

Grid Calculator, Version 1.2

By K2SMN

This program was originally written in 1997 as a quick way to determine the beam heading from my grid to another station. I added the distance in both miles and kilometers. It was small, and useful. Then, when some ham friends came to visit and saw it, they wanted one too. I added a few more features, and made it available to whoever wanted it from my DXCC.COM website. It did have a few quirks. You had to press "Calculate" to get it to show the results. Also, if you re-sized your desktop, it sometimes got confused as to its size and position (which is retained for the user's convenience). It was time to re-visit this utility and make some improvements.

What's Different in this Version

You can now enter another destination Grid Square, and it will re-calculate when you hit the "Enter" key. Much better! Also, if you don't know your 6 digit grid square, I have included (under "HELP") a conversion utility to convert from Latitude & Longitude to the 6 digit grid locator value. This way, when someone asks you what their 6-digit grid square is, you can quickly tell them (assuming they know their position on the planet in degrees). I have also attempted to fix the re-sizing problem, which, under some circumstances, would cause the program to crash. It was non-fatal, but you couldn't run the program. If this has happened to you with the earlier version, it won't happen with this one (I think). By the way, the fix was to clear out the position values in the WIN.INI file under the DXCC entry.

The original version was written using Visual Basic, Version 3. This new one is using Visual Basic V5. Note that the full version has gone from a 2.4 meg to a 4.3 meg download! I am still profoundly moved by how well Microsoft can bloat their software. Things we used to do with 16 K (kilobytes) now take 9 megabytes to accomplish. When Microsoft talked about "If cars advanced like computers..." they failed to mention that those cars would be the size of aircraft carriers. If you are already using my original Grid program, you might try and just download the new executable file first. I have named it "Grid2.exe". You will then have to modify your shortcut to point to the new name. It will probably work. If not, get the complete install package.

If you are new to this utility, download the full install. After you install it, create a shortcut and stick it on your desktop. The first time you run it, it will ask for your call letters and 6-digit Grid Square. You can enter just the first four, then use the new utility to determine the correct 6-digit value. If you enter just four digits, it defaults to the "mm" value, which is the center of the 4-digit grid. You can position the utility to a convenient place, and even re-size it to fit. When you exit, it will save your current size value and positions value, and use them the next time you run it. If you have any questions or suggestions, feel free to email me at K2SMN@dxcc.com and I'll be glad to help.

So, try this new version of the utility. I think you will find it is a handy tool. I've been using it a lot lately with the fantastic conditions we've been having on 6 meters!

Roger, K2SMN