



DirectSync APX25 Motor Installation

Step-by-Step Instructions for Installing the DirectSync APO Motor Assembly to your Astro-Tech, Meade®, Stellarvue® or other dual-speed focuser.

Optec's #19976 DirectSync APX25 motor fits directly in place of the coarse focus knob on the left side of many popular dual-speed focusers provided with popular Triplet refractors. With the integrated ThirdLynx control circuit, DirectSync APX25 provides a complete digital focusing solution for Meade, Stellarvue, Astro-Tech, Teleskop Services and other apochromatic refractor telescopes with 2-1/2" focusers produced prior to 2020. The right-side coarse and fine focus knobs are left intact on the focuser while the DirectSync clutch mechanism offers easy engagement and disengagement of the stepper motor for manual focus. Specifically, the DirectSync APX25 motor will fit the following telescope focusers plus several other brands:



- Astro-Tech AT80EDT f/6 Triplet with separate pinion block*
- Astro-Tech AT115EDT f/7 Triplet with separate pinion block*
- Astro-Tech AT130 EDT f/7 Triplet with separate pinion block*
- Meade Series 6000 ED Triplet APO 130mm separate pinion block
- Meade Series 6000 ED Triplet APO 115mm with separate pinion block
- Meade Series 6000 ED Triplet APO 80mm with separate pinion block
- Stellarvue SV70T f/6 APO Triplet
- Stellarvue SV80, SV102 and SV125 Access Series APO Refractors.
- Teleskop Services TS-Optics brand ED and APO refractors*

*IMPORTANT NOTE: In late 2019, several manufacturers switched to a new import focuser with a single cast body including these models noted above (see [Focuser Compatibility](#) section below).



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When properly mounted, the DirectSync APX25 motor provides approximately 1.4 micron per step resolution and superior repeatability and load carrying capacity. A precision digital temperature sensor and electronic noise suppression circuitry are integrated into the DirectSync motor assembly.

Connection to the observatory or telescope control computer can be made using any standard USB A-B cable. A separate 12VDC power connection provides sufficient power to vertically lift cameras or instrument packages exceeding 10 kg. Optec's new ASCOM Alpaca driver and field-proven FocusLynx Commander software round out the package for complete remote telescope focusing solution.

Focuser Compatibility

To determine if the DirectSync APX25 motor will fit your telescope, turn the focuser over to inspect the pinion block. If your focuser resembles the photo at right, regardless of finish color, the APX25 is probably right for you.

If, instead, your focuser resembles the newer focuser at left, then you should look at the DirectSync ATX25 motor (Optec stock no. 19981) instead. Note that this focuser has a single cast body compared to the original design with a bolt-on pinion assembly.



bolt-on pinion assembly.

Feel free to send a photo of your focuser to sales@optecinc.com for confirmation. We will provide our recommendation for the best DirectSync motor to automate your focuser.

Astro-Tech is a product of Astronomics,

Meade® is a registered trademark of Meade Instruments Corporation.

Stellarvue® is a registered trademark of Stellarvue

Teleskop Service is a trademark of Teleskop-Service Ransburg GmgH, Germany, EU.



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DirectSync APX25 Package Contents

Confirm the contents of your DirectSync APO motor package. The package should contain the following:

- DirectSync APX25 motor assembly,
- 60-tooth drive shaft gear with 0.675" (17mm) long brass hub,
- 1/16" Allen hex key,
- 2mm and 2.5mm hex key tools,
- One M4 X 5mm length button head screw,
- One M4 X 6mm length button head screw,
- Short and Long USB A-B cables,
- 12VDC power supply with 2.5 x 5.5mm power plug and IEC power cord.



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ThirdLynx vs. FocusLynx

All DirectSync and QuickSync motors are offered in two different versions with control electronics provided by the FocusLynx or FocusBoss II hub or with the integrated ThirdLynx control circuit.

Optec's original QuickSync and DirectSync motors feature a single RJ45 socket which allows connection to either the Focuser 1 or Focuser 2 port of a FocusLynx hub. **Note that a FocusLynx hub is required for these motors.** Connection to an observatory control computer can be made via USB using the Optec USB/Serial cable, Ethernet, or WiFi using the optional WiFi add-on board.



The **ThirdLynx** motors are designated with an "X" and feature a square USB-A connector and 2.5 x 5.5mm power socket. **No additional controller is required.** Connection to the observatory control computer is through any available USB port.



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Installation Procedure: Step-by-Step

Step 1 - Remove Access Screw

To install the DirectSync APO motor, you will first remove the existing coarse focus knob on the left side of the focuser. The coarse knob is fixed to the shaft with two metric hex set screws (also known as grub screws) that can only be accessed through a small threaded port on the main pinion block. You will use the 2mm hex head L-key to loosen these two setscrews. Loosen only, do not remove.



To access the knob setscrews, first use the 2mm hex key to remove the single setscrew indicated by the RED arrow below. Set the metric hex setscrew aside.

You will use this threaded hole to secure one side of the DirectSync APO silver bracket to the pinion block.

Step 2 - Remove Knob

Rotate the focus knob until you can see one of the setscrews holding the coarse knob in place through the threaded access hole. Use the 2mm hex key to loosen



the

setscrew and then rotate the knob until the second setscrew is accessible. No need to remove these setscrews, just loosen them until the coarse knob can be easily slide off the pinion shaft.



Step 3 - Install Gear

Slide the 60-tooth gear hub-end first onto the pinion shaft. Rotate the gear so that the setscrew falls upon the flat section of the pinion shaft.

Rotate the pinion shaft so the gear-hub setscrew can be seen through the access hole.



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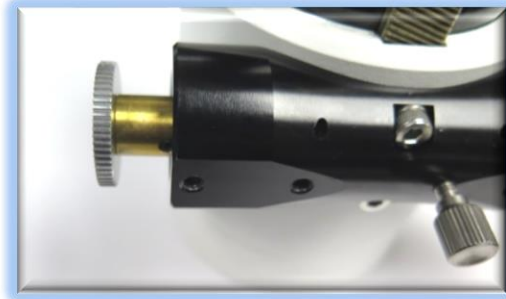


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Adjust the gear position so the hub setscrew can be tightened. Insert the 1/16" hex key into the access port to tighten the gear to the pinion shaft. Be sure it is fully secured before continuing. Test the focuser function by moving the coarse and fine focus knobs on the right side of the focuser up and down ensuring smooth free movement.

NOTE: Be sure to tighten gear setscrew tightly to avoid introducing backlash.



Step 4 – Attach Focus Motor

Disengage the motor by rolling the motor cap counterclockwise (away from you in the orientation at right.)

Slide the DirectSync APO motor onto the focuser pinion with the stainless tab fitting over the two setscrew holes that are exposed. To improve the engagement of the gears, shift the DirectSync up



keeping the stainless tab parallel with the pinion assembly. You should still be able to see the setscrew holes through the stainless tab. Use two M4 hex drive pan head screws to hold the motor in place, the longer 6mm in the left and shorter 5mm in the right hole.

With the motor engaged, apply light pressure upward and to right as shown by the arrows in the photo. Tighten the two panhead screws when the fit is good. Now test the mesh of the gears by disengaging and re-engaging the motor. Be sure the gears do not rub when the motor is disengaged.

Your DirectSync APO is now ready for FocusLynx Software Setup. Contact [Optec Support](#) if you have any questions or concerns when installing your DirectSync APO.



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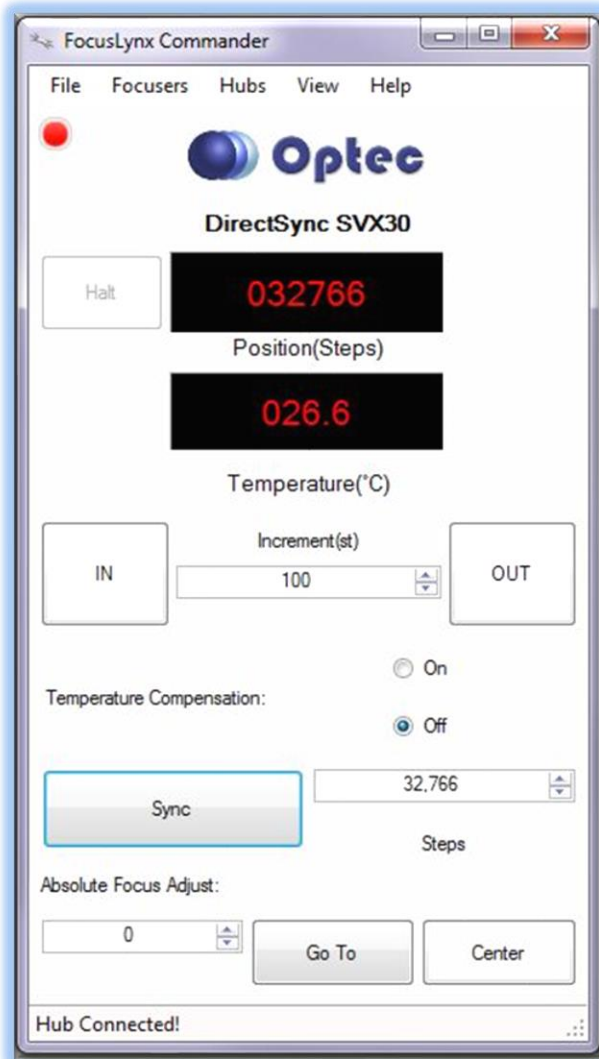
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Download FocusLynx Commander Software

Visit Optec's download page to obtain the latest version of the FocusLynx Commander ASCOM driver and software package. FocusLynx Commander runs on any Windows 7 or higher operating system. Be sure to download version 3.1 or higher to operate the ThirdLynx control circuit. Separate installer packages for Mac and Linux will be available soon.

<http://www.optecinc.com/astronomy/downloads/focuslynx.htm>



The ThirdLynx controller is an iFocuser3 type device. Because FocusLynx Commander is an ASCOM client, you will need ASCOM Platform 6.4 to configure the focuser. Visit the ASCOM webpages for the latest version.

<https://ascom-standards.org/>

On non-Windows computers, there is no need to install the ASCOM platform. Optec's driver includes a built-in Alpaca standard server that will provide the required interface for any client-level software displaying the Alpaca logo.



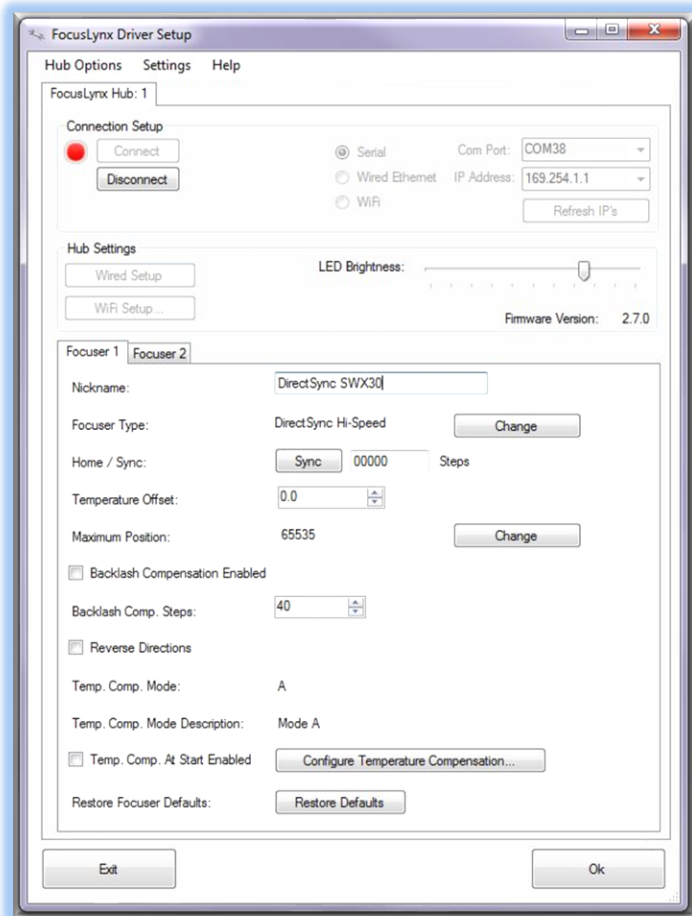
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Windows Software Setup



Consult the **FocusLynx Quick Start Guide** to install FocusLynx Commander for Windows. Once installed, you will need to configure FocusLynx Commander for your new DirectSync motor. Configuration within FocusLynx Commander will also configure the ASCOM driver so that the same settings will apply when using auto-focusing software such as Maxim D/L, FocusMax, Sequence Generator Pro, or TheSky X for Windows. Control of FocusLynx or ThirdLynx focusers within TheSky X Windows version can be accomplished through either the ASCOM chooser or with the native X2 drivers for FocusLynx.

Focuser Type Selection

In FocusLynx Commander, click **Focusers – Setup** to open the FocusLynx Driver Setup dialog. The ThirdLynx USB-CDC controller will be automatically assigned a virtual COM port by Windows. (note the Wired Ethernet and WiFi connection types will be grayed out). Select the assigned COM port

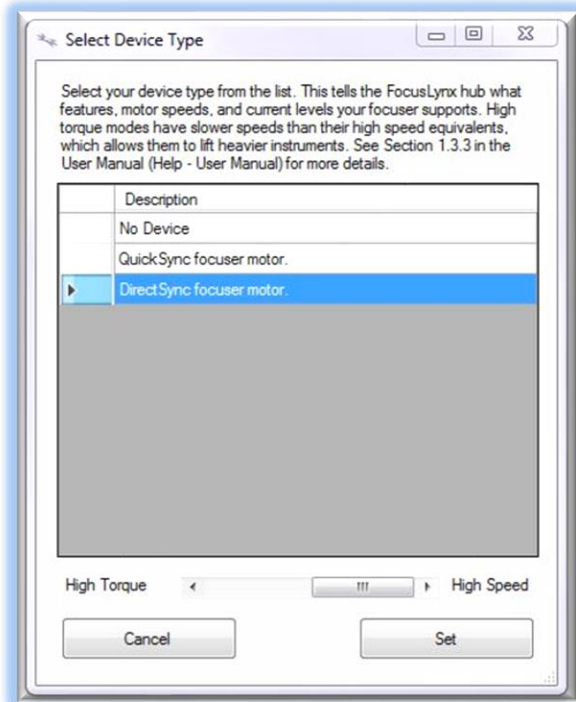
and click Connect. In the Focuser 1 section below, type in a Nickname for your telescope and click Change for the Focuser Type. Choose the **DirectSync** option and select either the Hi-Torque or Hi-Speed option using the slide bar near the bottom. With stepper motors speed and torque typically work inversely. That is, higher speeds will usually result in lower torque. The DirectSync Hi-Speed Focuser Type option coupled with the **DirectSync SWX30** motor assembly can reliably handle payloads of 10kg (22 lbs.) or more.



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Click OK to exit the setup form and return to the main FocusLynx window. Click Focusers –**Connect**. Test the focuser movement by engaging the motor (roll the endcap clockwise as viewed from the cable end). Test both IN and OUT functionality with 1000 step increments. You should see the coarse and fine focus knobs move on the opposite side of the pinion block. All movements should be smooth. Disengage the motor to return to manual focus.

Contact Optec support (support@optecinc.com) if your focus motor cannot be adjusted without slippage or stalling. Some focusers present unique challenges with internal slippage.

Optional Setup Steps

Set the Position Units

The iFocuserV3 standard for ASCOM absolute focusers relates all focuser movements to actual step counts with the higher level client responsible for making the conversions to real-world measurements. FocusLynx Commander acts as a client and extends the property to easily convert the units to mm and microns. In the main form of the FocusLynx Commander window, you may left-click directly on the red Position digital read-out to toggle units between Steps, Microns, and Millimeters. Note that only the step count is passed through to the ASCOM driver.

Step Size and Focuser Range

The Stellarvue focuser drawtubes have a wide variety of travel ranges. The DirectSync SVX30 stepper motor has a step-size of approximately 1.4 microns so the default maximum position of 65,535 steps would allow for about 92mm. If your focuser has a longer drawtube travel, you may wish to increase the Maximum Position value in the FocusLynx/ThirdLynx Driver Setup screen.

However, some focusers may have a smaller step size and greater travel. To take advantage of the full focuser travel, you may wish to change the Maximum Position value in setup to allow more steps for full



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travel. Click File- **Step Size Wizard** in FocusLynx Commander to calculate the exact step size and set the MaxStep values for your focuser and motor.

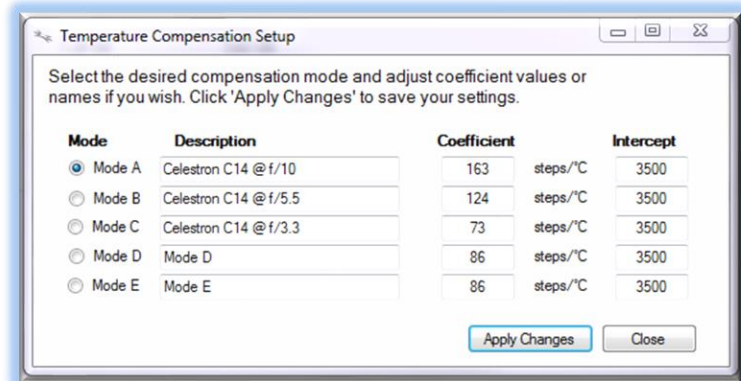
Recommended Sync Procedure

For most auto-focus routines, the required range of movement for the focuser is quite small compared to the total range of travel. The default 16-bit digital range of 65,535 steps is always more than adequate to allow successful auto-focusing. For best results, we recommend the focuser be manually moved to a rough focus and the position be synced to the center position of 32,767. The FocusLynx Hand Control offers an easy push-button method of accomplishing this “sync to center” operation. To “sync to center” with FocusLynx Commander, enter 32,767 (or simply round to 33,000) in the box immediately right of the Sync button. Press **Sync** and wait a few seconds. Test the IN and OUT button movements to ensure proper operation and function.

Alternatively, you can manually move the focuser drawtube all the way IN and Sync to 0. Then, use the hand control or FocusLynx Commander interface to move the drawtube outward to the end of travel. Note the step position and enter this value in the Maximum Position within setup. Subsequent connection to the focuser will automatically calculate the new center position (half of MaxPos) and display it as the new default Sync position on the main form and in the hand control “sync to center” feature.

Temperature Compensation

The DirectSync motor includes a built-in temperature sensor for temperature compensation. Within FocusLynx Commander click File – **Temp Comp Wizard** to let the software step you through the process and automatically calculate the “TC” or Temperature Coefficient for your particular telescope configuration. After completing the wizard, save the new TC value in any of the five available TC modes. Click the adjacent radio button next to Mode A through E to select that TempComp Mode for the current session.



Turn on temperature compensation by selecting “On” just above the Sync button on the main FocusLynx Commander form. The FocusLynx controller will automatically adjust the focus for changing temperatures.



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Linux and Mac Software Setup

Optec is developing a Linux based Commander program to provide much of the same functionality and features available with Windows FocusLynx Commander. Check the Optec website for the latest developments.

ASCOM Alpaca

INDI Support

A group of dedicated volunteer programmers has developed the INDI Library which is a collection of programs designed to control astronomical equipment. Full details are available at the INDI Library website: <https://www.indilib.org/>

ThirdLynx uses the same low-level commands as FocusLynx and will function with the INDI FocusLynx driver developed by Mr. Philippe Besson and Jasem Mutlaq. Complete instructions and the INDI Linux driver are available for download here: <https://www.indilib.org/devices/focusers/focuslynx.html>

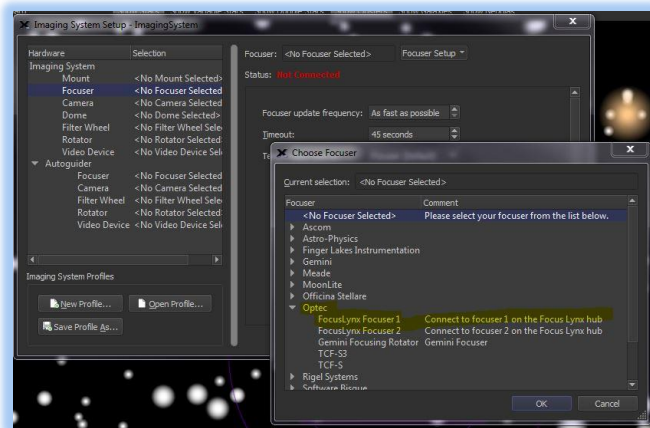
A special thanks to both developers.

Third-Party Software

Visit the Optec website for the additional information describing FocusLynx configurations for ASCOM clients such as **FocusMax** and **Maxim D/L**, as well as non-ASCOM software such as Software Bisque's **TheSky X** native X2 drivers for FocusLynx.

TheSky X Pro

Many users have asked for specific instructions to configure the DirectSync ThirdLynx controllers with TheSky X native X2 drivers. Currently, you should configure ThirdLynx as FocusLynx Focuser 1.



We expect a future daily build to offer the ThirdLynx as a separate option. Under settings, look for the COM port labeled **Optec ThirdLynx USB CDC**.



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Video Channel

Optec is developing videos for installation and configuration of our many products for various software packages. Visit our Rumble video channel by searching “Optec” or clicking the link below.



<https://www.optecinc.com/video>

Optec User Group

The Optec User Group is now located at Groups.io which provides a forum to communicate with other users of Optec instruments. Other end-users can often provide answers to specific configuration questions and Optec staff routinely follow and answer many questions as well. Click the banner below to subscribe.

Or visit the Groups.io Optec User Group here: <https://groups.io/g/Optec>.

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TheSky X is offered by Software Bisque - <http://www.bisque.com/>
Sequence Generator Pro by Main Sequence Software - <https://www.mainsequencesoftware.com/>*



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