



The Amateur in You, Part 2

What have you been pondering?



Advantages of being a lazy ham

Face it. We hams are lazy. The term *labor-saving* is our middle name. Memorizing test answers, using duct tape, saying partial call signs; you know, always trying to take the easy road. And proud of it. Being the innovative, clever, and creative hams we are, we always seem to be looking for ways to cut corners, save time, be more efficient without sacrificing effectiveness.

Examples of ham laziness

Some nets held on repeaters ask you to change to simplex once a month, but what a pain! You have to get into the dreaded menu, find the shift direction, and disable it, or worse on some HTs. Instead, the lazy ham doesn't bother; and simply programs two adjacent channels for the net, one on the repeater and the other on simplex. That way, she's on one or the other with one press of a button. Sheer laziness.

Anybody can install a decent transmitting HF antenna, whose signal can be heard across the ocean and more. For receiving, however, your antenna needs to reach up in the sky and catch every little radio wave it can. But that takes work and energy and too much thinking to correctly install one. So, what does the lazy ham do? He abandons any thoughts about receiving people's HF signals, and simply turns down the volume during contests. Then he turns on his computer and gets onto the [WebSDR](#), whose antenna will do all the listening for him. I mean, how lazy can get you get?

And speaking of contests, many of us are so lazy that, instead of endlessly calling "CQ! CQ! Keelo India Seven Bravo Wisskey Delta! CQ!" we simply record that phrase once into the HF radio (that supports such a recording) and let it do all the calling for us. And if nobody answers for several calls, we can kick

back and enjoy a soft drink while the rig does all the work. Just lazy, I tell you!

When Morse code was required for amateur radio exams and some circumstances, we found ways to prevent sore wrists, tired hands, and even carpal tunnel syndrome by creating abbreviations for many words. Admittedly, many Morse code abbreviations were created out of cost per character that a telegraph operator was paid to send messages. For example, *PSE* for *please*, *THX* for *thanks*, and *73* for *I wish you well*. Amateurs are not paid to transmit, but the abbreviations persisted out of pure ham laziness.

Laziness or efficiency?

To justify ourselves, and if it makes us feel better, we claim to be *efficient* rather than lazy. Ok, fair enough; often our object is to do more with less, especially less time, less material, or less money. Some say you get what you pay for, but is that true if you pay more for an identical item?

Because of our knack for efficiency, many of us get accused of being *appliance operators*, meaning people who are so lazy that they would rather go to the store and buy something than build their own. I'm not sure how many people today can actually build their own iPhone, but by those standards everybody seems to be an appliance operator. There are antennas that cost \$10 online but \$40 to make yourself. On one hand, building your own antenna can provide a unique and valuable education. On the other hand, it's hard to argue with \$10.

Famous last words

Ok, so are these tips, tricks, hacks, and techniques the result of a *lazy ham*? Or are they the genius of a *smart* ham? In some ways it's hard to tell, so *you* be the judge.