

Artsoft Helpdesk

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Imported User 6 - 2019-04-29 - in FAQ's

As the popularity of CNC machining has steadily increased the market has been supplied many desktop CNC machines from overseas. Many of these machines are being shipped with a pirated version of Mach3 on a writable CD. These pirated/cracked versions are not supported, and frankly do not work. There are large sections of the code that is missing and many users have unexplainable issues that trace back to a pirated version. Both Artsoft and the end users are victims in this situation. However, we can assist you in getting your machine running but only with a legitimate version of Mach3 or Mach4 software. If you are just getting started with CNC now would be the perfect time to try out Mach4 and learn it rather than Mach3 which is no longer being developed. All of our developers are working on Mach4 and there is no better time to learn the software than when you get started.

The machines that are shipped with the parallel port can be easily set up to be controlled by either Mach3 or Mach4 with the purchase of an external motion controller (preferred method) or they can be run with a 32bit PC that has a parallel port as long as it is not an OS higher than Windows 7. Microsoft broke the printer port on operating systems higher than Windows 7 so it can NOT be made to work on those OSs. Examples of these direct plugin motion controllers for Mach3 are the UC100 and the Pokeys 57CNCDB25. For Mach4 the Pokeys or the PMDX SmartBOB 411. These are not a standard USB to parallel port adapter. They have an on board processor that makes it an external motion controller. The adapter cables will NOT work at all. The steps per and port/pin configuration information that comes with these machines will allow the user to get the legitimate software configured for their machine and allow them to start running right away.

Any machine connected to the PC via a parallel port will require the use of a 32bit version of Windows 7 through Windows XP operating system and a breakout board (BOB).

-For machines that come with the USB connection you would need to purchase a Mach3 or Mach4 compatible external motion controller (preferred method).

Some examples of these external motion controllers are:

Mach3

-The ESS from Warp 9 technologies

-The UC300 from CNC drive

-The Pokeys 57CNC from PoLabs

-The Hicon and DSPMC from Vital systems

-The CSMIO from CS Labs

-Galil motion controllers

-There are many more but I would avoid the very low cost unsupported external motion controllers from overseas. Users have reported that while some will work the lack of support coupled with the low quality creates more problems than they are worth.

Mach4

-The ESS from Warp 9 technologies

-The PMDX SmartBOBs

-The Pokeys 57CNC from PoLabs

-The Hicon and DSPMC from Vital Systems

-The CSMIO from CS Labs

-Galil (coming soon)

Some of these motion controllers can be panel mounted and all the wires landed onto the board while others would be used in conjunction with a breakout board (BOB) to land the wires and a ribbon cable is used to connect the BOB to the motion controller. You will have to do your own research to determine which external motion controller is within your budget and supports the features your demands require.

<http://www.machsupport.com/software/>