

wsjt-x_improved for Digital Modes, Part 1

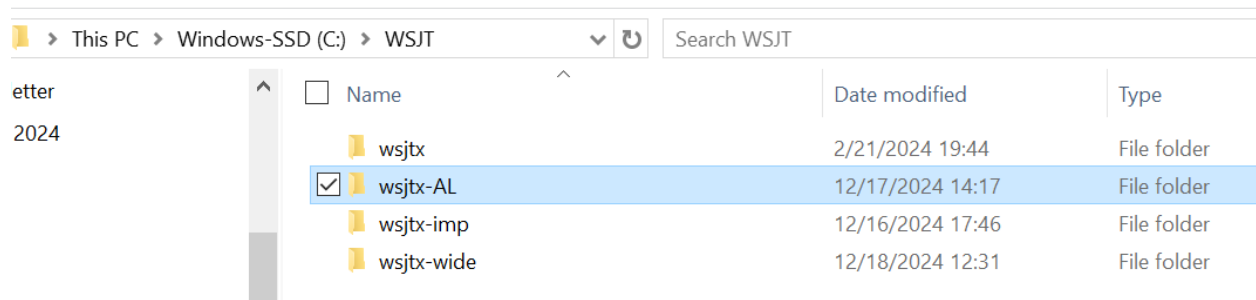
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For this article, I assume that the reader is familiar with the features of standard wsjt-x software (by Joe Taylor, et al version). This month and next, I will highlight what I think are some of the most useful features of wsjt-x_improved. DG2YCB created [wsjt-x_improved](#) and is now part of the wsjt-x development team. He wrote the new version to add some user-friendly features and to improve the user interface. The above link is to the SourceForge site which provides a description, features list, screenshots and download links for the various versions of wsjt-x_improved.

Versions are available for Windows 32-bit and 64-bit, macOS, Raspberry Pi and Linux. For Windows there are three sub-versions: "PLUS" which has a typical wsjt-x window look and feel, "AL", or alternate layout, designed for smaller device screens, and "widescreen" with a longer receive window.

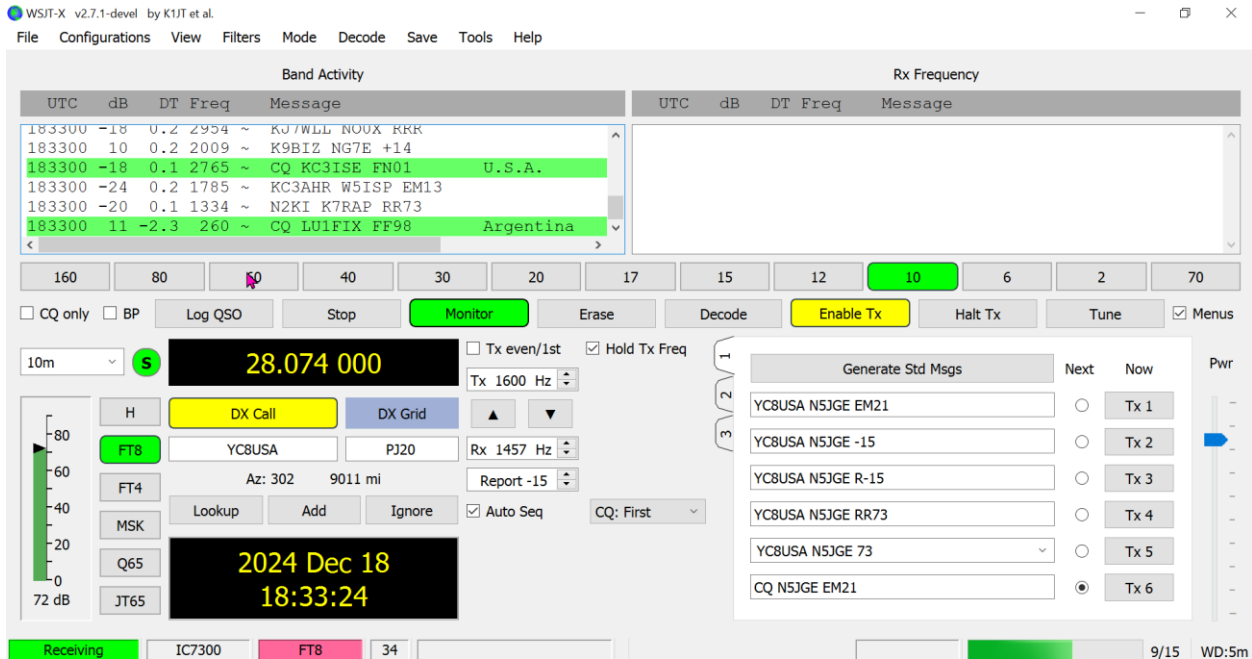
For those who like to learn by watching, [K8MRD](#) and [LB4FH](#) have good Youtube videos that demonstrate many of the features of wsjt-x_improved.

The first thing to be aware of is that wsjt-x_improved will install itself "over top" of your existing wsjt-x installation. This means that if you change your mind, you will have to reinstall regular wsjt-x. To avoid this, I installed the "PLUS" version into a new subfolder, that I named "wsjt-imp". I also installed the "AL" and "widescreen" versions in new subfolders "wsjt-AL" and "wsjt-wide", respectively (see below).

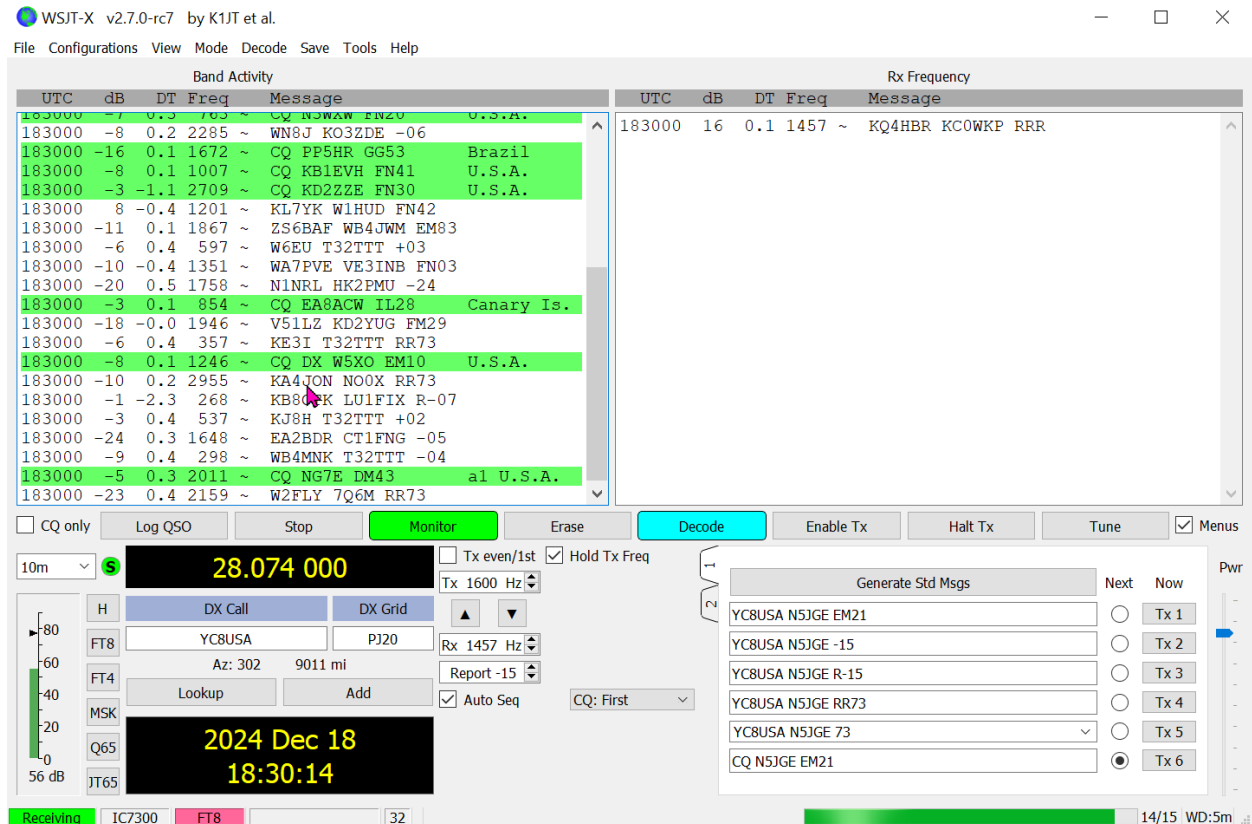


The second thing to be aware is that all of the wsjt-x_improved versions automatically use all of your existing wsjt-x settings and radio configurations. This saves a great deal of work to re-create those for each version.

The next two screenshots show the user interfaces of wsjt-x and wsjt-x_improved.



Standard wsjt-x user interface



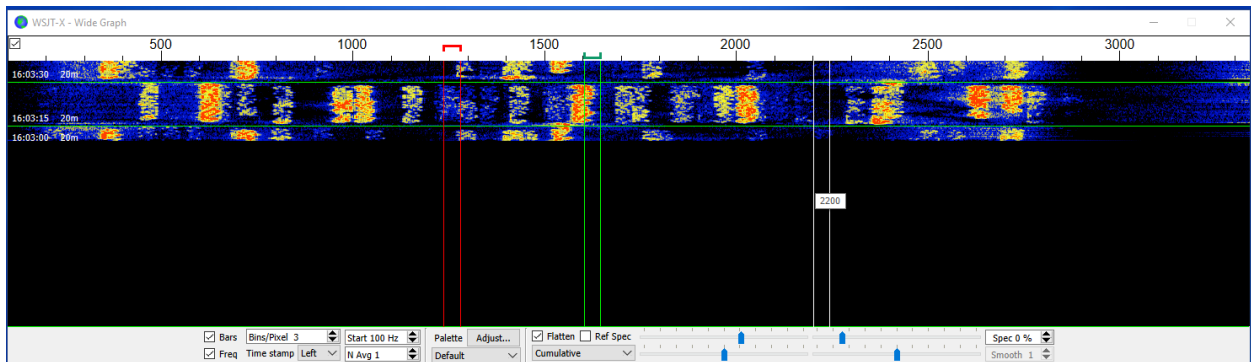
wsjt-x_improved PLUS user interface

Careful inspection of the screenshots shows several differences: the wsjt-x_improved Menu Bar includes a "Filter" tab, there is a row of "Band Buttons" below the activity

windows, there is a checkbox labelled “BP” below the Band Buttons, in the “DX Call” area there is a new button “Ignore”, there are two additional boxes on the Status Bar at the bottom of the screen and the “DX Call” and “Enable TX” buttons are colored yellow. Some of these differences are because of the specific options that I chose when setting up wsjt-x_improved. The major new features of wsjt-x_improved will be described further below and next month’s article.

One thing that I dislike about the wsjt-x_improved user interface is that the height of the bottom half of the user interface is fixed. This means that when you shrink the size of the interface window, the Band Activity and Rx Frequency sub-windows become quite short and can contain only a few lines. The original wsjt-x window proportionately reduces the size of all of the interface sections and sub-windows. To me, this is much more usable approach.

Before jumping into all of the new features, I want to highlight improvements of the waterfall display (see below). The main feature to note is the inclusion of vertical bars for the transmit frequency (red), the receive frequency (green) and the mouse cursor position (white). Additionally, one can select the receive frequency by a left-click of the mouse. The transmit frequency can be selected by a right-click of the mouse. The vertical bars allow you to more accurately position the frequency selection between other signals (transmit) or on the desired station (receive). This is especially helpful if the band is crowded.



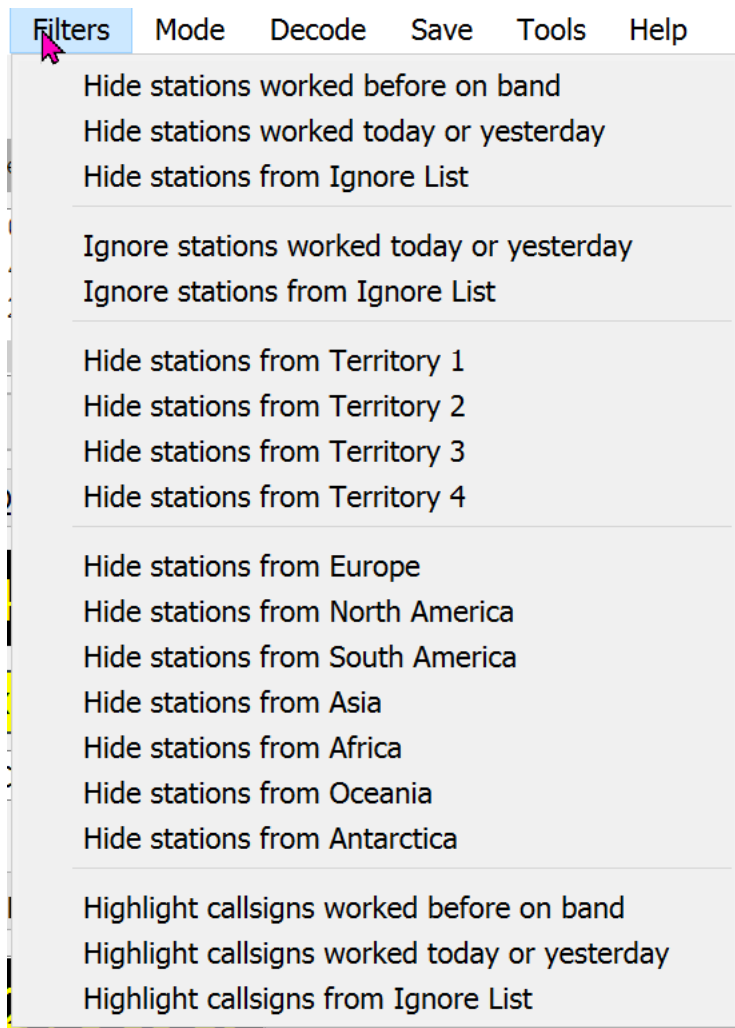
wsjt-x_improved waterfall display

The Band Buttons are toggled off and on in the View tab of the Menu Bar. These are used to rapidly change bands just like the Mode Buttons in original wsjt-x and wsjt-x_improved are used for changing modes. A related setting in General Settings window (“Additional Features” section at bottom) will erase the Band Activity and RX Frequency windows when the band is changed. I find this very handy as I was always manually doing that in standard wsjt-x when changing bands.

The last features to discuss this month are the Filters. Actually, there is quite a bit to this topic, so I finish this in next month's article. The opened "Filters" menu tab is shown below. As you can see there are quite a few pre-defined filters to use – most are self-explanatory. The ones that refer territories are defined in the deeper Settings Menu. Basically, you can enter country names there to be selected from the main Filter Menu. If you use GridTracker or GridTracker2, the filters will affect what you see in the roster and on the map!

A related item is that "BP" checkbox that I mentioned earlier. Checking that bypasses all filters and lets all of the decodes show in the Band Activity window without having to toggle each individual filter setting.

Next month, I will continue with more details on filters and then some other cool features!



wsjt-x_improved Filters Menu