

The Definitive SkyLink Magic Eye Guide

Definitions

SkyLink - Refers to "Sky magic eyes" such as tvLINK, SLxLink, DigiLink, Digital Link, VisionLink, Triax Link and all the rest.

Secondary TV set - Any remote TV set connected by RF coaxial lead (other than your main set, which is connected via a Scart or HDMI lead to your Sky Digibox).

Decoupled cable - a cable in which the outer screen has been disconnected to leave a tiny gap part way along its length.

Double-screened cable - coaxial cable having a metal foil screen and a braided copper screen. (Aluminium foil screened cable is perfectly OK for short runs indoors.)

What is the purpose of a SkyLink magic eye?

The purpose of any SkyLink "magic eye" is to send remote control signals back down a coaxial cable to your Sky Digibox. It allows other TV signals to pass through to your secondary TV aerial socket, unaffected.

The SkyLink device passes all RF signals straight through without affecting them, including the selected Sky channel (and any terrestrial aerial signals if an aerial is connected to your Sky Digibox aerial input).

How do I connect a SkyLink?

Connect it to the RF2 output on your Sky Digibox using double-screened cable with soldered plugs or screw-connection plugs. It is essential to have a good connection because the Sky Digibox provides power to the SkyLink.

A little silicone grease on the plug and pin connections will make it easier to remove without damaging the RF2 socket (common problem!) without affecting the electrical connection.

Note that the RF2 socket is male so you will need to use a female-female adapter unless you have a female TV plug fitted. (Female TV

plugs can not be soldered so ensure that it is the screw connection type.)

The SkyLink module should never be connected directly to a TV aerial socket as the strain could damage the socket and/or SkyLink. You should preferably use a double-screened "decoupled" cable to connect the SkyLink to the TV aerial socket. This cable does NOT need to have soldered plugs because it is not carrying any power. However, there is no problem if the plugs are soldered. If space is a premium, a right-angle TV plug can be used. If you need extra flexibility and a less obtrusive cable, ultra-thin double-screened cable is available. (Not to be confused with so called "low loss" aerial cable, which should be avoided.)

A little silicone grease on the plug and pin connections will make it easier to remove without damaging the TV aerial socket (common problem!) without affecting the electrical connection.

As all TV sets radiate interference, which might interfere with the operation of the SkyLink, you may need to position the device away from the TV. In the case of some large screen TV sets, a distance of up to three metres may be required. Please bear this in mind if your SkyLink does not work reliably.

The SkyLink "magic eye" unit does NOT need to be connected to a secondary TV set in order to send your remote control signals back to your Sky Digibox. (For example, it can be used as a simple remote extender if your Digibox is in a cabinet.) However, it MUST be connected to your secondary TV set if you want Sky picture and sound on that TV or Freeview programmes.

Will the SkyLink work with any Sky Digibox?

The Amstrad DRX595 has NO RF output at all, and will not work with a SkyLink "magic eye" unless you also buy a tvLink-Plus and a power supply.

All other Sky Digiboxes (Standard, Sky-plus and Sky-HD) are theoretically compatible with all SkyLink devices. In practice, however, variations in tolerances can cause unreliable operation with some combinations and with some cable lengths.

The Pace BSKYB1000 minibox "Javelin" has only one RF output. This is "RF2" and works fine with "magic eyes".

Some Sky Digiboxes have problems with specific conditions of cable length and "discontinuities" caused by additional connections (in-line connectors, wall plates, Y-splitters, amplifiers). In many cases the solution is as simple as adding an extra metre of cable somewhere in the run or removing the problem connector. In other cases, the specific configuration will work only with a different Digibox or SkyLink.

Some Sky Digiboxes can not power more than two "magic eyes". In this case you must use an amplified splitter with a separate power supply.

(If anyone has experienced this problem, please post your Digibox make and model number here!)

What settings must I change on the Digibox?

The Sky Digibox RF2 Outlet power must be set to ON in the on-screen menu.

To access this secret Installer Menu, connect your main TV set to the Sky Digibox with a Scart lead (if not already so.) Make sure you can see a Sky programme.

Press the following sequence quickly on your Sky remote control:

[services] 401 [select]

or **[services] 001 [select]** in later HD EPG.

Then press 4 to access the RF Outlet menu.

Set the RF Outlet power to ON and set the UHF channel to an unused channel between 21 and 69. Save the settings then press [backup] repeatedly until you see the picture on your main TV.

Tune your secondary TV set to the same UHF number (or find it by autoscanning in the TV analogue menu). Note that some TV sets can not tune to 69.

If you see interference or a grainy Sky picture on your secondary TV, you have chosen a UHF channel number that is already in use. Return to the secret Installer menu and try a different number.

Can I use more than one "magic eye"?

Yes. Connect RF2 to a SkyLink compatible splitter or amplifier (see below). Connect the outputs directly to the "magic eyes" via double-screened cable.

Can I use an amplifier?

If your Sky RF2 Outlet signal passes through any amplifier or splitter, these units must be SkyLink compatible, otherwise reliable operation may be impossible to achieve. If you use wall plates, make sure they are "DC pass" versions (not "isolated") and fully screened, otherwise you could get interference and unreliable operation. Note that the amplifier amplifies the RF signal from RF2. It does not amplify the signal coming back from the "magic eye".

What's the maximum cable length?

With good quality double-screened cable a length of 20m should be fine and 50m is often possible. However, if you plan to run a long length, be sure to test it (loose on the ground) before plastering it into walls.

What's the best SkyLink?

It's really a personal choice. From feedback we've had, I would currently recommend the "VisionLink" because it has proved to be reliable, less prone to interference problems and the "eye" part is tiny.

What's the best cable?

To minimise problems with interference - especially close to the TV and other equipment - you should use only double-screened cable. An ultra-thin white double-screened cable is available for use where you need extra flexibility and lower visual impact.

What if I have problems after installation?

Buy from a reputable supplier. Ask your supplier for troubleshooting information.

Troubleshooting isn't too difficult when you understand that the "eye" requires a 9 volt DC supply from the Digibox (or from an amplifier) and also sends a signal back to the Digibox.

Anything that blocks DC on the way out or blocks (or interferes with) RF on the way back, will prevent reliable operation. Hence the need for good connections and screening of everything, especially near to any TV set or electronic equipment (including "energy-saver" bulbs and fluorescent lights).

Since the "eye" itself can't be screened, move it well away from the TV set and other sources of interference if you have a problem.

How do I power the SkyLink amplified splitter?

Normally it gets its power from RF2 on the Digibox. However, some Digiboxes can't supply enough power for more than 2 "magic eyes" so the SkyLink amplifier will require a separate "plug-top" power supply. If you can't access mains power for a power supply unit near the SkyLink amplifier, you could try fitting a DC1 in-line DC inserter near to RF2 and feed a 9 volt DC power supply into that.

Get the complete SkyLink Magic-Eye Guide here:
<https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/B01DAHBTM>