

GETTING A HAM RADIO LICENSE

The rules for getting an amateur radio license are slightly different depending on which country you live in. In the USA, there are three license levels, or “license classes”. Technician, General and Extra are those three and are granted by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

The Technician License

For beginners, the Technician Class license is the entry level class which requires only a 35 multiple-choice question written examination. The test is written with the beginner in mind, and Morse Code is not required for this license. With a Technician Class license, you will have all ham radio privileges above 30 MHz. These privileges include the very popular 2-meter and 440 MHz bands.

Technician licensees enjoy using small hand-held, or “HT” radios to communicate with other hams in their local area. Technicians may operate FM voice, digital modes via their computers, amateur television, single-sideband voice and several other modes. You can even make international radio contacts via satellites, and repeater systems with Internet linked radio systems.

Preparing For The Exam

Taking the time to prepare for the exam is your first step to becoming a ham. Your best bet is to first locate a radio club in your area. Some radio clubs offer ham radio classes in which they will help prepare you for the exam. You may want to try getting hold of a club member which can answer your questions. You may even be invited to attend a local radio club meeting, as most clubs are open to the public.

If you cannot locate a club nearby or if, by chance, your local club does not offer classes that’s not a problem. Publishers including the ARRL publishes handy study guides designed to help you learn the things you need to know in order to pass the exam. You can read the full poll of questions and answers in which will be pulled for your exam as well. How easy is that?!

Taking The Exam

The Amateur Radio license examinations, commonly referred to as “V.E. Sessions”, are administered by ham radio volunteers. When you are ready, you will need to locate an exam session near you. The ARRL’s website includes an Exam Session Search engine which will help you locate an exam session near you. If you happen to be ready at this point and are feeling confident, we wish you good luck!