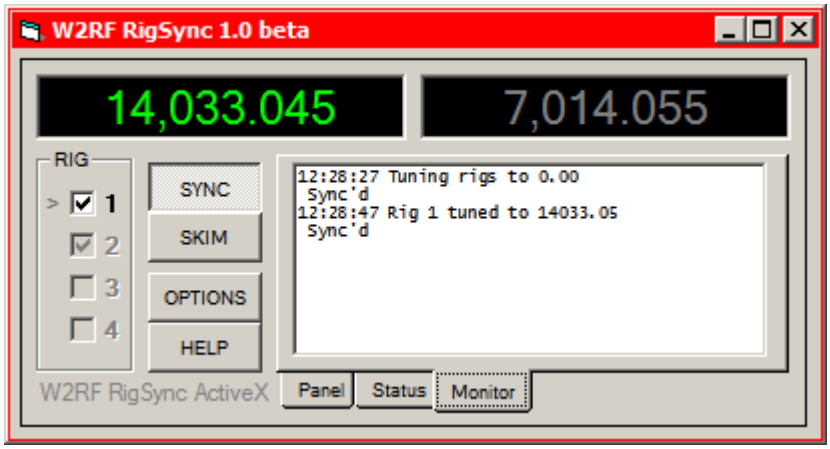
Now you're ready to go. Get back to the main panel and click the Sync button.



You'll see that RigSync has picked up your VFO A and VFO B frequencies from your radio. Click the Status tab, and you get more confirmation of that fact.

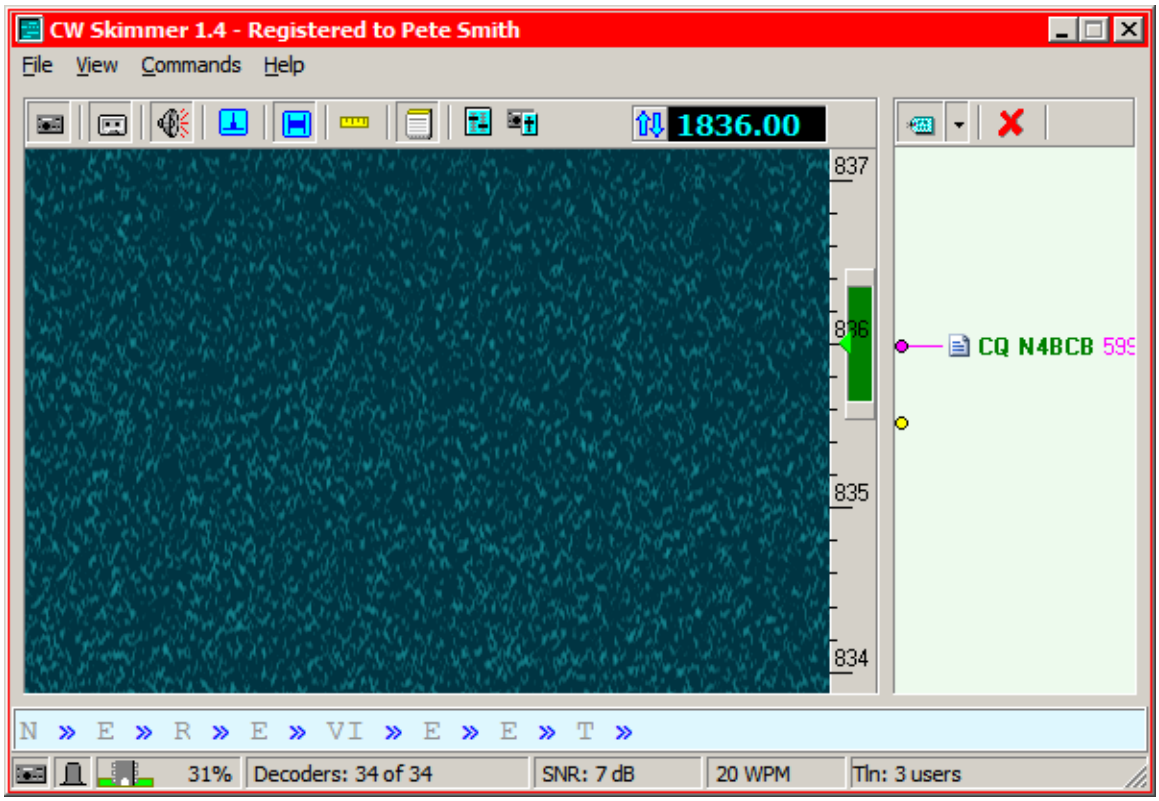


Now finally, click the Monitor tab, and you'll see things happen in real time.

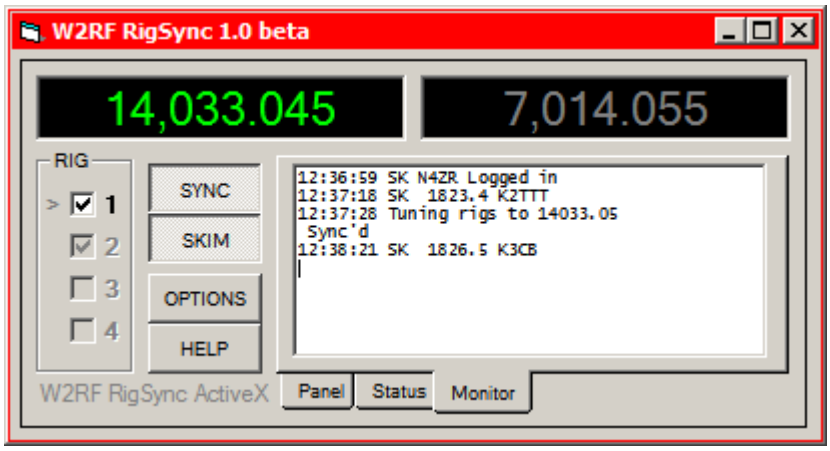


The light background of Rig 1 tells you that it's active Typically you'll probably want to stay in the Panel view, so the changes in the Rig list give you a quick reminder of what is going on.

Now let's get Skimmer started. Because of the way that RigSync communicates with Skimmer, you must start Skimmer first, and then start RigSync. Ready?

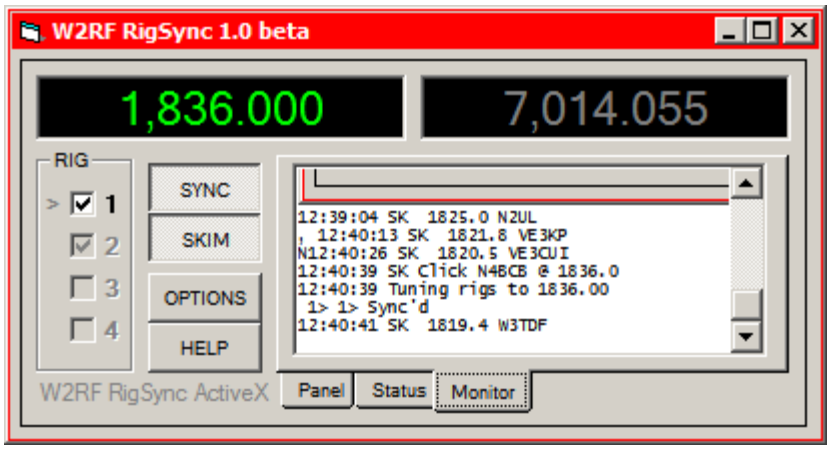


This is Skimmer at mid-day during the CQWW160 contest – boring, right? So now re-start RigSync, click on both Sync and Skim, and here we are.



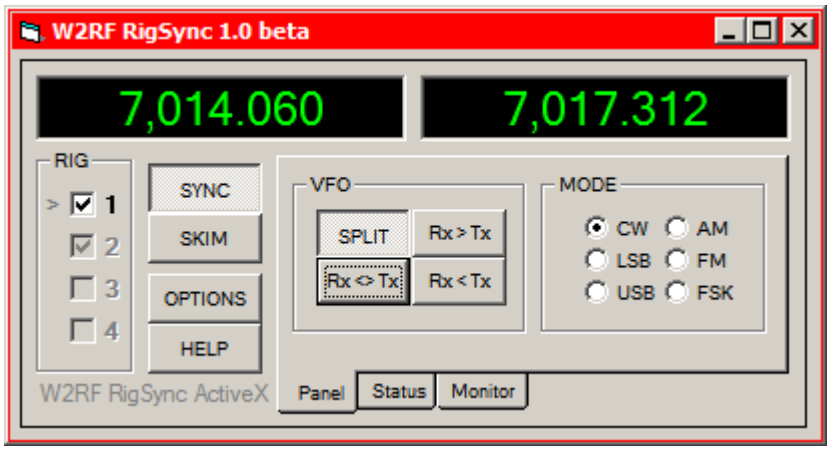
Now suppose you want to tune your radio quickly to one of the stations spotted by Skimmer, like N4BCB, Just click on the callsign on the Skimmer bandmap, and shazam – RigSync tunes your radio to the right band and mode.

Here's how it looks on the monitor tab.



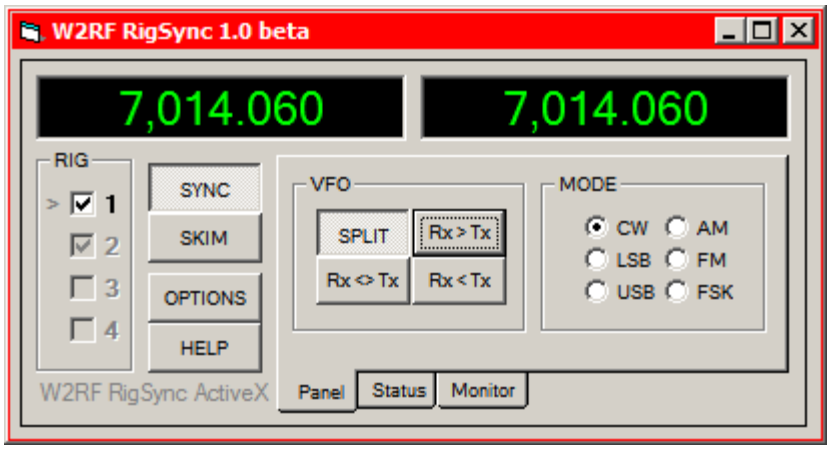
That's pretty much the basics. Now let's look quickly at some of the additional features.

In the Panel view again, with Sync on, if you click the Split button your transceiver will go into Split mode. Unclick it and you're back in one-VFO mode.

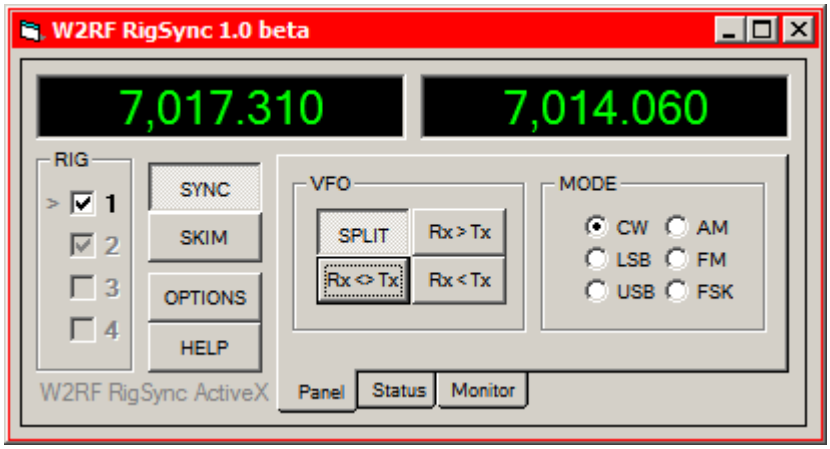


Do the same on the transceiver's front panel and you'll see the button go on and off on the RigSync panel. Everything works this way, to keep your transceiver and RigSync in sync. Try it with the mode buttons. Cute, huh?

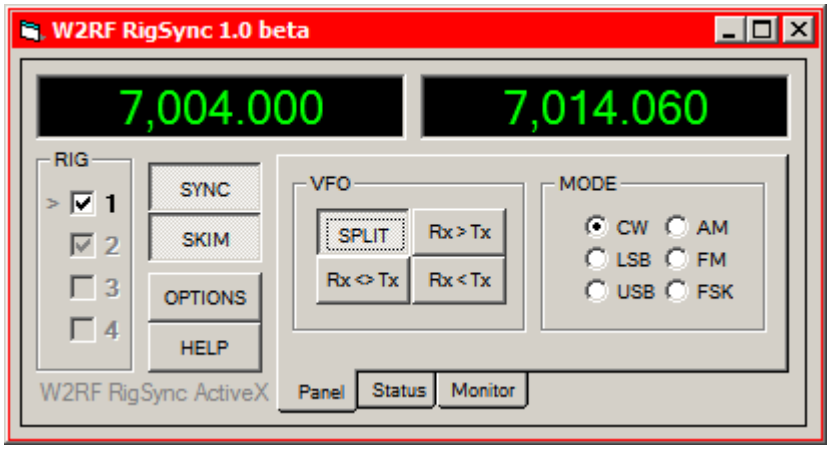
Click the RX>TX button and it makes your Transceiver's TX frequency the same as your RX frequency.



Click the RX<TX button and the transceiver's RX frequency will become the same as the TX frequency. Finally, click the RX<>TX button and the two frequencies are swapped.



Now let's get a little fancier. Start CW Skimmer, and then click RigSync's Skim button. Now click on a callsign, or just on a frequency in the waterfall. RigSync moves your RX VFO to the frequency you clicked on, but leaves your TX VFO where it was set.



Of course, if the Split button wasn't pressed then only the RX VFO would be active (for both transmit and receive),

Finally, here's an exotic option for SO2R ops, just to give you some sense of the flexibility available.