

Getting Started with Amateur Radio

1. Hi there, so you want to be a ham radio operator. **Yes**
2. Well let's start with the process that you need to follow to get your Amateur Radio License. **Ok**
3. To get your license you have to pass a test that is administered by a local Amateur Radio group, we at SOARA (South Orange Amateur Radio Association) are such a group.
4. SOARA gives preparatory classes, do the testing and help you on your way with coaching.
 - a. It helps to start with a good Technician class license manual. We recommend the Gordon West Technician book. This book is available at SOARA meetings, Amazon and at Ham Radio Outlet in Anaheim.
 - b. Read the book and ignore the incorrect answers but concentrate on the question, the hint that Gordon usually gives and the correct answer. Highlighting only the correct answer helps many study.
5. Here are some practice test sites:
 - a. <https://www.qrz.com/hamtest/>
 - b. <https://hamexam.org/exam/12-Technician>
 - c. <aa9pw.com/radio/>
 - d. www.arrl.org/exam-practice
 - e. www.eham.net/exams/
6. SOARA offers ARRL VE license exams one hour before our monthly meetings. The fee is \$15. Go here for more information.
 - a. <https://www.soara.org/activities/ham-radio-examinations/>
 - b. Once you pass the test, you should receive your FCC callsign in about two weeks. Don't stop here. The learning just begins!
7. Get on the air. Be sure to listen to the traffic on the SOARA repeaters and become accustomed to the protocol. Please read all the SOARA guidelines. Go to www.soara.org then membership then application. A really good Q&A is part of the SOARA membership application.
8. Join an organization(s) and continue your emergency training and practice.
 - a. Many also join the national ARRL. The ARRL publishes a monthly magazine and sells many interesting books. www.arrl.org Also, they have an excellent book on emergency communications. SOARA is proud to be an ARRL Special Service Club!
 - b. www.mvraces.org
 - c. www.ocparks.com/about/volunteer/fire/
9. As previously said, the journey just begins with your license. You might consider joining SOARA. Membership dues help support our organization costs and keep the repeaters up-and-running. If you do join SOARA be sure to attend our events. We have monthly meetings except December, monthly newsletter called The Propagator, transmitter hunts, educational classes, SOARA Saturdays, weekly nets on HF & UHF/VHF, volunteer events, Elmer system, Summer picnic, Holiday party, and more.

Welcome to the exciting world of amateur radio.

73!