

How to get your FCC Technician Amateur Radio License

The following is information you may find useful if you want to receive an FCC license to use Amateur (Ham) radio.

To become an amateur radio operator you need to pass the FCC exam and obtain your FCC Technician Radio Operators license. The Technician License allows you to go on the air using all the UHF and VHF Amateur Radio bands commonly used for local contacts and regional emergency communication and to experiment with bits of the longer range HF radio frequency bands.

Earning your FCC Technician License is as simple as passing the 35 question FCC Element 2 multiple choice written exam. And it's not complicated -- no Morse Code is required. All you need to do is study some of the FCC rules and regulations and learn a little bit about how radios and repeaters systems work. With a little preparation, the Element 2 FCC exam is easy to pass.

Exams are given by Volunteer Examiners -- experienced Hams who administer the test as a public service at local locations. Exams are scheduled frequently -- usually every week. Exam times and places can be found on the American Radio Relay League website

<http://www.arrl.org/find-an-amateur-radio-license-exam-session>.

There are a number of ways to study for the Technician Exam -- Amateur Radio clubs have free classes, classes are available on line, and there are excellent self-study books available. My wife and I passed the Technician exam by studying "The ARRL Ham Radio License Manual 2nd Edition" on our own a few hours a day for about 10 days and by taking the practice tests we found at <http://www.qrz.com> -- that's all it took.

You can take the sample tests on line and learn if your answers were correct, and if not, the correct ones. You will eventually learn the answers to all the questions in the FCC Exam question pool. Some have passed the exam simply by practicing the sample tests on QRZ.com.

Most people do very well on the exam by reading the "The ARRL Ham Radio License Manual 2nd Edition" published by the Amateur Radio Relay League. It sells for \$29.95 and is available from Ham Radio Outlet in Burbank and at other radio supply stores. It's also available on line from the ARRL at:

<http://www.arrl.org/shop/Ham-Radio-License-Manual-Revised-2nd-Edition/>

Make sure the edition you purchase contains the question pool effective July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2014 for the most up to date information. This well written text is easy to read and contains all the questions available for use on the FCC exam.

Another book you might consider is the "2010-2014 Technician Class" by Gordon West (\$20.95), available at most radio supply stores, amateur radio stores (Ham Radio Outlet, Jun's Electronics), and on the Internet at www.w5yi.org.

The <http://www.qrz.com> and <http://arrl.org> web sites all contain a wealth of information to help you obtain a license.

I recommend the ARRL book, self study, and taking the sample tests. It's inexpensive and you can study at home at your own pace. If there is something you don't understand in the book I may be able to help you with a phone call or two. If not, there are other highly experienced Hams who are excellent teachers and will be pleased to help. And there are excellent free amateur radio classes in the Los Angeles area.

When all else fails, Amateur Radio works.

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