

Sharing Channels via QR Code

How Channel Sharing Works

Meshtastic encodes channel configuration as a URL containing a Base64-encoded protobuf payload (a `ChannelSet`). This URL can be displayed as a QR code or shared as a plain link. At minimum the payload encodes the channel definition(s) — channel name and PSK. The shared LoRa config, which includes the **modem preset**, is only included when you enable the “Add to URL” / share-full-config option; with a plain channel share it is **not** carried. If you share only the channel (no LoRa config), recipients must be told the modem preset separately, or they will be on the right channel but unable to communicate.

Generating a QR Code

1. Open the [Meshtastic app](#) and navigate to **Channels**.
2. Select the channel you want to share.
3. Tap the **Share** (QR icon) button.
4. The app displays a QR code and a shareable URL. (Enable the option to include LoRa config if you also want to share the modem preset.)

Importing a Channel

To import a channel on another device:

- Scan the QR code directly from the Meshtastic app's channel import screen, *or*
- Navigate to the channel URL on a device that has the Meshtastic app installed - the app intercepts the URL and offers to import the channel.

URL Format

Channel URLs follow this structure:

```
https://meshtastic.org/e/#<Base64-encoded channel data>
```

The fragment (`#...`) portion is the Base64-encoded protobuf. (Legacy links used a `/c/` path without the `#` fragment; `/e/#` is the current form.) Because it is a URL fragment, it is not included in the HTTP request line sent to the server, which reduces incidental exposure during a direct request. **This is not a strong privacy guarantee, however:** link-preview bots, browser history and account sync, and messaging clients can still capture the full URL including the PSK. Treat the link as equivalent to the key regardless of how it is transported.

Security: What Sharing a QR Means

Sharing a channel QR code shares the encryption key. Anyone who receives the QR or link can decode all past and future messages on that channel if they have access to the ciphertext. Key management rules:

- Only share with people you intend to give channel access.
- Once a PSK is shared there is no revocation - the only way to remove access is to generate a new PSK and redistribute it to all authorized nodes.
- Treat a shared channel QR like a password: do not post it publicly, and remember that pasting the link into a chat or preview service can leak the PSK.

Admin Channel QR

An admin channel PSK grants remote configuration access to a node. Store any admin channel QR securely and share it only with authorized administrators. If you lose admin access to a remote, unattended node you may lose the ability to remotely reconfigure it - physical access becomes necessary. Note that modern firmware (2.5 and later) uses public-key (PKC) admin keys for remote administration rather than a shared admin-channel PSK; the shared-PSK admin channel is the older mechanism.

Multi-Channel QR Codes

The Meshtastic app can generate a single QR code that encodes multiple channel definitions simultaneously. This makes onboarding new nodes to a full community channel set (e.g., public + club + EmComm) a single scan rather than importing each channel individually.

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