

Interwrite Cricket

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

What is the technology used for signal transmission?

The Cricket system operates in the 2.4GHz frequency range and uses a Direct Spread Spectrum Sequence (DSSS) technology. Range for the system in Free Space is 150 feet.

How many students (Clickers) can participate in a session?

There can be 2047 Clickers used per Receiver. Up to 4 Receivers can be used concurrently, making the theoretical limit for the system 8,188 Clickers.

Are there recurring registration charges for students?

No, there are no ongoing registration fees required of the school or the students to continue using the system. The only cost of the Cricket system is the hardware. The initial cost is up front - purchasing the system. The only recurring costs are for replacement batteries.

Can the Cricket System be used in Anonymous mode?

Yes. Anonymous mode gives the instructor the option of collecting students' responses without the associated Student ID that identifies the student. Anonymous mode is set when the RF Class is started.

Can Cricket "class packs" be set up as loaners?

Yes. The Cricket clickers in class packs are preconfigured as Loaners, which allows the clickers to be shared with other students. Simply assign a Student a Cricket clicker and have them use the same clicker when responding to questions in class. Student responses are recorded in the Response Software based on the ID displayed on top of the Cricket remote.

Do I need to manually create a roster?

No. Cricket provides the ability to easily and reliably associate a specific student in the class with a specific Clicker. When using a class pack, the class roster is automatically created when the clicker joins the class since there is a direct association between the student and the clicker. Schools using the University model of the Cricket clickers will have Students register their clickers using the PRS Web Registration application host by the school or the PRS Blackboard Building Block.

What batteries do the RF Clickers use and how long do they last?

The Cricket clicker uses two (2) AAA batteries - standard alkaline batteries. One set of batteries is included with the purchase. The average life expectancy of the 2 AA batteries in the Cricket Clicker is estimated at 6 months with typical use. The Cricket clicker has a battery level indicator LED that lights up green when the unit is powered on. When the battery gets very low, the Cricket clicker battery level indicator LED will fast blink when the unit is powered on.

Hardware and Installation

How are the RF Receivers powered and connected to the computer?

The Interwrite Response Receiver for Cricket is a 2" RF Receiver that plugs directly into a USB port on the computer or USB Hub.

How can I add additional RF Receivers?

Up to 4 Receivers can be used with one PRS system. Each Receiver requires its own USB port.

Where should I place the Interwrite Response Receiver in the classroom?

The Cricket system is a very portable system. The Response Receiver does not rely on line-of-sight transmission, so a special wall mount is not necessary. Be aware that the Response Receiver works best when it is not plugged into a computer that is under a podium/desk or near metal. Use the supplied USB extension cable to get the Response Receiver out from under furniture or metal that may shield the RF signal.

Is the Cricket system RoHS-compliant?

Yes. The Cricket system complies with the European Union's strict environmental standards referred to as RoHS (Restriction of Hazardous Substances). Cricket is compliant for the following six substances restricted by the RoHS regulations: Lead, Hexavalent Chromium, Mercury, Polybrominated Biphenyls, Polybrominated Biphenyl ethers, and Cadmium.

Lack of Data Collision and Interference from Other Systems

How many channels does the Cricket system use and how does it find a channel?

The Cricket system partitions the 2.4GHz frequency providing up to 156 channel combinations. Of these channels, 130 are used to send data from the Cricket clickers to the Response. The Interwrite Response Receiver selects channels dynamically by performing a scan of the entire 2.4GHz spectrum and selects the channels that have the least amount of RF interference. Students connect their Cricket remote to the class by pressing a two-character Join Code.

Can the Interwrite Response Receiver detect conflicting RF Receivers in adjacent areas?

The receiver scans the entire environment and looks for energy on all channels in the 2.4GHz frequency band in order to avoid other Cricket Receivers in nearby classrooms. The Interwrite Response Receiver also broadcasts a 16-bit Receiver ID as a unique identifier for the Clickers in the classroom.

How does Cricket deal with interference from or with other radio sources?

Cricket uses a DSSS (Direct Spread Spectrum Sequence) technology to provide a high level of noise immunity from other systems. With DSSS, the signal is spread across the entire channel and reconstructed at the Interwrite Response Receiver. By spreading the signal across the channel, Cricket minimizes interference with other systems that might be in close proximity.

Classroom Techniques

What types of questions are supported by the Cricket clickers?

Question types supported by Cricket include Single Answer Multiple Choice (lettered or numbered), True/False (dedicated T & F buttons on 8-button Cricket), and Survey (lettered or numbered).

How do students enter their responses on the Clicker and will they know when their responses have been received?

Students simply enter their response on the Cricket keypad and the answer is automatically sent! The Cricket has 4 LED's to show status. The Battery LED turns green when Cricket is turned on. When joined to a class, the Connect LED will blink slowly. The Received (check) LED will turn green when a transmission has been received and the Not Received (X) LED will turn red when a transmission was not received.

Can the students change their responses?

Yes. Students can change their responses for question being polled, but only the last response is saved. The instructor can set the number of chances students can respond to a question. The Response Software tracks the number of chances for each student.

How are the results reviewed with the class?

When the question timer is stopped, or time runs out, a Response Chart is displayed. The Response Chart graphs the distribution of the responses to the question and the correct response (instructor's choice). Students and instructors appreciate the instant feedback. It opens up opportunities for discussion and reveals areas of weakness in the level of comprehension of the material being covered.