

AMATEUR RADIO LICENSES

Who licenses Amateur Radio stations and operators?

In the United States, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) issues Amateur Radio licenses. This is the same agency that licenses commercial broadcast radio stations and television stations.

Why does the FCC authorize the Amateur Radio Service?

The FCC regulations (47 CFR Part 97.1) state the following reasons for having an Amateur Radio service:

- To voluntarily provide emergency communications.
- To contribute to the advancement of the radio art.
- To encourage and improve amateur communications and technical applications.
- To increase the number of trained operators, technicians and electronic experts.
- To enhance international good will.

What is required to get a license?

Technician Class - Get a passing score on a multiple choice test.

General Class - Have a Technician Class license, pass a multiple choice test, and demonstrate ability to receive Morse code at 5 words per minute.

Extra Class - Have a General Class license and pass a multiple choice test.

The questions for the written exams are selected from known groups of questions.

Who gives amateur radio license exams?

Exams are given by volunteer Hams who are volunteer examiners. They are called VE's. In New Mexico, tests are generally scheduled every couple of months. One VE group (at least three VE's are required to give an exam) in Rio Ranch schedule individual tests when requested.

What are some of the things a ham can do with a technician license?

- Use any mode of communication on any Amateur Radio frequency above 50 MHz.
- Operate a base station, mobile radio or handheld radio.
- Communicate using repeaters including satellites.
- Operate a repeater station.
- Provide emergency communications as a Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service, Amateur Radio Emergency Service or Skywarn operator.
- Participate in radio club activities and become a club officer.
- Have a lot of fun while gaining knowledge and experience that can lead to a career.