



## Section Manager

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### I got my license – so now what do I do?

Hopefully you are not of the mindset that once you have your license that the world will fall to your feet to speak to you. You need to make yourself known that you want to engage or they will never know that you are out there. Perhaps you are a bit afraid to push the mike button?

### So how do I take the very first step?

Think of a ham license like a driver's license. You know the basic rules of the road but in order to explore your neighborhood you need to start your car (turn on the radio) put in gear and pull into traffic (get on the air) A little bit unsure of yourself, maybe afraid to make a mistake or just a bit shy? Trust me, most new hams start this way. It is quite common for a new ham to be a bit nervous the first time they key-down. Calm down and then key down.

Most hams are courteous and a bit curious. Most remember how they first felt the first time, so they will try to make you feel wanted. Your newness may show for a while, but once you pick up the lingo the fright will be nothing more than a faded memory.

On the topic of lingo, there are phrases that are common to Amateur Radio and others that are not and discouraged. For the most part there is no secret language, talk naturally as you would to someone face to face or on the phone. Try and stay away from lingo that other radio services use such as the police, fire and citizen band radio. Listen a while before you transmit and you will get a sense of what is appropriate lingo.

### Here are a few easy suggestions to get you started.

1. If you are limited to VHF /UHF equipment, find a local active repeater. The best time to find activity is during the drive time as people commute to work. How do you find that repeater? Try <http://www.nerepeaters.com/> or <http://rprr.amateur-radio.net>
2. Another good source is a local NH-ARES Training net. A listing of these can be found at: <http://www.nh-ares.org/CommPlan/AttachmentB-Nets&Frequencies.pdf>
3. If you graduated from a formal class, try setting up scheduled meeting with those you feel comfortable with, your fellow classmates. If you live within a short distance from each other, pick a simplex frequency, (check your band plans). "Going simplex" will give you some degree of privacy.
4. Once you have built a little confidence – Then go For it !

### So how do I meet other hams in a social setting?

There are Amateur Radio clubs throughout New Hampshire who are always interested in new members. You will be welcome to visit clubs and invited to partake in some of their on the air and social activities. You don't need to join right away. You can find the club that suits your interests.

1. Get on the repeaters and ask where the nearest club nearest to you.
2. Go to [www.arrl-nh-org](http://www.arrl-nh-org) and look for the section titled NH Amateur Radio Organization and investigate their web sites.
3. Some clubs will have social function like weekly or monthly breakfast get together.

### How do I know what interests me?

1. Check out each club's web site in your area. Try and gauge what their interests are. Some clubs are general interest while others will lean toward a specialty, such as contesting, project building, repeater operation, emergency and public service or some of the many other facets of the hobby.
2. Still can't find something. Give me a call and we can explore your interests together and I'll try to hook you up with someone that I know with a common interest to yours.

Call me if you need to discuss this further. Ok now.... Get to it.

73,

*Al*

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