

# YOUR FIRST 30 DAYS AS A LICENSED HAM

A new Technician's action checklist · hamradiolicense.pages.dev

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## DAYS 1–3: Get Your Call Sign

- Check spam for FCC fee email (from do-not-reply@fcc.gov)
- Pay \$35 FCC fee at pay.fcc.gov — do this the same day you get the email
- Monitor wireless.fcc.gov/uls for call sign status change to "A-Active"
- Do NOT transmit until call sign is in FCC database — not when you pay, not on CSCE alone

## DAYS 3–7: Get On the Air

- Get a radio: Baofeng UV-5R (~\$28) or Yaesu FT-65R (~\$80)
- Buy a programming cable for your radio (~\$12)
- Download CHIRP (free at chirpmyradio.com)
- Find 3 local repeaters at repeaterbook.com — note output freq, offset, and CTCSS tone
- Program repeaters into radio using CHIRP
- Listen for 15–30 minutes before transmitting

## DAYS 7–14: Make Your First Contact

- Key up on a local repeater: "This is [call sign phonetically], new ham, monitoring"
- Have a first conversation — your location, your radio, how you got licensed
- Try the 2-meter national simplex calling frequency: 146.520 MHz
- Learn the NATO phonetic alphabet — use it when giving your call sign
- Practice identifying every 10 minutes and at end of each contact (FCC requirement)

## DAYS 14–21: Connect with the Community

- Find a local ham radio club: arrl.org/find-a-club
- Attend a club meeting — introduce yourself as a new Technician
- Find local nets and check in: r/amateurradio or ask on your local repeater
- Create a QRZ.com profile with your call sign
- If interested in emergency comms: contact local ARES group

## DAYS 21–30: Plan Your Next Step

- Decide: upgrade to General Class? (HF bands, worldwide contacts)
- Consider a home station setup: mobile radio + power supply + outdoor antenna
- Explore APRS: monitor 144.390 MHz or visit [aprs.fi](http://aprs.fi) to see your local network
- Field Day is every 4th weekend of June — find a local club operating event
- Set a 10-year license renewal reminder on your calendar

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## QUICK REFERENCE

Key Frequencies	Key Websites
146.520 MHz — 2m simplex calling 144.390 MHz — APRS 446.000 MHz — 70cm simplex calling 144.200 MHz — 2m SSB calling	<a href="http://fcc.gov/uls">fcc.gov/uls</a> — your license <a href="http://repeaterbook.com">repeaterbook.com</a> — find repeaters <a href="http://aprs.fi">aprs.fi</a> — live APRS map <a href="http://arrl.org">arrl.org</a> — national ham org <a href="http://hamstudy.org">hamstudy.org</a> — exam prep