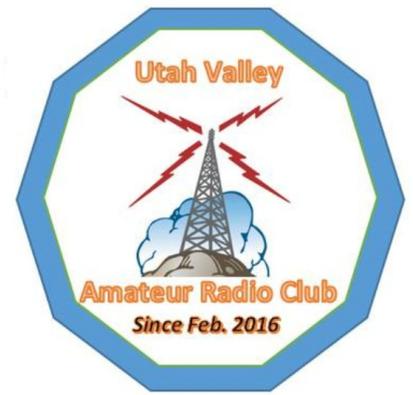


Hot Tips

Good info for the new ham, and old stuff to refresh your memory



What's in *your* radio?

Some new amateur radio operators have been fortunate enough to associate with Elmers (mentors) who are quite knowledgeable about local repeaters, emergency channels, and their proper settings. Their interest, of course, is having some communication method handy during a compromised situation.

And with over a hundred memory channels available on most radios, these good mentors have either programmed, or at least recommended, the new hams get their radios programmed with many of these frequencies, to be available at a moment's notice. On the other hand, once all these many frequencies have been safely tucked away in your radio's memory, two questions always seem to arise: 1) What do all these strange channel names mean? and 2) Do I really need all of them?

Channel names

Most folks new to the craft are easily confused by the many numbers we take for granted, such as bands, offsets, tones, and most of all, frequencies. So, when faced with a choice, they typically opt to have their radios display channel names rather than frequency numbers. But with a 5- or 6-character display limit on most radios, those names can seem quite cryptic.

While your Elmer can recommend channel names for you, it's ultimately up to you to understand what they mean. It might therefore be more helpful for *you* to come up with names of your own, which can help you better remember what they're for.

The channels I really need

Once your Elmer populates your radio channels with a hundred different frequencies, will that really be useful to you? Well, it can be if you know which to use in a pinch. In the latter

part of the 20th Century the entire world seemed to be about *choice*. Now, it seems to me that a myriad of options can often result in information overload.

For example, some people store every FRS and GMRS channel (many of which are redundant) in their radios, just in case. Ok, but do you really need [all 22](#), or will three do? Along the same lines, there are many police and sheriff and fire and other channels, but do you need all of them, or are there a few key channels that can keep you informed without filling up your memories?

One of the features I really like about the Yaesu FT-60R, for example, is its ability to store frequency channels in *memory banks*. This way, when I'm in Utah County, I leave it on Bank 1, in St. George I change it to Bank 2, etc. I just have to remember to change memory banks when I travel, that's all.

My recommendations

In the end, I recommend that you store the [following frequencies](#) in your radio's memory (or for each memory bank, if it has banks), tailored for each locale:

- Eight to twelve local repeaters
- One or two [linked repeater systems](#)
- One Area / stake / diocese frequency
- One city frequency
- Two to four other simplex frequencies
- One [weather frequency](#)
- Three or four police / EMS frequencies
- Three or four FRS / GMRS frequencies

After these 30, if you'd like to fill your radio memory with others, you'll have the choice.

— Noji KNØJI