

(infrared) Control” cable that works with both satellite and cable boxes. I explain each method below; choose the one that works best with your particular box.

Hooking up a Serial Control cable

A few satellite boxes let you plug in this special cable so TiVo can change its channels. Here’s how to eyeball your satellite box for the right connector, and, if your box is one of the lucky ones, how to connect the right cable. (It comes bundled with TiVo.)

1. Examine the back of your satellite box for a “serial port” connector.



Seen in the margin, this little oblong bump has either 9 or 15 tiny holes.

If you spot a 9-hole connector, rummage around for TiVo’s bundled Serial Control cable with the 9-pin connector and proceed to Step 2.

If you spot a 15-hole connector, head to Radio Shack and buy a “15-pin male to 9-pin female” adapter and push it onto the end of TiVo’s included serial port connector. TiVo’s Web site (<https://store.tivo.com>) sells the same adapter, as do some TiVo accessory stores listed in Chapter 13.

2. Push the larger end of the TiVo serial cable into the plug on the back of your satellite box.

The plug’s pins should align perfectly with the holes. If they don’t, you’re plugging it in upside down or you need the adapter discussed in the previous step.

3. Plug the cable’s other end into TiVo’s Serial Connector port.

Tell TiVo to use the “serial” connector for changing channels when you run TiVo’s onscreen “Guided Setup” (described in Chapter 4).



➤ Once you’ve connected TiVo to your satellite box, *hide the box’s remote*. TiVo’s now responsible for changing channels, so stick with TiVo’s remote exclusively. If you accidentally press a button on the satellite box’s remote while TiVo’s recording a show, you might accidentally change channels in the middle of your recording.



➤ Some RCA satellite receivers use a “Home Control” connector that looks a tad smaller than a phone connector. If your RCA-brand satellite box has a Home Control cable (not included with TiVo), plug one end into its jack and the other end into TiVo’s Control Out/Serial jack. Don’t have the right cable? Either buy one at TiVo’s Web site (<https://store.tivo.com>) or use TiVo’s Infrared (IR) Control cable, instead, as described in the next section.



➤ The Motorola DCT2000 cable box also uses a serial connection, but not all cable companies enable the serial port. If you have that particular model of cable box, give it a try by following the same steps above.