

Hot Tips

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



Where *not* to do ham radio

In the craft of amateur radio we love to tell people that we're able to operate and communicate in places where other services might fail. For example, there are numerous remote locations in which phone service is simply unavailable, but where a person with a ham radio might still be able to connect with another person. Even though we *can* communicate, there appears to be locations and situations in which it might not be *wise* to use ham radio.

Bedroom

Many newly licensed hams proudly announce that they've installed a radio in their bedrooms, and leave their radios on in case an important request comes through. If you're married, ***I highly recommend against installing ham radio in your bedroom***, even if you and your spouse are both licensed. It won't take long before that distraction drives a wedge between you. If you are not married, I still do not recommend it in your bedroom, because I believe the noise will slowly lead to sleep deprivation and undesirable daytime mood and work habits.

Outdoors

Another place you might want to reconsider if you're planning on portable work is outdoors when it's raining, especially when you can hear thunder. It's much safer to run your portable operation during a thunderstorm in an RV (recreational vehicle) than in an outdoor shed or pavilion, but the best place is in a building.

Bathroom

While there's nothing really wrong with using ham radio in your bathroom or restroom, as they say, *it's the thought that counts*. If you don't share your bathroom radio with others, people probably won't mind that you use it there, but the ick factor might still turn some

away from you. Just sayin'

Travel

If you're considering some travel, you might want to keep in mind two things. One is that there are countries that might not permit ham radio. For example, although [permitted today](#), an American licensee was once not allowed to communicate by ham radio to people in Yemen or North Korea. Furthermore, your American amateur radio license does not grant you the privilege to communicate by ham radio while visiting another country unless that country honors a *reciprocal agreement* with the US to do so. Some cruise liners also prohibit ham radio equipment, so be sure to check with them ahead of time.

Luggage

Even if you're planning to visit or communicate with friendly nations, you might want to check on travel restrictions for ham radio. Generally, radios placed in checked luggage are permitted, but because many contain lithium batteries, you might also want to verify their airline-specific restrictions as well.

In your face

Ham radio can be a fun hobby, and many of us want to share the excitement we feel with friends and loved ones. When we leave our radios installed or sitting in plain sight of family members, however, that constant reminder can become a sore spot for the family. They probably appreciate the fact that you have a hobby at all, but for you to rub their noses in it can leave a bad taste in their mouths, and can actually do more harm than good by turning them against your newfound love. I recommend using good judgment and keeping your toys out of sight.

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