# Introduction to Bitlbee

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## 1    Introduction

This article covers configuring Bitlbee, an IRC to multiple Instant Messanger system. It supports AOL Instant Messanger (AIM), ICQ, MSN and Jabber.

## 2    Installation

The installation of Bitlbee is fairly simple, just download the tarball from http://www.bitlbee.org/. Untar it into a temporary directory and change into that directory, then run configure, then make install. Alternatively, most Linux distributions have it packaged.

## 3    Usage

Bitlbee runs as an irc daemon (which should be done via inetd although it can run by itself) - by default, it runs on port 6667. Some Linux distributions (such as Debian) have bitlbee packaged and will handle all this for you. To use it simply connect to the host running the service on the configured port with your prefered irc client.

## 4    Configuration

On connecting initially you will be joined to #bitlbee. There will also be another user, root in channel with you. This is the admin user that is your interface to configuration. You can easily change root's name if you want - indeed some Linux distribions have, most commonly to Bitlbee.

### 4.1    Registering

The first thing to do is register and set yourself a password. This is simply done by:

```
register <password>
```

This is the password that is used to identify yourself when you connect and protect your account information.

## 4.2   Accounts

After registering, it's time to add accounts. To add an AIM and ICQ account, do:

```
account add oscar pibradm pass login.oscar.aol.com
account add oscar 16660652 pass login.icq.com
```

Adding jabber and MSN accounts are as simple as:

```
account add jabber bradm@jabber.org pass
account add msn b.marshall@cqu.edu.au pass
```

To check the accounts have been added, simply:

```
<@Jiko> account list
<@root>  0. OSCAR, pibradm on login.oscar.aol.com (connected)
<@root>  1. OSCAR, 16660652 on login.icq.com (connected)
<@root>  2. JABBER, bradm@jabber.org (connected)
<@root>  3. MSN, b.marshall@cqu.edu.au
<@root> End of account list
```

To connect to an account is done by the following:

```
<@Jiko> account on 1
<@root> ICQ - Logging in: Signon: 16660652
<@root> ICQ - Logging in: Connection established, cookie sent
<@root> ICQ - Logged in
```

Connection to all defined accounts is simply done by running account on - this will try and log in to every account that isn't currently online.

Disconnection is done in a similar way:

```
<@Jiko> account off 2
<@root> JABBER - Signing off..
```

## 4.3   User Management

Adding users is simply done by looking up the number that refers to the network you wish to add them on, then doing the following:

```
<@Jiko> add 3 123214
<@root> User '123214' added to your contact list as '123214'
```

You may wish to rename the user. For ICQ they are added as their login number, which you will definately want to change. For others if there is a name conflict bitlbee will append an underscore to the name to remove the conflict.

```
<@Jiko> rename 123214 Foobar
<@root> Nick successfully changed
```

To view your buddy list, run the following:

```
<@Jiko> blist all
<@root> Nick   User/Host/Network                 Status
<@root> Fred   flinstone@login.oscar.aol.com (OSCAR)  Offline
<@root> Barney barney@login.oscar.aol.com (OSCAR)     Online
<@root> Bender bender@jabber.org (JABBER)             Online
<@root> Bart   1415135@login.icq.com (OSCAR)          Offline
<@root> Lisa   945234@login.icq.com (OSCAR)           Online
```

You can also restrict what you view in your buddy list to only those online or offline.

# 5 Interacting

Once everything is configured, you'll see people join **#bitlbee** when they're online. To talk to them, either address them directly, as follows, or via messages.

```
<@Jiko> Bender: Hey there, how's Fry?
< Bender> Jiko: He's great, off on a delivery.
```

# 6 Conclusion

As you can see, Bitlbee is an excellent gateway between irc and other chat networks, and will reduce the number of applications you need to run to talk to people on various IM networks. It is also an excellent example of a highly versatile way of getting functionality into a wide range of clients, rather than writing yet another multi-IM client.