

FLEXIBLE COPY TRADE

Version 1.41

MT4 & MT5 Edition

Dual-Mode Trade Copier — Enterprise Final

Supports MT5 → MT5 | MT5 → MT4 | MT4 → MT4 | MT4 → MT5

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*This document covers installation, configuration, and operation of Flexible Copy Trade v1.41 for
MetaTrader 4 and MetaTrader 5.*

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1. Introduction

Flexible Copy Trade (FCT) is a professional, dual-mode trade copier Expert Advisor (EA) designed for MetaTrader 4 (MT4) and MetaTrader 5 (MT5). It enables seamless, real-time trade copying between multiple terminal instances — whether on the same computer or different computers sharing a common network folder.

A single EA file operates in either Master mode (broadcasting trades) or Slave mode (receiving and replicating trades). This architecture makes deployment extremely flexible: one Master can serve an unlimited number of Slaves simultaneously.

1.1 Key Features

- Dual-mode: Master (sender) and Slave (receiver) in one EA file
- Supports MT5-to-MT5, MT5-to-MT4, MT4-to-MT4, and MT4-to-MT5 copy trading
- Three lot sizing modes: Fixed, Multiplier, and Proportional (auto-risk)
- Reverse trading — inverts Buy/Sell on the Slave side
- Smart symbol auto-mapping with 5-layer suffix probing (m, i, .raw, .pro, cross-suffix, etc.)
- Real-time SL/TP synchronization with optional custom override
- Copy pending orders (Buy Limit, Sell Limit, Buy Stop, Sell Stop)
- Slave-side Trailing Stop and Break-Even protection
- Master disconnect detection with optional emergency auto-close
- Multi-Slave heartbeat monitoring with live on-chart dashboard
- Password-protected signal channel — unauthorized Slaves are silently rejected
- Account whitelist for license control
- Signal debounce engine (v1.41) — prevents phantom closes during brief signal drops
- Write-lock retry engine — atomic file update compatible with MT4/MT5 simultaneous access
- Smart Order Fill engine — auto-selects FOK / IOC / RETURN fill mode per broker

1.2 Supported Copy Directions

Master Terminal	Slave Terminal	Notes
MT5	MT5	Both run the MQ5 version of Flexible Copy Trade
MT5	MT4	Master runs MQ5; Slave runs MQ4 (MT4 port)
MT4	MT4	Both run the MQ4 version of Flexible Copy Trade
MT4	MT5	Master runs MQ4; Slave runs MQ5 — fully supported in v1.41

NOTE: v1.41 introduces full MT4 → MT5 support via a universal binary string protocol (`FCT_WriteString` / `FCT_ReadString`) that is compatible across both platforms.

1.3 How It Works

FCT uses MetaTrader's shared Common folder to pass trade data between terminals:

- The Master EA scans open positions and pending orders, then writes a binary signal file ([ChannelName].bin) to the MT Common folder at a configurable interval (default: every 300 ms). It uses a write-lock retry engine and atomic rename to prevent file corruption when multiple platforms access it simultaneously.
- Each Slave EA reads that file every 1 second, validates the embedded password, and replicates open trades on its own account.
- Slaves also write heartbeat files ([ChannelName]_hb_[AccountNumber].bin) so the Master can count active Slave connections and display them on its dashboard.
- All communication is file-based — no internet connection, DLL, or external server is required.



NOTE: *The Common folder is typically located at:*

C:\Users\[Username]\AppData\Roaming\MetaQuotes\Terminal\Common\Files

2. Installation

2.1 File Versions

File	Platform	When to Use
Flexible-Copy-Trade-1_41	MetaTrader 5	Master or Slave on any MT5 terminal
Flexible-Copy-Trade-1_41	MetaTrader 4	Master or Slave on any MT4 terminal

2.2 Installing on MetaTrader 5 (MQ5)

- Open MetaTrader 5.
- If free version > Download and automatically installed.
- If paid version > Purchase product then download and automatically installed.
- Drag and drop the EA onto the chart where you want it to run.

⚠ IMPORTANT: Make sure 'Allow Automated Trading' is enabled in the EA properties dialog and the MT5 terminal's Algo Trading button is ON (green). The EA will print a critical warning in the Experts log every 60 seconds if algo trading is disabled.

2.3 Installing on MetaTrader 4 (MQ4)

- Open MetaTrader 4.
- If free version > Download and automatically installed.
- If paid version > Purchase product then download and automatically installed.
- Drag and drop the EA onto a chart.

⚠ IMPORTANT: In MT4 EA Properties → Common tab, enable 'Allow Automated Trading' to ensure all features work correctly.

3. Quick Start — Setup Scenarios

3.1 MT5 Master → MT5 Slave


Both terminals must be running on the same computer, OR both must have access to the same Common folder path (e.g., a shared network drive).

Step 1: Configure the Master (MT5)

- Drag Flexible-Copy-Trade-1_41 onto any chart on the Master MT5 terminal.
- Set EA Operation Mode = MASTER MODE.
- Set Signal ID / Channel Name to a unique name, e.g. MyChannel_01.
- Set Security Password to a strong password, e.g. MyPass123.
- Adjust other Master settings as needed (symbol filter, magic filter, update interval).
- Click OK. The blue Master dashboard appears on the chart.

Step 2: Configure the Slave (MT5)


- Drag Flexible-Copy-Trade-1_41 onto any chart on the Slave MT5 terminal.
- Set EA Operation Mode = SLAVE MODE.
- Set Master Signal ID = MyChannel_01 (must match Master's Channel Name exactly).
- Set Security Password = MyPass123 (must match Master's Security Password exactly).
- Configure lot sizing, SL/TP options, and protection settings as desired.
- Click OK. The red Slave dashboard appears on the chart.

 **TIP:** The Master dashboard will show the number of active Slaves once they connect — allow up to 10–15 seconds for the heartbeat files to register.

3.2 MT5 Master → MT4 Slave

The Master runs the MQ5 version on MT5. The Slave runs the MQ4 version on MT4. Both must share the same MetaQuotes Common folder (same computer recommended). Configuration steps are identical to Section 3.1. The only differences are:

- Master: Install Flexible-Copy-Trade-1_41 on MT5, set Mode = MASTER.
- Slave: Install Flexible-Copy-Trade-1_41 on MT4, set Mode = SLAVE.
- Use the same Channel Name and Password on both sides.

 **NOTE:** MT5 and MT4 share the same Common folder path on Windows, so file-based communication works seamlessly between them on the same machine.

3.3 MT4 Master → MT4 Slave

Both terminals use the MQ4 version. Setup is identical to Section 3.1 — simply use Flexible-Copy-Trade-1_41.mq4 on both Master and Slave terminals.

3.4 MT4 Master → MT5 Slave (New in v1.41)

v1.41 fully supports MT4 as Master with MT5 as Slave. The binary signal format has been unified using a platform-agnostic string protocol. Configuration steps:

- Master: Install Flexible-Copy-Trade-1_41 on MT4, set Mode = MASTER.
- Slave: Install Flexible-Copy-Trade-1_41 on MT5, set Mode = SLAVE.
- Both must share the same Common folder. Use identical Channel Name and Password.

NOTE: MT4 pending order type codes (Buy Limit=2, Sell Limit=3, Buy Stop=4, Sell Stop=5) are identical to MT5, so pending orders copy correctly in both directions.

3.5 One Master, Multiple Slaves

To connect multiple Slaves to one Master:

- Configure the Master once as described above.
- On each Slave terminal, load the EA with the same Channel Name and Password.
- Each Slave instance can have different lot sizes, symbol mappings, and protection settings.
- The Master dashboard automatically counts and displays all connected Slaves.

NOTE: There is no built-in limit on the number of Slaves. Performance depends on your computer's disk I/O speed, since all communication uses file writes to the Common folder.

4. Input Parameters — Complete Reference

The table below uses the format: Input Variable Name \ Display Name. The Display Name is the label shown in the EA settings panel. Parameters are grouped exactly as they appear in the settings dialog.

NOTE: All parameters apply to BOTH MT4 and MT5 versions unless specifically noted.

4.1 General Settings

Input Variable \ Display Name	Description	Default	Notes
InpEAMode \ EA Operation Mode	Selects whether this EA instance acts as a Master (trade sender) or Slave (trade receiver). This is the most critical setting — ensure it is correctly set on each terminal.	MASTER MODE	Must be different on each side: MASTER on sender, SLAVE on receiver.
InpChannelName \ Signal ID / Channel Name	Unique identifier for the signal channel. The Master writes a file named [ChannelName].bin to the Common folder. The Slave reads from this same file. Both sides must use an identical value.	FlexCopy_Signal	Use alphanumeric characters and underscores only. Avoid spaces and special characters. Case-sensitive.
InpAuthorizedAccounts \ Whitelist Accounts (CSV)	Comma-separated list of account numbers authorized to run this EA. If empty, any account can run it. If set, only listed accounts will initialize — others print an error and stop.	(empty)	Example: 12345678,87654321. Useful for license enforcement or restricting EA to specific accounts.

4.2 Master Configuration

These settings are only active when the EA is running in MASTER MODE. They are ignored by the Slave.

Input Variable \ Display Name	Description	Default	Notes
InpUpdateInterval \ Update Interval (ms)	How frequently (in milliseconds) the Master writes the signal file to the Common folder. Lower values give faster copying; higher values reduce CPU and disk usage.	300	Recommended range: 100–2000 ms. 300 ms is optimal for most setups. Use 100–200 ms for scalping.
InpCopyManual \ Copy Manual Trades	When enabled, the Master broadcasts trades opened manually by the trader (magic number = 0) in addition to EA-placed trades. Disable to	true	Set to false if you only want to copy trades from a specific EA identified by InpFilterMagic.

Input Variable \ Display Name	Description	Default	Notes
	broadcast only trades from EAs.		
InpFilterMagic \ <i>Filter by Magic Number (0 = All)</i>	If non-zero, the Master broadcasts only trades whose magic number matches this value. Set to 0 to broadcast trades from all sources (subject to InpCopyManual setting).	0	<i>Use a specific magic number to copy only from one particular EA. Example: 12345 copies only trades with magic 12345.</i>
InpSymbolFilter \ <i>Symbol Filter (CSV)</i>	Comma-separated list of symbols to broadcast. Only trades on the listed symbols will be sent. Leave blank to broadcast all symbols.	(empty)	<i>Example: XAUUSD, EURUSD, GBPUSD. Useful if you only want to copy specific instruments.</i>
InpMasterPassword \ <i>Security Password</i>	Password embedded in every signal file. The Slave verifies this password on each read cycle. If it does not match, the Slave silently ignores the entire signal file for that cycle.	FlexCopy_Password	<i>Choose a strong, unique password. Must exactly match InpSlavePassword on the Slave side. Case-sensitive.</i>
InpShowDashboard \ <i>Show Dashboard</i>	Displays an information panel on the chart showing the EA mode, account number, active Slave count, number of positions being broadcast, and the channel name.	true	<i>Set to false to hide the panel if it overlaps with other chart objects or indicators.</i>

4.3 Slave: Connection

These settings are only active when the EA is running in SLAVE MODE.

Input Variable \ Display Name	Description	Default	Notes
InpMasterSignalID \ <i>Master Signal ID</i>	The channel name of the Master to connect to. The Slave reads the file [MasterSignalID].bin from the Common folder. This MUST exactly match the Master's InpChannelName.	FlexCopy_Signal	<i>Case-sensitive. Any mismatch means the Slave finds no signal file and copies nothing.</i>
InpSlavePassword \ <i>Security Password</i>	The password the Slave uses to verify the signal file. Must be identical to the Master's InpMasterPassword. If passwords differ, the Slave rejects the entire signal without error output to the user.	FlexCopy_Password	<i>Must match the Master's Security Password exactly.</i>

Input Variable \ Display Name	Description	Default	Notes
InpHeartbeatTimeout \ Heartbeat Timeout (sec)	Number of seconds after which the Slave considers the Master disconnected if the signal file timestamp has not advanced. Controls the InpCloseDisconnect feature. Also determines how long a Slave counts as 'active' on the Master dashboard (timeout × 3).	30	<i>Increase if the Master terminal freezes briefly (e.g., slow VPS). Typical range: 15–60 seconds.</i>
InpSlaveMagic \ Slave Magic Number	Magic number assigned to all trades opened by this Slave EA. Used to identify Slave-owned positions for management (SL/TP sync, trailing stop, break-even, close-on-disconnect). Must be unique across all EAs on the Slave terminal.	270426	<i>Do not use 0. Each Slave instance should have a different magic number if running multiple Slaves on the same account.</i>

4.4 Slave: Strategy

Input Variable \ Display Name	Description	Default	Notes
InpReverseTrade \ Reverse Trading (Invert Buy/Sell)	When enabled, the Slave opens trades in the opposite direction of the Master. A Master BUY becomes a Slave SELL, and vice versa. SL/TP distances are mirrored around the Slave's actual open price when InpCopySLTP is also enabled.	false	<i>Useful for hedge accounts or counter-trend strategies. Ensure your broker supports hedging (opposite positions on the same symbol).</i>
InpLotMode \ Lot Sizing Mode	Determines how the Slave calculates its trade size: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fixed Lot: always uses InpFixedLot regardless of Master lot. Multiplier: Slave lot = Master lot × InpLotMultiplier. Auto Risk (Proportional): Slave lot = Master lot × (Slave Balance ÷ Master Balance) × InpAutoRisk. 	LOT_FIXED	<i>Proportional mode is the most sophisticated — scales lot size based on the balance ratio between accounts.</i>
InpFixedLot \ Fixed Lot Size	Lot size used for every trade when Lot Sizing Mode = Fixed Lot. Ignored for other lot modes.	0.01	<i>Must be ≥ broker minimum lot size. Typical minimum: 0.01 lots.</i>
InpLotMultiplier \ Lot Multiplier (x Master Lot)	Multiplier applied to the Master's lot size when Lot Sizing Mode = Multiplier. Example: if Master trades 1.0 lot and multiplier is 0.5, Slave opens 0.5 lot.	1.0	<i>Values < 1.0 reduce size; values > 1.0 increase size. 1.0 = exact copy of Master lot.</i>
InpAutoRisk \ Auto Risk Factor (Proportional)	Scaling factor applied on top of the balance ratio in Proportional mode. At 1.0, the Slave's lot is purely proportional to account balance. At 0.5, it is halved; at 2.0, it is doubled.	1.0	<i>Only active when Lot Sizing Mode = Auto Risk (Proportional).</i>

Input Variable \ Display Name	Description	Default	Notes
InpMaxLotSize \ <i>Max Lot Size</i>	Absolute maximum lot size the Slave will ever open, regardless of the calculated result. Acts as a safety cap for all lot modes.	5.0	<i>Always set a reasonable cap to prevent oversized positions from unexpected signals or calculation edge cases.</i>
InpMaxTradeAge \ <i>Max Trade Age to Copy (sec, 0=No Limit)</i>	Maximum age in seconds of a Master trade that the Slave will copy. If the trade on the Master is older than this value when the Slave first sees it, the trade is silently skipped. Set to 0 to copy trades regardless of age.	5	<i>Uses the Master's server clock for cross-broker accuracy. Prevents copying very old positions that were already open when the Slave EA first started.</i>

4.5 Slave: Execution & Mapping

Input Variable \ Display Name	Description	Default	Notes
InpMapMode \ <i>Symbol Mapping Mode</i>	Controls how the Slave maps the Master's symbol name to its own broker's symbol name: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Auto Mapping: automatically probes common broker suffixes (m, i, x, c, pro, raw, stp, ecn, +, .m, .i, .pro, .raw, .stp, .ecn, .c). Manual Mapping String: uses the explicit mapping table in InpManualMapString. 	MAP_AUTO	<i>Use Manual mode when Auto mode cannot resolve the correct symbol (e.g., broker uses 'GOLD' instead of 'XAUUSD').</i>
InpManualMapString \ <i>Manual Mapping String</i>	Comma-separated list of symbol mappings in the format MASTER_SYMBOL:SLAVE_SYMBOL. Only active when Symbol Mapping Mode = Manual Mapping String.	XAUUSD:GOLD	<i>Example: XAUUSD:GOLD, EURUSD:EURUSDm, BTCUSD:BITCOIN. Manual map takes highest priority; unmatched symbols fall through to auto mapping.</i>
InpMaxSlippage \ <i>Max Allowed Spread/Slippage (Points)</i>	Maximum current spread (in points) on the Slave's symbol acceptable before the EA skips opening a new trade. Protects against opening during abnormally wide spreads.	1000	<i>For XAUUSD on a 5-digit broker: spread of 30 pips = 300 points. Set conservatively for your specific broker and instrument.</i>
InpWaitBetterPrice \ <i>Wait for Better Price</i>	If enabled, the Slave waits for the current market price to be equal to or better than the Master's open price before executing. BUY trades wait for ASK ≤ Master open; SELL trades wait for BID ≥ Master open.	false	<i>Reduces fill price deviation but may delay or miss entries during fast-moving markets. Recommended: keep disabled unless slippage is consistently significant.</i>

Input Variable \ Display Name	Description	Default	Notes
InpCopyPending \ Copy Pending Orders	When enabled, the Slave also copies the Master's pending orders (Buy Limit, Sell Limit, Buy Stop, Sell Stop). When disabled, only market-executed (instant) orders are copied.	true	<i>Disable if you only want to copy filled market positions and not pending orders.</i>

4.6 Slave: Exit & Protection

Input Variable \ Display Name	Description	Default	Notes
InpCopySLTP \ Copy SL & TP (Supports Real-time Sync)	When enabled, the Slave copies the Master's Stop Loss and Take Profit values and keeps them synchronized in real time. If the Master modifies SL/TP, the Slave updates its own positions on the next sync cycle.	true	<i>Disable to manage SL/TP independently on the Slave side (use InpCustomSL / InpCustomTP for fixed values).</i>
InpCustomSL \ Custom SL (Points)	Overrides the Master's SL with a fixed distance from the Slave's actual open price, in points. If set to 0, the Master's SL is used (subject to InpCopySLTP). A non-zero value takes priority over Master SL.	0	<i>Example: 500 = 50 pips SL on a 5-digit broker. Fixed and does not follow Master modifications after the trade opens.</i>
InpCustomTP \ Custom TP (Points)	Overrides the Master's TP with a fixed distance from the Slave's actual open price, in points. Works identically to InpCustomSL. If 0, uses Master's TP.	0	<i>Example: 1000 = 100 pips TP on a 5-digit broker.</i>
InpCloseDisconnect \ Close All if Master Disconnects	If enabled and the Master's signal file stops updating for more than InpHeartbeatTimeout seconds, the Slave automatically closes all its managed positions as an emergency measure.	false	<i>Use with caution — a brief network glitch or PC sleep can trigger unwanted mass-close. Uses real elapsed time (GetTickCount) to avoid broker timezone issues.</i>
InpTrailingStop \ Trailing Stop Slave	Activates an independent trailing stop on the Slave's positions, in points. The Slave moves the SL behind price as it advances in profit. Set to 0 to disable.	0	<i>Operates independently of the Master's SL. If InpCopySLTP is on, the Slave's trailing SL takes priority when it is more favorable (further in profit direction) than the Master's SL.</i>
InpBEActivation \ Breakeven Activation	The profit distance (in points) at which the Slave moves the SL to the trade's open price (break-even point). Set to 0 to disable.	0	<i>Example: 300 = move SL to break-even when trade is 30 pips in profit (5-digit broker). Break-</i>

Input Variable \ Display Name	Description	Default	Notes
			<i>even fires first; trailing stop continues after.</i>
InpBEOffset \ <i>Breakeven Offset</i>	Additional offset (in points) added to the break-even SL level. Instead of placing SL exactly at open price, the EA places it at open price + offset (BUY) or open price – offset (SELL), locking in a small guaranteed profit.	0	<i>Example: 50 = lock in 5 pips of profit at the break-even trigger. Only active when InpBEActivation > 0.</i>
InpTradeComment \ <i>Custom Trade Comment</i>	Order comment attached to all trades opened by the Slave EA. Useful for identifying Slave trades in account history and trade reports.	Flex Copy	<i>Maximum 31 characters. Automatically truncated if longer.</i>

5. On-Chart Dashboard


When InpShowDashboard is enabled, the EA draws an information panel in the top-left corner of the chart. The panel's colour scheme differs by mode: dark blue for Master, dark red for Slave.

5.1 Master Dashboard

Field	Description
MODE	Always shows MASTER
ACCOUNT	The account number of the Master terminal
SLAVES	Number of active Slave connections detected via heartbeat files (updates every timer cycle)
BROADCAST	Number of positions (and pending orders) currently being broadcast to Slaves
CHANNEL	The Signal ID / Channel Name currently in use
RUNNING •	Green dot and text indicating the EA is active and running normally

5.2 Slave Dashboard

Field	Description
MODE	Always shows SLAVE
ACCOUNT	The account number of the Slave terminal
REVERSE	TRUE (orange) if Reverse Trading is active; FALSE (green) if copying in normal direction
MAGIC	The Slave Magic Number assigned to this Slave instance
CHANNEL	The Master Signal ID this Slave is listening to
RUNNING •	Green dot and text indicating the EA is active and running normally

 **TIP:** The dashboard is automatically removed and chart settings (candle colours, grid) are restored to their original values when the EA is removed from the chart.

6. Advanced Features

6.1 Smart Symbol Mapping (5-Layer Engine)

Different brokers often use different names for the same instrument. FCT v1.41 handles this with a 5-layer mapping engine applied in order of priority:

- **Layer 1 — Manual Mapping (highest priority):** If `InpMapMode = MAP_MANUAL` and a matching MASTER:SLAVE pair exists in `InpManualMapString`, that mapping is used immediately.
- **Layer 2 — Exact Match:** If the Master's symbol name exists verbatim on the Slave broker, it is used as-is.
- **Layer 3 — Auto-Add Suffix:** Probes the Master symbol with common suffixes appended: m, i, x, c, pro, raw, stp, ecn, +, .m, .i, .pro, .raw, .stp, .ecn, .c
- **Layer 4 — Auto-Strip Suffix:** If the Master symbol has a known suffix, strips it and checks if the base name exists on the Slave.
- **Layer 5 — Cross-Suffix:** Takes the stripped base name and probes all known suffixes to find a cross-broker match (e.g., XAUUSDm on Master → XAUUSDpro on Slave).

Manual Mapping String format: MASTER_SYMBOL:SLAVE_SYMBOL, separated by commas.

Example: XAUUSD:GOLD, EURUSD:EURUSDm, GBPUSD:GBPUSDpro

6.2 Lot Sizing Modes

Fixed Lot

Every trade opened by the Slave uses the exact lot size in `InpFixedLot`. Simple and predictable regardless of Master lot size.

Multiplier

Formula: Slave lot = Master lot × `InpLotMultiplier`

Example: if the Master opens 2.0 lots and `InpLotMultiplier` = 0.5, the Slave opens 1.0 lot.

Auto Risk (Proportional)

Formula: Slave lot = Master lot × (Slave Account Balance ÷ Master Account Balance) × `InpAutoRisk`

Example: Master account \$10,000 trades 1.0 lot. Slave account \$5,000 with `InpAutoRisk` = 1.0 opens 0.5 lot.

NOTE: All calculated lot sizes are capped by `InpMaxLotSize` and automatically constrained to the broker's minimum/maximum lot limits and volume step size.

6.3 Reverse Trading

When `InpReverseTrade` = true:

- BUY on Master → SELL on Slave
- SELL on Master → BUY on Slave
- BUY LIMIT on Master → SELL LIMIT on Slave (and vice versa)
- BUY STOP on Master → SELL STOP on Slave (and vice versa)
- SL and TP distances are mirrored symmetrically from the Slave's actual open price when `InpCopySLTP` is also active

⚠ IMPORTANT: Reverse trading is intended for hedging strategies. Ensure your broker allows simultaneous opposite positions on the same symbol (hedging/FIFO accounts only).

6.4 Break-Even & Trailing Stop

Break-Even

When price moves `InpBEActivation` points in profit, the Slave moves the SL to the trade's open price + `InpBEOffset` points (for BUY) or open price – `InpBEOffset` (for SELL). This locks the trade at a guaranteed minimum outcome.

Trailing Stop

When `InpTrailingStop` > 0, the Slave continuously moves the SL to maintain a fixed distance of `InpTrailingStop` points behind the current price. The SL only moves in the profitable direction — it never moves against the trade.

i NOTE: If both Break-Even and Trailing Stop are active, Break-Even fires first when the activation threshold is reached. The Trailing Stop then continues to manage the SL as price advances further.

i NOTE: When `InpCopySLTP` is also active, the Slave's local SL (from trailing/break-even) takes priority over the Master's SL only when it represents a more favorable level (further in the profit direction).

6.5 Signal Debounce Engine (v1.41)

FCT v1.41 introduces a 4-second debounce buffer for phantom close protection. When a Slave position disappears from the Master's signal file (e.g., due to a momentary file read error or brief network lag), the Slave does not immediately close the position. Instead, it waits 4 seconds and only closes if the position is still absent on the next verification cycle.

i NOTE: This prevents the 'phantom close' bug where a Slave incorrectly closes live positions during brief communication gaps. The `DEBOUNCE_CLOSE_MS` constant is set to 4000 ms in the EA source code.

6.6 Write-Lock Retry Engine (v1.41)

The Master uses an atomic write process to prevent file corruption when multiple platforms (e.g., MT4 and MT5) access the Common folder simultaneously:

- The Master writes to a temporary file (`[ChannelName]_tmp.bin`) first, with up to 5 retry attempts (10 ms apart) if the file is locked.
- Once the write succeeds, the temporary file is atomically renamed to the main signal file (`[ChannelName].bin`) with up to 5 retry attempts.
- The Slave opens the main file with shared read/write access to avoid blocking the Master's write.

6.7 Smart Order Fill Engine (v1.41)

Before opening any trade, the Slave automatically detects the broker's supported order fill modes and selects the best available one:

- FOK (Fill-or-Kill): selected if the broker supports it (highest priority)
- IOC (Immediate-or-Cancel): selected if FOK is not available
- RETURN: selected as a fallback for all remaining brokers

i NOTE: This eliminates 'Unsupported Filling Mode' errors that occur when the EA uses a fill mode incompatible with the Slave's broker.

6.8 Master Disconnect Protection

When `InpCloseDisconnect = true`, the Slave monitors the Master's signal file timestamp using the local monotonic clock (`GetTickCount()` delta). If the Master's signal file has not been updated for more than `InpHeartbeatTimeout × 3` seconds, the Slave triggers an emergency close of all its managed positions.

⚠ IMPORTANT: This feature uses real elapsed time (not broker server time) to avoid false triggers caused by different broker time zones between Master and Slave.

6.9 Password Security

The Master embeds its `InpMasterPassword` in every signal file write. The Slave reads and verifies this password before processing any trade data. If passwords do not match, the Slave silently rejects the signal file for that cycle without any error message to the chart.

This prevents accidental cross-channel interference when multiple FCT channels are active on the same computer, and blocks unauthorized Slaves from reading your signal.

7. Troubleshooting

Problem	Solution / Cause
Slave does not copy any trades	1. Verify Channel Name matches on both sides (case-sensitive). 2. Verify Password matches on both sides. 3. Ensure AutoTrading is enabled on both terminals. 4. Ensure both terminals share the same Common folder path. 5. Check the Experts log tab in the terminal for error messages.
Password mismatch / no copy	InpSlavePassword on the Slave does not match InpMasterPassword on the Master. Both must be exactly identical, including capitalization and spaces.
'Symbol not found' or symbol mapping error	Switch InpMapMode to Manual and set the correct symbol pair in InpManualMapString. Ensure the target symbol is visible in the Slave's Market Watch (right-click → Show All).
Slave opens duplicate trades	Ensure InpSlaveMagic is unique and not used by any other EA on the Slave terminal. Do not run two Slave instances with the same magic number on the same account.
'Invalid Stops' error on Slave	SL or TP is too close to the current price (below broker's minimum stop level). FCT automatically clears SL/TP if within stop level. If error persists, check if InpCustomSL/TP values are too small for your broker.
Master dashboard shows 0 Slaves when Slaves are connected	Wait 10–15 seconds for heartbeat files to register. Check InpHeartbeatTimeout — if too low, Slave heartbeats may expire before the Master reads them. Verify Common folder access.
Slave closes all positions unexpectedly	InpCloseDisconnect is enabled and the Master's file was not updated within InpHeartbeatTimeout seconds. Check the Master terminal — it may have crashed, lost connection, or the chart was closed. Increase InpHeartbeatTimeout for more tolerance.
'Unsupported Filling Mode' error	This error is fixed in v1.41 by the Smart Order Fill Engine. Ensure you are running the latest version. If it persists, the broker may use a non-standard fill mode not yet detected.
Algo Trading disabled warning in log	The EA prints this warning every 60 seconds if Algo Trading (AutoTrading) is disabled in the terminal. Click the 'Algo Trading' button in MT5 or 'AutoTrading' in MT4 to enable it.
EA fails to compile	MQ5 file: requires MetaTrader 5 build 2361 or later. MQ4 file: requires MetaTrader 4 build 509 or later (for EventSetMillisecondTimer). Ensure #property strict is accepted by your MT4 build.
MT4 → MT5 copying not working	Ensure you are using v1.41 or later. Earlier versions do not support MT4 → MT5 direction. Verify both terminals share the same Common folder. Confirm Channel Name and Password match exactly.

8. Best Practices

8.1 General Recommendations

- Run the Master EA on a VPS or dedicated PC with a stable internet connection for uninterrupted signal broadcasting.
- Use a unique, secure Channel Name and Password for each trading operation. Never share your password.
- Always test on a demo environment before deploying on live accounts.
- Start with `InpFixedLot = 0.01` (minimum) to verify correct copying behavior before scaling up.
- Set `InpMaxLotSize` to a value appropriate for your account balance as a safety cap.
- Set a reasonable `InpMaxTradeAge` (5–30 seconds) to avoid copying stale positions.

8.2 For MT4 → MT5 or MT5 → MT4 Setups

- Install both versions on the same Windows PC to ensure they share the same Common folder automatically.
- MT4 uses `OP_BUY` (0) and `OP_SELL` (1); FCT handles all type translation internally — no manual adjustment needed.
- MT4 does not support partial position closes on some account types. If errors occur with lot size reduction, consider using `LOT_FIXED` mode instead of `Proportional`.

8.3 Performance Tips

- For fast scalping: reduce `InpUpdateInterval` to 100–200 ms on the Master.
- For swing trading: 500–1000 ms is sufficient and greatly reduces disk I/O.
- Avoid running more than 10 Slave instances per Master on the same computer to prevent file I/O bottlenecks.
- Place all terminals on the same local SSD to minimize file read/write latency.
- Keep the Common folder on a local drive, not a network share, for lowest latency.

8.4 Security Recommendations

- Change the default Password (`FlexCopy_Password`) to something unique and strong.
- Change the default Channel Name (`FlexCopy_Signal`) to a name only you know.
- Use `InpAuthorizedAccounts` to whitelist only the specific account numbers that should run this EA.
- Do not share your signal files folder with untrusted parties.

9. Version History

Version	Changes
v1.41	Signal Debounce Engine: 4-second buffer prevents phantom closes during brief signal gaps. Write-Lock Retry Engine: atomic rename with 5 retries prevents file corruption on MT4/MT5 simultaneous access. Smart Order Fill Engine: auto-selects FOK / IOC / RETURN fill mode per broker symbol. Full MT4 → MT5 support: universal binary string protocol (FCT_WriteString / FCT_ReadString). Algo Trading Sentinel: prints critical warning every 60 seconds if AutoTrading is disabled. Smart Suffix Stripper: enhanced 5-layer symbol mapping including cross-suffix resolution.
v1.29	MT4 port released — full feature parity with MT5 version. Timezone-safe heartbeat detection using GetTickCount() delta. Fixed netting account pending order fill tracking (DEAL_ENTRY_IN mapping). Stop level guard now clears SL/TP instead of rejecting the trade.
v1.28	Trade age filter uses Master server clock for cross-broker accuracy. Added AdjustForStopLevel() to validate SL/TP against broker minimum. Fixed pending order broadcast logic.
v1.27	Replaced comment-based ticket lookup with GlobalVariable mapping. Trade comment is now clean InpTradeComment value.
v1.26	Added open_time field to signal data for trade age filtering. Slave age filter introduced (InpMaxTradeAge).

10. Disclaimer

Flexible Copy Trade is a trade execution utility. It does not provide trading signals or investment advice. Past performance of any strategy copied using this tool does not guarantee future results.

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