

Transferring files with USB cables

April 5th, 2010, 7:09 pm · [Post a Comment](#) · posted by [Ed Schwartz, NOCCC](#)



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QUESTION: I have an IBM ThinkPad T41p (aka – Type 2373, Model 315) and will hopefully soon be getting a T60 as a replacement. The question is this – how can I move files (and if possible, installed applications) from the T41p to the T60? I have had it suggested to me that 'just' connecting a USB cable between the two machine as a kind of hardwired 2-node network would allow me to see the hard drive on the T41p from the T60 and then move or copy files, etc. It sounds too good to be that simple. Please help me understand what I actually need to do.

PC CLUB: You're correct, it is too good to be true that simply connecting an "ordinary" USB cable can't be used to transfer files from one PC to another. However, there are other types or "special" USB cables that will do the job quite well. Unfortunately, installed applications cannot be copied from one PC to another. You will have to reinstall these applications using the original CDs, DVDs or by downloading the software from the Internet.

As far as cables go, there are several different types of USB-USB cables on the market. The one used to connect two PCs is called a "bridged" "USB networking" cable, because it has a small electronic circuit in the middle allowing the two PCs to talk to each other.



There also are the so-called A/A or Male to Male USB cables that, in spite of having two standard male USB connectors at each end, don't have a bridge chip and cannot be used to connect two PCs. So, these A/A USB cables are completely useless for your needs.



DataPro

A/B or Male to Female USB cables are used to connect your computer to peripherals such as printers and scanners, so they also won't fit your needs.

Suppliers of the A/B type which will do what you need, include the Targus High Speed Transfer Cable available at Amazon.com for \$30 (see <http://bit.ly/targususb>) and the Startech cable also available at Amazon.com for \$19 (see <http://bit.ly/usbstartech>). Laplink and Belkin also supply these cables.



Many of these devices do not require any software installation in that the software is contained within the cable itself. Here what Targus states:

“The Targus High Speed File Share Cable is the premier file and data sharing solution for PC and Mac users. With Easy Suite software embedded inside of the cable there are no drivers or software to install, making it a quick and easy way to transfer large amounts of data. Transfer e-mail, music, photos, videos and document files from one computer to another, at speeds up to 480 Mbps. Compatible with Windows XP and Vista, as well as Mac operating systems, the High Speed File Share Cable is ideal for those transferring important files to a new computer and also allows you to quickly transfer music or video files to a friend’s computer. Whether transferring from PC to PC, Mac to Mac, Mac to PC, or PC to Mac, the High-Speed File Transfer Cable is compatible and provides a direct computer-to-computer file transfer to save time. It is excellent for those who often share files with friends or transfer data between two computers.”

Even though Windows 7 is not explicitly mentioned, the cable will work under the new operating system. I connected a Windows XP PC to a Windows 7 PC and it worked flawlessly.

The Belkin and Targus cables use different approaches. With the Belkin cable, you must install software in order to use it with Window XP or Vista. Windows 7 will recognize the cable without installing the software. If you have an older Belkin cable and misplaced the software you can download it from <http://bit.ly/easytransfer>. The Targus cable, as stated above, has the software embedded in the device. I personally prefer the Targus approach. Staples and Office Depot frequently carry these products in their retail stores from \$27 to \$39. You can call them or check on line before going to the store. ~Ed Schwartz, NOCCC member. View his Web site at www.edwardns.com.