

How to SSH to nice.fas.harvard.edu from Windows

Recall that nice.fas.harvard.edu refers to a cluster of computers running Linux on which you have an account (your so-called FAS account). Even though those computers are locked away in the basement of the Science Center (and might not even have monitors or keyboards), you can still “open a shell” on them in order to execute commands remotely via a protocol called SSH.¹ On this cluster you have several megabytes of storage space (your so-called home directory). To SSH to nice.fas.harvard.edu, then, is to access your account and, in turn, home directory on this cluster remotely. All you need is an SSH client, a program that “speaks” SSH.

You’re welcome to use any SSH client for CSCI E-259. This document explains how to install and use SecureCRT, commercial software for Windows for which Harvard has a site license; it’s installed on most PCs around campus and can also be installed on yours.²

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¹ A “protocol” is essentially a language that computers speak in order to communicate.

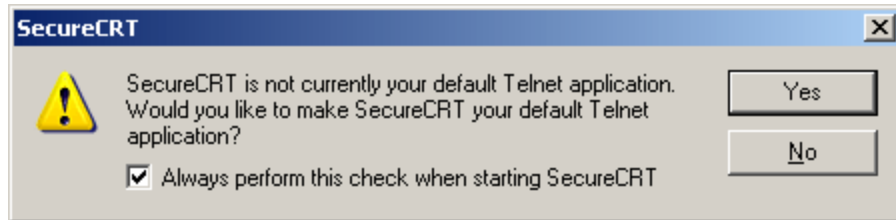
² A popular alternative is PuTTY, which is also available for download via the course’s website under **Software**.

Installing SecureCRT

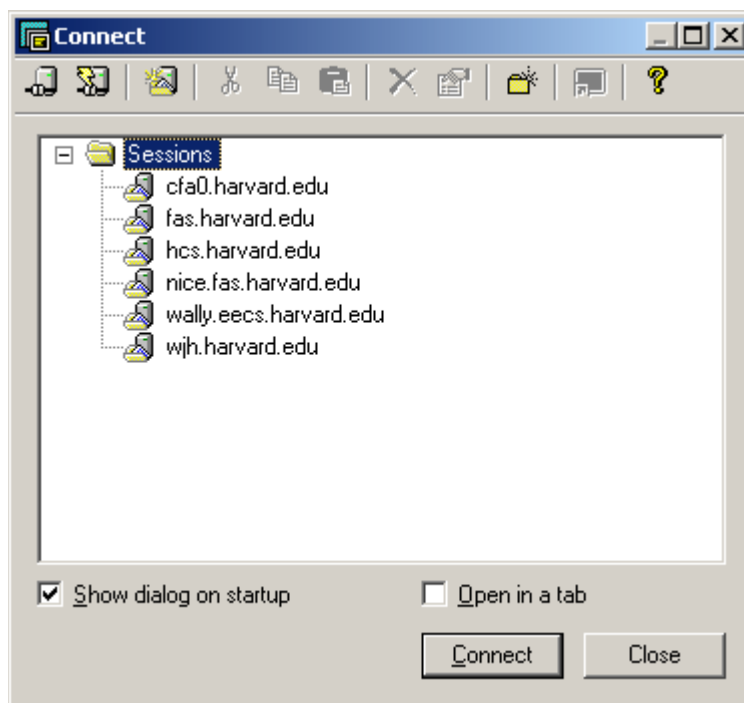
If SecureCRT is not already installed on your computer, download the installer for SecureCRT to your desktop via the course's website under **Software**. Double-click the installer's icon and follow the on-screen directions. It's fine to breeze through them, leaving all defaults selected.

Launching SecureCRT

Launch SecureCRT via its icon. If you see a window like the below, just click **YES** and leave the checkbox checked.



You should then see a window like the below appear. If not, make it appear by going to **File → Connect...**



The window you see may or may not list as many sessions. If `nice.fas.harvard.edu` does not appear in the list, proceed to **Creating a Session**, below. If `nice.fas.harvard.edu` does appear in the list, skip to **Configuring a Session**.

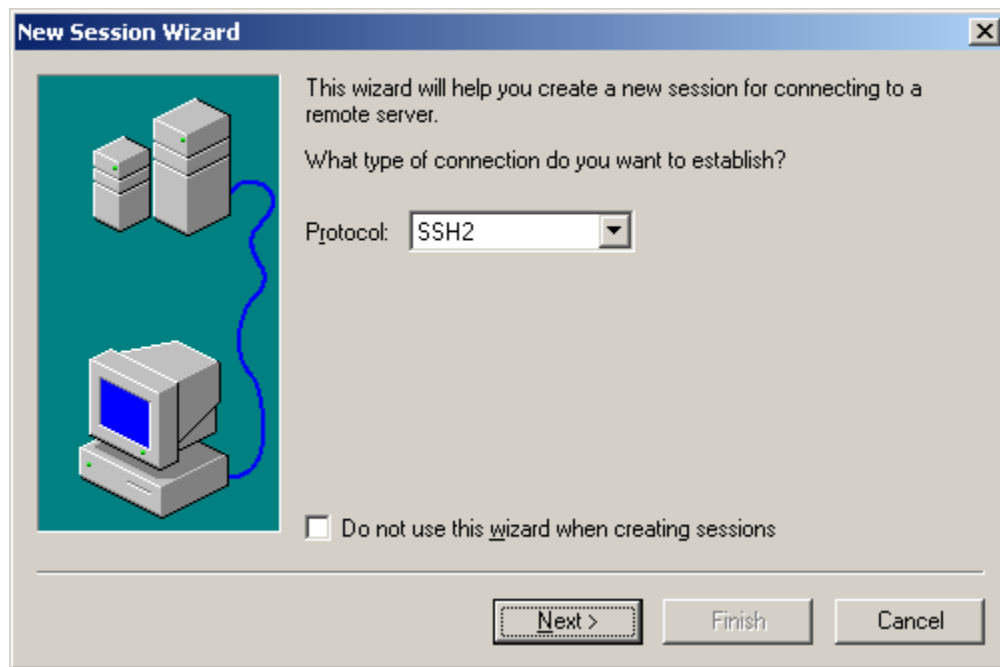
Creating a Session

If you're using SecureCRT on your own computer, you should need to create a session for `nice.fas.harvard.edu` only once. On a PC in one of Harvard's labs, you may need to create a session each time you use the PC, as lab PCs' hard drives tend to be restored to defaults upon logout or overnight.

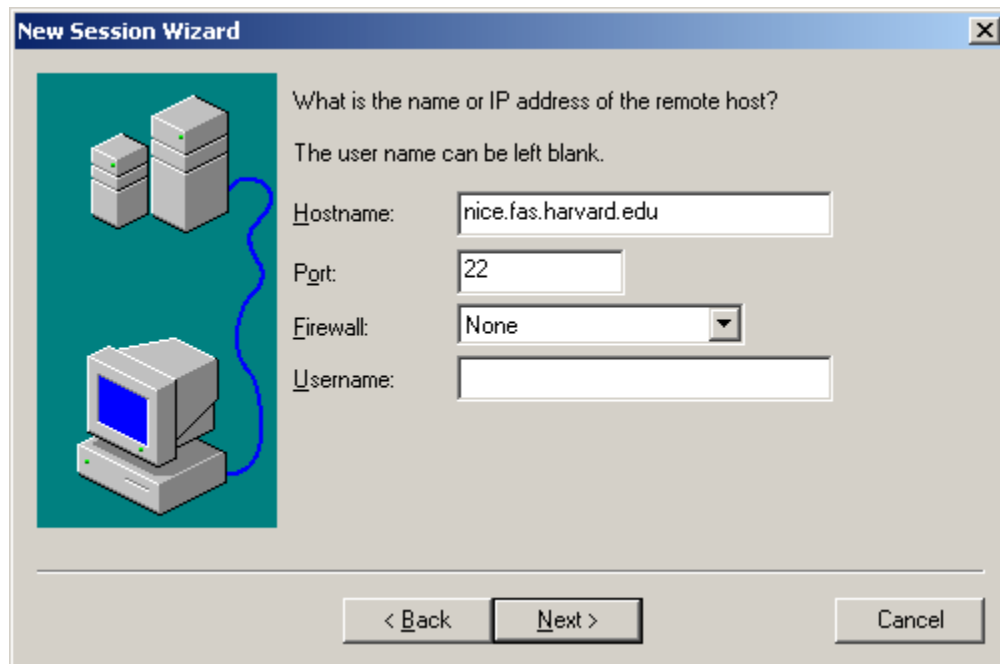
In the **Connect** window (pictured above), click the third icon over from the top-left that looks like the below.



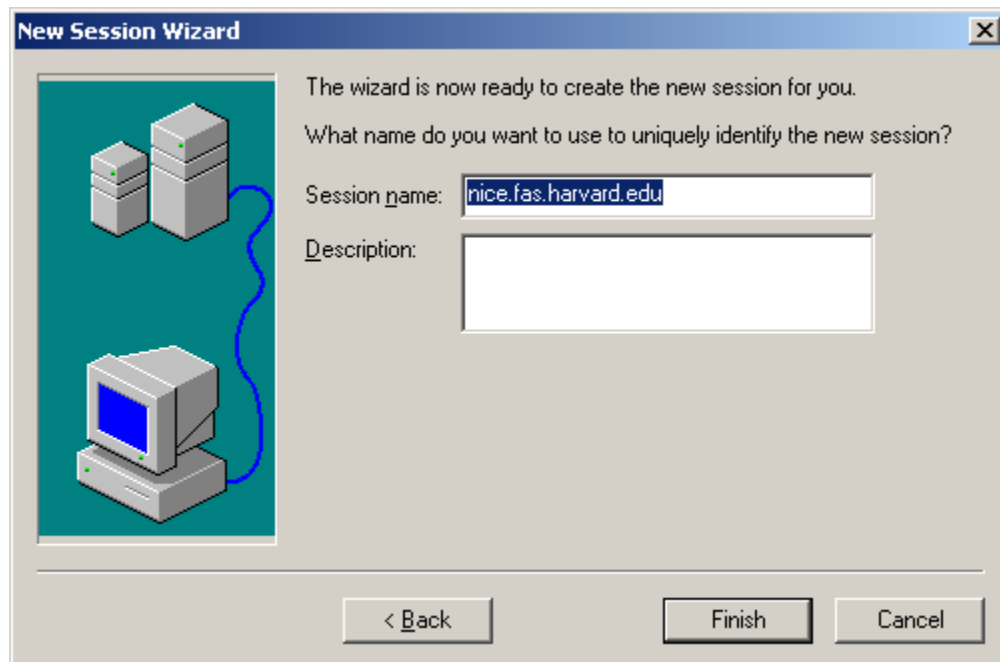
Make the window that appears look exactly like the below.



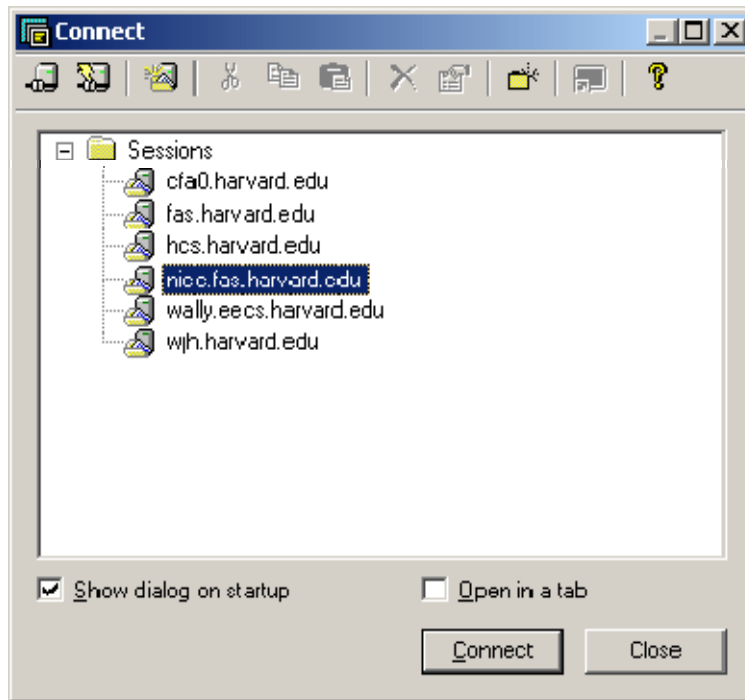
Click **Next** and make the window that appears look exactly like the below.



Click **Next** yet again and make the window that appears look exactly like the below.



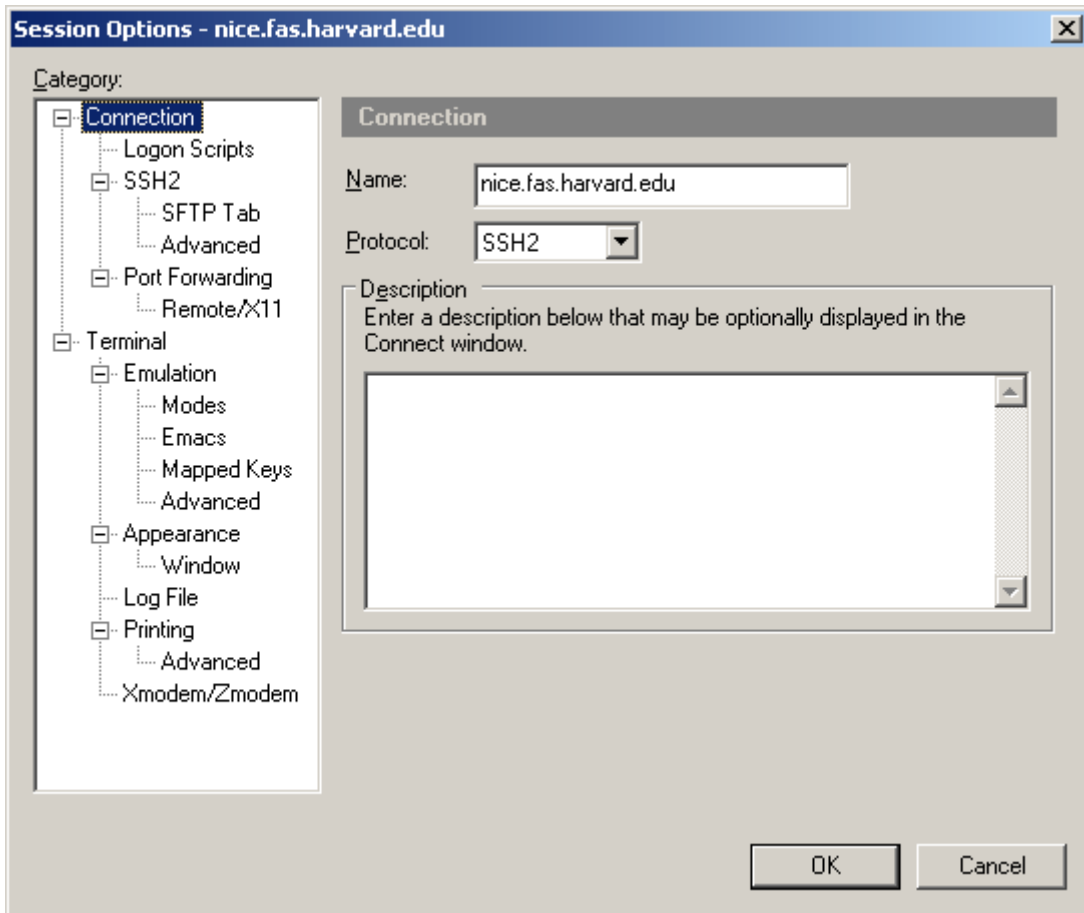
Finally, click **Finish**. You should see a window like the below appear. Again, the window you see may or may not list as many sessions, but it should now at least include `nice.fas.harvard.edu`.



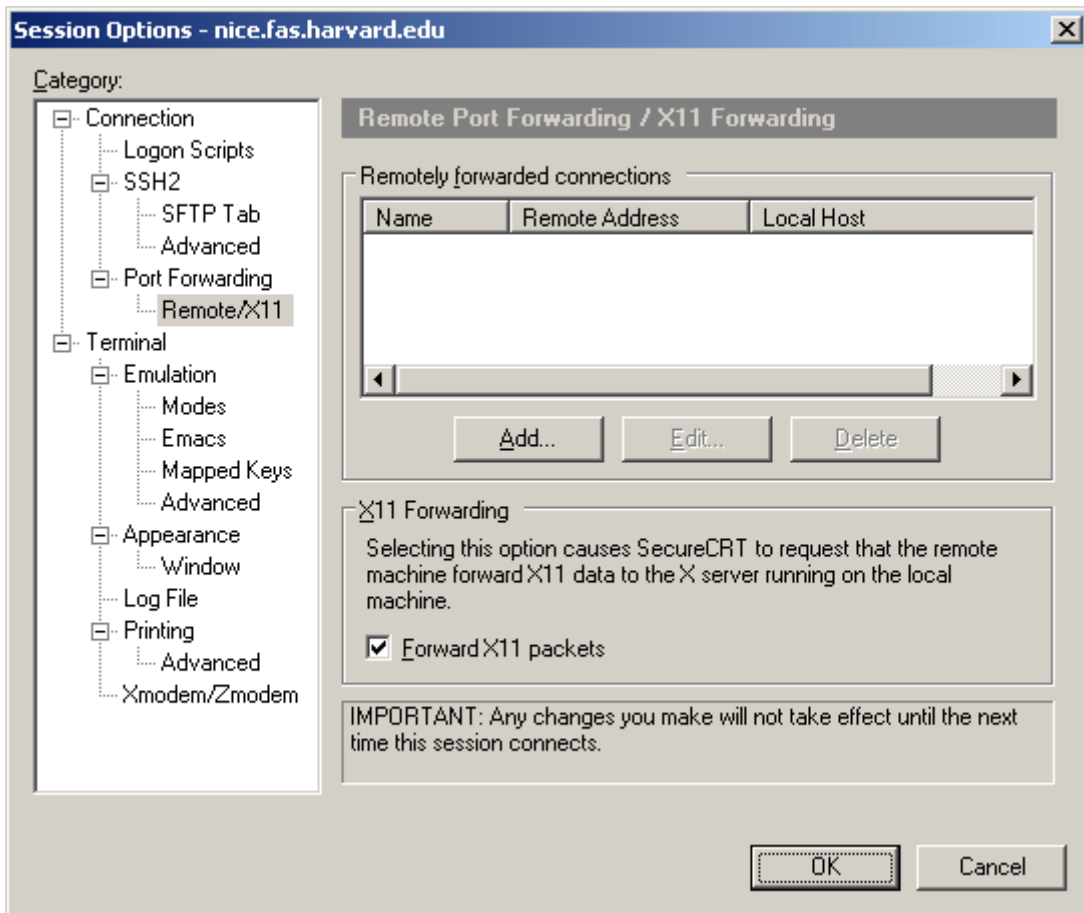
Configuring a Session

If you're using SecureCRT on your own computer, you should need to configure a session for `nice.fas.harvard.edu` only once. On a PC in one of Harvard's labs, you may need to configure a session each time you use the PC, as lab PCs' hard drives tend to be restored to defaults upon logout or overnight.

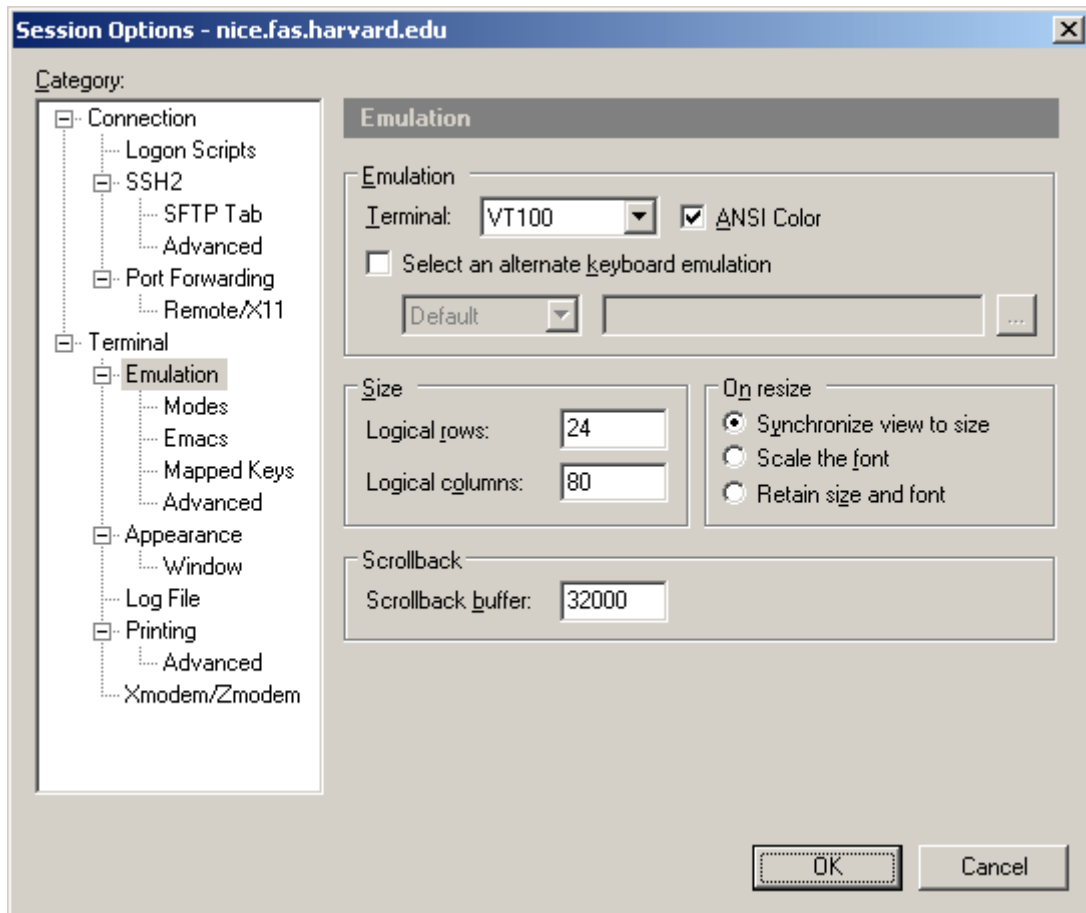
In the **Connect** window (pictured above), right-click the icon to the left of `nice.fas.harvard.edu` and choose **Properties**. You should see a window like the below.



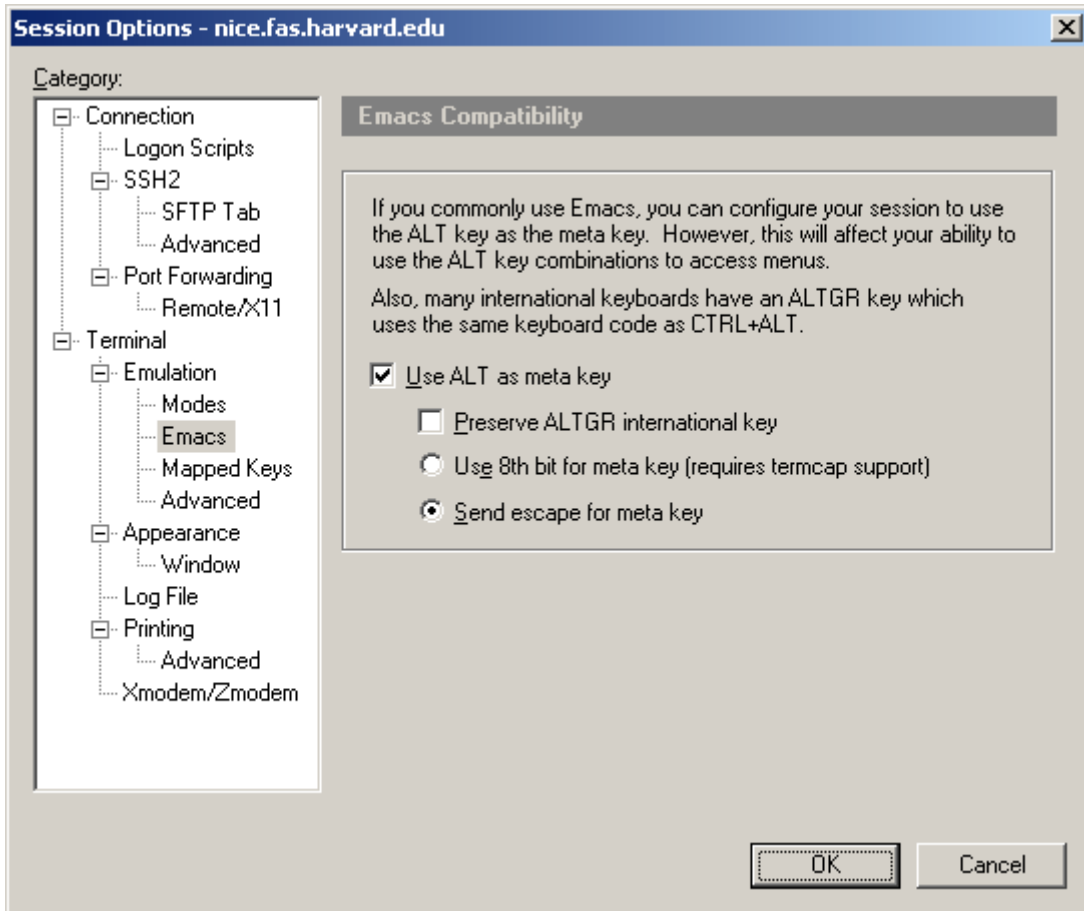
Click **Remote/X11**, and make the window that appears look exactly like the below.



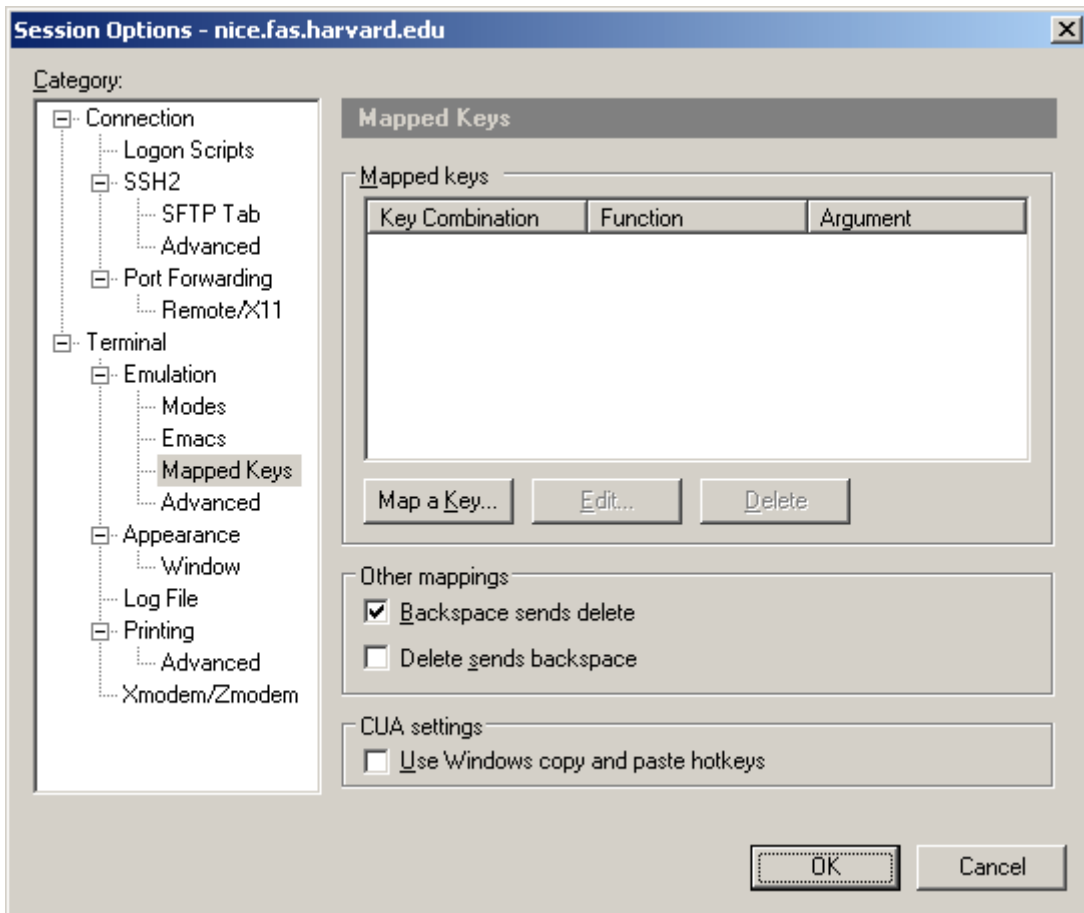
Click **Emulation**, and make the window that appears look exactly like the below.



Click **Emacs**, and make the window that appears look exactly like the below.



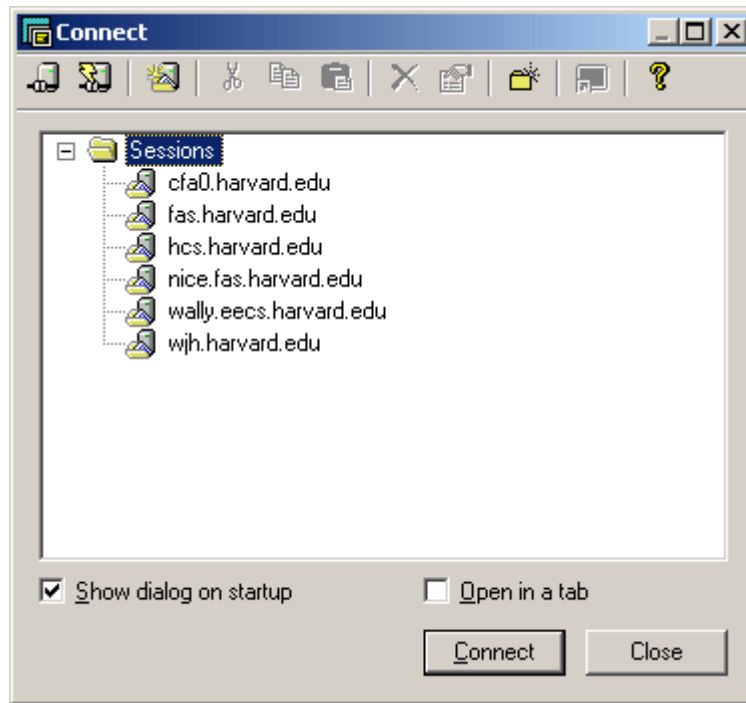
Click **Mapped Keys**, and make the window that appears look exactly like the below.



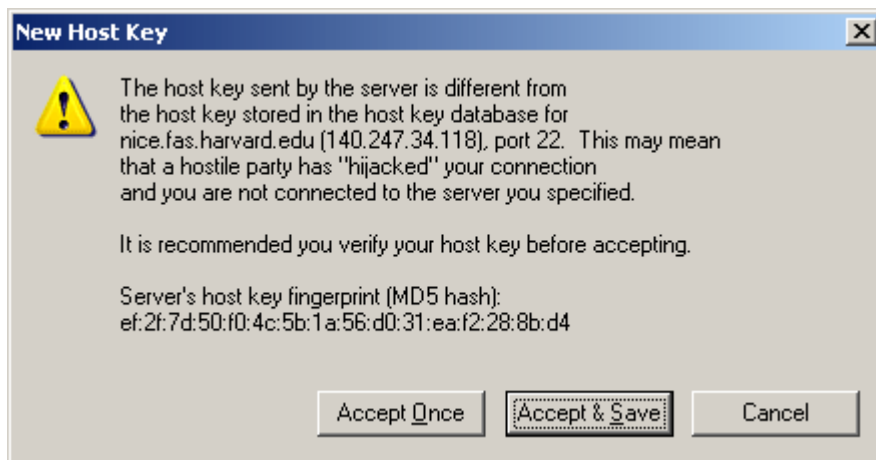
If you're feeling adventurous, you're welcome to make other changes to settings as you see fit. Ultimately, click **OK**.

Using SecureCRT

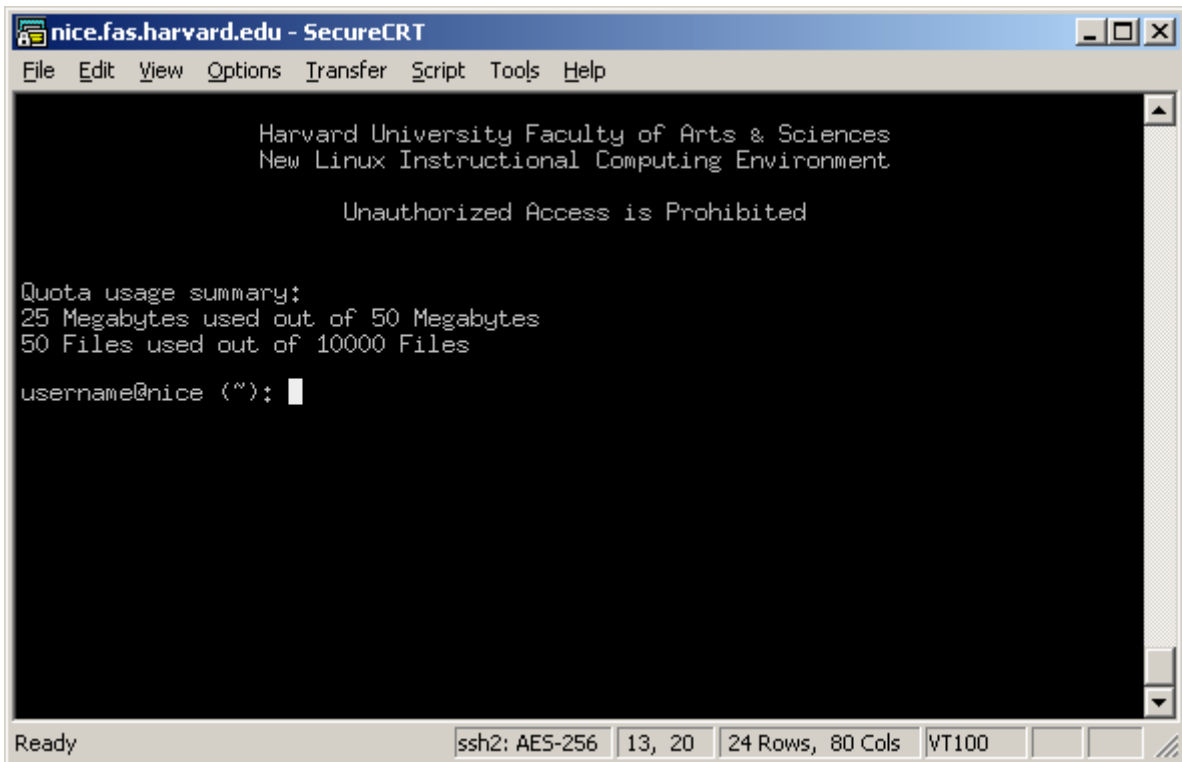
Launch SecureCRT. Assuming you (or somebody) has already created and configured a session for nice.fas.harvard.edu, you should see a window like the below.



Highlight nice.fas.harvard.edu by clicking it, then click **Connect**. If you see a window like the below, click **Accept & Save**.



Provide your username and password if prompted. A window like the below should then appear, possibly with additional text and a different prompt.



```
nice.fas.harvard.edu - SecureCRT
File Edit View Options Transfer Script Tools Help
Harvard University Faculty of Arts & Sciences
New Linux Instructional Computing Environment
Unauthorized Access is Prohibited
Quota usage summary:
25 Megabytes used out of 50 Megabytes
50 Files used out of 10000 Files
username@nice (~): █
Ready ssh2: AES-256 13, 20 24 Rows, 80 Cols VT100
```

At this point, you have successfully SSHed to `nice.fas.harvard.edu` and are thus in control of your account! To execute a command, type it (*e.g.*, `nano questions.txt`), then hit **Enter**.

May that you never have to read all of these directions again!