

# Project CARS - Dedicated Server Game Guide

This document describes how to use and join dedicated servers from the Project CARS game.

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## Joining Dedicated Server

To join a multiplayer game hosted on a dedicated server, just use the standard Online-Browser screen to search for a game. The icon in the last column distinguishes between the hosting type. The three types look like this:



This is a standard peer to peer session not hosted on a server.



Session hosted on a dedicated server. The “host player” determines the game’s setup, same as with peer to peer sessions.



Session hosted on a dedicated server. The server controls the game’s setup. The “host player’s” setup UI will be disabled in the session lobby.

Unlike peer to peer sessions, server-hosted sessions will be visible in the browser even when they are empty - they will show as “0/N PLAYERS”. The first player who joins the session becomes its “host player”, which is important for server types where the “host player” can change the session’s setup. This is similar to how the player who Creates a peer to peer session becomes its host.

The icon’s color is based on the expected latency of the session. For server-hosted sessions, this is derived directly from the ping to the server. For peer to peer sessions, this is based on the distance to the region where the session’s Steam lobby was created, which is the region of the player who created the session.

As a side note - the “people” icon on the picture above means that the servers are password-protected.

## Servers that control the game

The way a server controls the game depends entirely on how the server is configured. You won't know that just from the browser. Each server that controls the game will disable the lobby setup options on the “player host” - those will be always controlled by the server. Some servers might also take over the track selection, or vehicle selection, or restrict vehicle selection to specific vehicle class. Servers running the standard “sms\_motd” addon on them should inform all players about the control setup when they join the session in the lobby chat box.

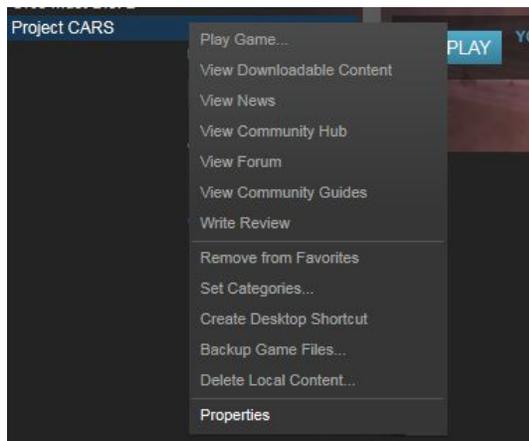
## Manually creating session on Dedicated Server

This is the old method of using dedicated servers, before the game supported joining empty servers. It remains available in the game for advanced users only, in most cases you will not need it.

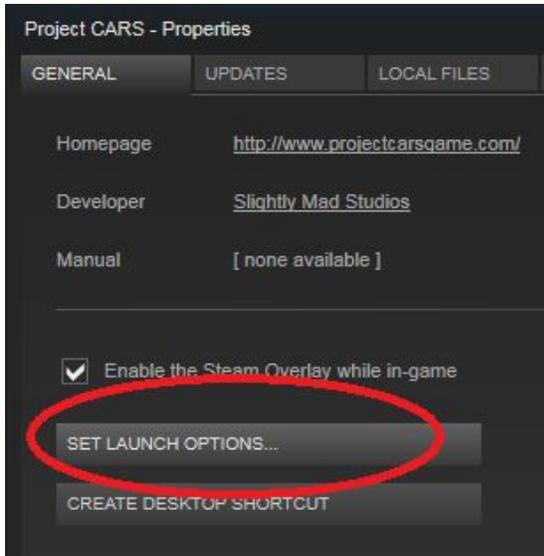
As an alternative to joining empty servers, you can use the Online-Create screen to also create session on specific empty dedicated servers. The only advantage of using this approach is to ensure that the player becomes the “player host”, and that the server starts with settings set in the Create screen. This is also why this approach can be used to join only servers controlled by “player hosts”. Servers that control game settings can't be joined this way.

There is no dedicated UI to choose server to allocate in the Online-Create screen. Instead you have to use the command-line.

To change the arguments passed to the game from Steam, go to your Library, right click Project CARS and choose Properties.



Choose SET LAUNCH OPTIONS on the GENERAL tab:

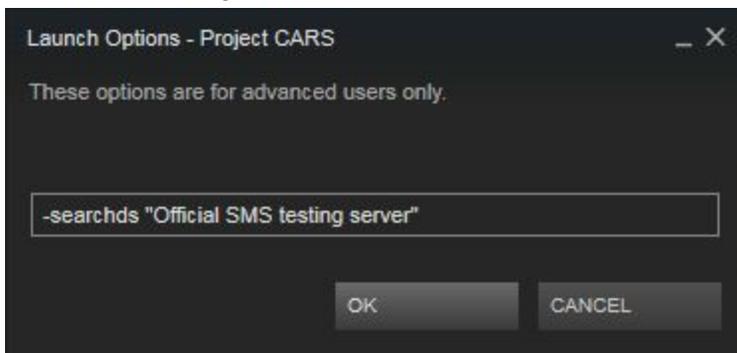


And then enter the command-line options in the box that appears.

There are two command-line options you can pass to the game:

- -autods: In this mode the game will enumerate all open dedicated servers that are currently available - the servers must be public, not password-protected and not used by the game. It first looks for servers available on your LAN, then the Internet, and automatically pick a server with the best latency if there are any public servers available.
- -searchds "SERVER NAME": Searches for available dedicated server matching SERVER NAME. If there are multiple servers matching that name (as substring) the server with the best latency will be used. So for example '-searchds "test"' would match servers named "SMS test server" or "my testing server". The server can be password-protected, in which case the game will ask you for the password before creating a session on the server.

So for example to create a session on one of our public dedicated servers you would use this command-line argument:



When such command-line is used, the game will allocate the multiplayer session on a dedicated server instead of creating a peer to peer session.