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## ABOUT THE AMATEUR RADIO RELAY LEAGUE

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From: <http://www.arrl.org/about-arrl>

"ARRL is the national association for Amateur Radio in the US. Founded in 1914 by Hiram Percy Maxim as The American Radio Relay League, ARRL is a noncommercial organization of radio amateurs. ARRL numbers within its ranks the vast majority of active radio amateurs in the nation and has a proud history of achievement as the standard-bearer in amateur affairs. ARRL's underpinnings as Amateur Radio's witness, partner and forum are defined by five pillars: Public Service, Advocacy, Education, Technology, and Membership. "

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The ARRL promotes and provides support to amateur radio operators across the United States.

There are Amateur Radio clubs across the country that are affiliated with the ARRL. These clubs provide support to their membership and often provide training classes to help bring new people into the amateur radio family.



LOW POWER PORTABLE HAM RADIO

## What is Amateur Radio?

There are over 730,000 Amateur Radio operators in the US, licensed by the Federal Communications Commission. They are trained in communications techniques and basic electronics theory.

During emergencies and other times of need, Amateur Radio operators have provided worldwide public service. Amateur Radio has been recognized by FEMA and the American Red Cross as elements of the critical communications network needed during natural disasters and other emergencies.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT

Parks On The Air Home Page:  
<https://parksontheair.com>

Amateur Radio Relay League Home Page:  
<http://www.arrl.org>

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# Parks On The Air

PORTABLE AMATEUR RADIO



Cherry Plain State Park, NY

Operating a portable amateur radio station from a park pavilion can afford fantastic views! It also provides an opportunity to expose the public to the amateur radio service.



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## ABOUT PARKS ON THE AIR

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Parks On The Air (POTA) is a non-profit organization that supports the use of amateur radio in our state and national parks. Through promotion by Parks On The Air, more people will discover and enjoy our park system. This also directly helps amateur radio meet its charter of providing communications support in times of emergencies, such as after natural disasters,

POTA provides a website where amateur radio operators, often called "hams", can find nearby parks. Hams then set up temporary portable radio stations and attempt to contact as many fellow hams as possible. Visiting a park and getting on the air is called an "activation" and after each one, the hams will submit a list of their contacts to POTA. The goals are to activate as many parks as possible and to talk to as many stations as possible. Certificate awards are then given for a number of categories.

Hams, like other park visitors, must obey all park regulations and generally leave no trace of their operation after they leave. Some hams have radios in their car and simply operate from the parking lot. Some hams enjoy backpacking and hiking and may explore throughout the park setting up operations almost anywhere. The majority of hams will locate an available picnic or similar area and operate from there.

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## A TYPICAL STATION

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Although there is, perhaps, no "typical" ham radio station set up, all stations do have a few common elements.

### POWER SOURCE

All stations will require a power source, which for portable operations, is usually a battery or possibly a solar panel.

### INPUT MECHANISM

The operator will use either a microphone or a Morse code key to communicate with other hams.



Homemade Morse Code Key

### RADIO

There are many different makes and models of radio and although these come in various sizes, smaller is generally preferred for portable use.

Radios are also available in high and low power versions. Operating a radio with higher power means bringing bigger and heavier batteries!

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## A TYPICAL STATION CONTINUED...

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### ANTENNA

The final required component is an antenna. For portable operation this is generally just a few pieces of wire sometimes attached to a push up pole.

### ACCESSORIES

Accessories might include a pair of headphones or ear buds and a tablet or laptop computer.

A notepad or log book is used to keep track of the stations that have been contacted.



Low Power Station for Morse Code

Some hams gather all this gear into a single backpack for a truly portable setup!