4cast User-Manual

General

4cast is a weather browser for Palm OS devices. It downloads weather information from **weather.yahoo.com** and displays it on the handheld screen. 4Cast does not alter the information, but extracts the data and displays it in a clear and efficient way:

You can add/select a number of cities (by city name or ZIP code), and have 4cast download refreshed forecasts from the Internet.

Reading the forecasts from the Internet requires a way for connecting to it. You can use 4cast on one of the following connection methods:
- On a handheld device with on-board wireless connection, such as **GPRS**/**CDMA** (like with the **Treo** smartphones).
- On a handheld device with **WiFi** connectivity.
- On a handheld device you connect to an Internet connected cellular phone or a computer (via **IrDA** or **Bluetooth**).
- Another option is if you have a desktop (or laptop) computer running Windows OS, and connected to the Internet – you can install the "**4cast HotSync Conduit**" to have it retrieve weather forecasts on the desktop computer during every **HotSync** you do with your handheld, and transfer that data to the handheld for 4cast to display (for more details – see below).

You can refresh this forecast information either manually when running 4cast, or schedule auto-refreshes as specific intervals and time (note – for obvious reasons, this is not relevant for the last HotSync option, and will only work if the device can be connected when scheduled).

When viewing a forecast for a city, you can navigate up/down to view more information like winds speed, visibility, etc. Move further down to view a graph view, then a more detailed text forecast for the next 5 days.
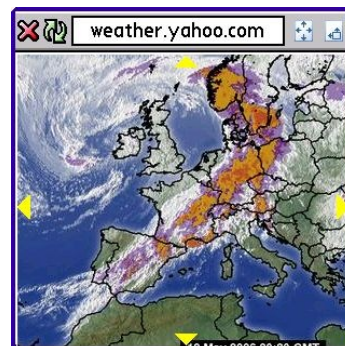
Press the right arrow (or right on the 5way navigator control) to change cities between the ones you already selected.

Select "Refresh" (shortcut-R) or tap the icon to refresh the forecast information, "Global refresh" (shortcut-G) to refresh forecasts for all the cities you selected.

Note: the top line at the main screen toggles to show the forecast for today, and the current conditions, the URL field on the top icons bar toggles to show the forecast "true for" time from the Yahoo servers.

Maps (radar & satellite images):

You can select "Maps" from the menu (shortcut-M) to see radar & satellite images for the current city. 4Cast can either display those internally (requires you install the **pboJpegLib.prc** – supplied in the 4cast ZIP file), or you can use any web browser you have on your device. You can select where to display at the bottom of the "Maps" screen.

If you select to display maps within 4cast, you can set it to retrieve the map images during every weather refresh, or only if/when you open a map in 4cast.
Within the map viewer screen – tap the icons on top to go back/refresh map image/fit map to page/display map in real size (you can use the 5-way navigator to pan the image).

You can define 1-2 'custom maps' – set your own (permanent) URL for a jpg map image from the web (jpg images should be less than 64K).
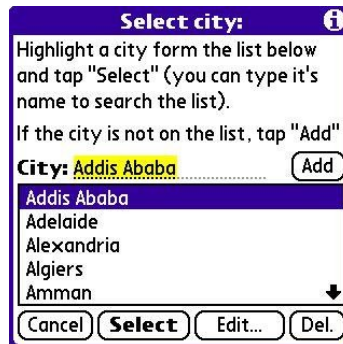
Weather alerts

If a certain city has a weather alert attached to its forecast, you will see an "A" icon (in a red rectangle) on the top of the screen. Tap the icon (or select Shortcut-A from menu) to view the alert text.

Using 4cast as a plugin for other applications

4cast can also be used as a plugin for other applications: **2day**, **DateBk6** and **Zlauncher**. See more information below.

Managing cities

When you first run 4cast, or when you select "Select/Add city" from the main menu (shortcut-S or press the SPACE key on a keyboard), you will be presented with this screen:

Here you can highlight a city from a pre-defined list (you can better navigate the list by typing its first letters), and press the "Select" button to select this city.
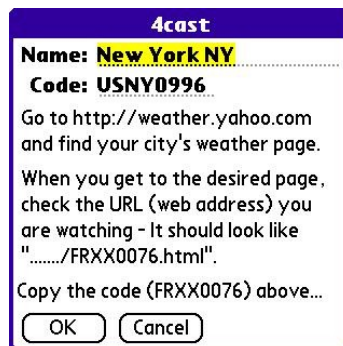You can also rename cities from the pre-defined list, or delete entries there.

If the city you're looking for does not exist in the pre-defined list – just enter its name (or US ZIP code) at the "City" field, and press the "Add" button on the right.
4cast will lookup the city/zip at the Yahoo server, and try to match it with a city. If it finds the city – it will add it to the pre-defined list, and select it.

If there are multiple matches for the city name you entered, you will be presented with a list to select the one you want.

If the city is not found – it will display a dialog asking you if you want to enter the city details manually:

Note: if your device can not connect to the Internet, you will be asked if you want to use the HotSync option the first time you add a city.

Important: If you selected not to use (or you cant use) wireless connection, and enabled HotSync connection, then you should still use 4cast on your handheld to add cities the same way explained above. Only difference is in stead of reading the information from the device, 4cast will show a dialog stating the information will be retrieved during the next HotSync. So – you add a city, then press the HotSync button (or initiate a HotSync in any other method). If you entered a city with multiple matches at the Yahoo server – the 4cast Conduit will prompt you on the desktop (PC) computer to select between the matching cities.

General preferences

The general preferences page has a few general options:

First you can select the method to use for getting the weather information from the web – you can check "Wireless" (retrieving the info via wireless connection – on device like on the Treo, WiFi, Bluetooth, etc.) and/or "HotSync" - where information will be retrieved during every HotSync.

To use the HotSync method – you need to be connected to a web-enabled desktop computer running Windows OS, and install the "4cast conduit" (provided in the 4cast ZIP file).

If you enabled "Wireless" refreshes, you can set a few relevant options:
-   "disconnect": set if/how a network connection is disconnected (to save battery and data charges where applicable).
-   You can schedule automated refreshes at specific times and intervals. Note that this will only work if the device is capable of connecting to the web when those scheduled times come.

"Advanced wireless prefs...": Tap to configure advanced network settings (if you are using the 'Wireless' refresh method above), such as using a proxy server.

"Show forecast time from Yahoo": Turn on to show time of the data as shown at the Yahoo site (the time the forecast information is true for, as opposed to the time when the information was read from the web).

- "Plugins": Configure display in the 2day/ZLauncher/DateBk6 plugin.

- "Rotate all": When on, the plugin in 2day will rotate through all defined cities.
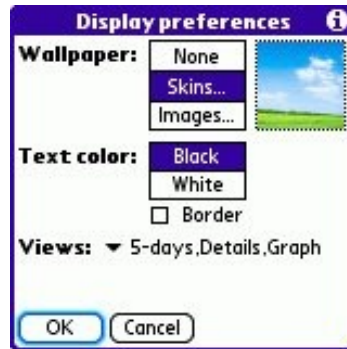

Advanced wireless preferences

"Use HTTP library": On some newer Palm devices there is an HTTP library, enabling use of Proxy servers. If you need to use proxy servers, or if you are having trouble reading the weather on your carrier network – turn this option ON.

"Check Treo radio state": when on, 4cast checks that the radio is on before attempting connection on a Treo device. Turn this off if you are trying to use another wireless method (such as Bluetooth DUN) on a Treo.
"Check Treo roaming state": when on, 4cast will not do an auto-update if the device is roaming.

Display preferences

- "Wallpaper": First you can select a background scheme for the main screens – you can use blank background ("None"), or select to display a background image. The image can be from a "Skin" (a file stored in your device main memory), or from any JPEG image stored in your SD card.

To select between the images on the card or the built-in "skins" - tap the square on the right.

- "Text color": To improve readability of text on the selected wallpaper, you can set its color (black or white), and surround it with an inverted border (if you wish).

- "Views": You can set the order in which the 3 first views ("5-days", "Details", "Graph") are displayed (if displayed).

Working as a plugin

4cast can also be used as a plugin for several other Palm OS applications: **2day**, **Datebk6** and **Zlauncher**.

You can configure every such application to display a line of weather information on their screens with the information retrieved by 4cast.

Important: You have to run 4cast at least once to have it register itself as a plugin, and configure at least one city, before you can configure 2day, DateBk6 or Zlauncher to display 4cast as a plugin.
Once this is done, you can run those applications, and use their preferences to configure the way 4cast plugin will be displayed (see the documentation of the specific application for details).

Note: for **Zlauncher**, you have to install an additional file (PRC) to interface with Zlauncher – the zl4cast.prc file from the 4cast ZIP.

Reading weather via HotSync (if you don't have wireless access)

If you do not have wireless capabilities on your device, or if you just prefer not to use them, you can use a desktop computer connected to the Internet to read the weather information for you whenever you perform a HotSync between the Palm device and the PC.

To do this, you need to install the "4cast HotSync conduit". In the 4cast ZIP file, there is a sub-directory called "ForHotSync". Unzip it onto your desktop computer, and run the "setup_4cast_and_conduit.exe" file in it. This will install the conduit.

In 4cast – open the "General preferences", and check the "HotSync" button on.
Now when you perform a HotSync, the desktop computer will read weather information for all the cities you define in 4cast for you.

Note: MAC OS users do not have a conduit for this. A possible solution is using the "Missing Sync" by www.MarkSpace.com.