

## First Radio – First Questions to Ask Yourself

“What do I want to do?”

“Do I want local communications within 25 miles?”

“Do I want to talk around the world?”

“Do I want a portable setup or a hamshack in the Man-Cave?”

“Do I want to participate in emergency communications events and training?”

Asking these questions will help you with your decision. Below are a few links to help get you started.

<http://www.eham.net/newham/firstradio>

<http://www.hamuniverse.com/firstradio.html>

<http://www.arrl.org/buying-your-first-radio>

[http://www.ar15.com/forums/t\\_10\\_22/665780 Important Threads New to the forum check here first .html](http://www.ar15.com/forums/t_10_22/665780_Important_Threads_New_to_the_forum_check_here_first_.html)

There is a lot of information here, do not worry too much about the details. Use this for more info and to start your list of questions to bring to the next meeting.

Most new hams will start with a dual-band, UHF/VHF radio, most likely an HT (handi-talkie). These radios are designed for local, short distance communications, generally using repeaters. I highly recommend starting at this website:

[WWW.MIKLOR.COM](http://WWW.MIKLOR.COM)

While the information here is focused on Baofeng radios, there is a wealth of information on ham radio in general.

[www.eham.net](http://www.eham.net)

This is a great place to get customer reviews on equipment.

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As an example, let me give you a history of what I started with and where I went from there.

This is what I started with:

[http://www.amazon.com/BaoFeng-UV-5R-Dual-Radio-](http://www.amazon.com/BaoFeng-UV-5R-Dual-Radio-Black/dp/B007H4VT7A?ie=UTF8&psc=1&redirect=true&ref_oh_aui_search_detailpage)

[Black/dp/B007H4VT7A?ie=UTF8&psc=1&redirect=true&ref\\_oh\\_aui\\_search\\_detailpage](http://www.amazon.com/BaoFeng-UV-5R-Dual-Radio-Black/dp/B007H4VT7A?ie=UTF8&psc=1&redirect=true&ref_oh_aui_search_detailpage)

[http://www.amazon.com/Extended-3800mAh-Li-ion-Battery-Baofeng/dp/B00NQNIGIG?ie=UTF8&psc=1&redirect=true&ref=oh\\_aui\\_search\\_detailpage](http://www.amazon.com/Extended-3800mAh-Li-ion-Battery-Baofeng/dp/B00NQNIGIG?ie=UTF8&psc=1&redirect=true&ref=oh_aui_search_detailpage)

[http://www.amazon.com/ExpertPower-XP-669-7-5-Inch-SMA-F-Antenna/dp/B008Y2SPH6?ie=UTF8&psc=1&redirect=true&ref=oh\\_aui\\_search\\_detailpage](http://www.amazon.com/ExpertPower-XP-669-7-5-Inch-SMA-F-Antenna/dp/B008Y2SPH6?ie=UTF8&psc=1&redirect=true&ref=oh_aui_search_detailpage)

[http://www.amazon.com/Baofeng-Programming-Cable-BAOFENG-BF-888S/dp/B00CP0I474?ie=UTF8&psc=1&redirect=true&ref=oh\\_aui\\_search\\_detailpage](http://www.amazon.com/Baofeng-Programming-Cable-BAOFENG-BF-888S/dp/B00CP0I474?ie=UTF8&psc=1&redirect=true&ref=oh_aui_search_detailpage)

***This is just a suggestion. Please make your own decisions based on your research.***

You can find frequencies using the following websites:

<http://www.radioreference.com/apps/db/>

<https://repeaterbook.com>

There is a BASE LOAD available for download at the clubhouse containing local frequencies and repeaters.

I was a brand new ham. At the time, I thought this was the only radio I would ever need. This was my learning radio. I used it the first time at the Lubbock Triathlon as part of the comms crew. Very good real world training and they can always use volunteers. Contact the club for upcoming events.

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As I asked questions, researched and learned, I asked myself the question, “What do I want to be able to do next?” Answer: I want to extend my range and stay portable. I needed a more powerful radio mounted in my van.

<http://www.hamradio.com/detail.cfm?pid=H0-010079>

<http://www.hamradio.com/detail.cfm?pid=H0-001570>

<http://www.hamradio.com/detail.cfm?pid=H0-000002>

***There are many different radios, antennas and mounts out there. This is just a suggestion. Please make your own decisions based on your research. Ask the club members what they use and/or like.***

After learning some more and using this radio on road trips and campouts, it was time to ask the question again: “What do I want to do next?” Answer: I want to be able to go out thirty miles from civilization, setup a radio, talk around the world and be self-sufficient for a week. For that, I needed a bigger radio. *(Do you see a theme here....)*

<http://www.hamradio.com/detail.cfm?pid=H0-007098>  
<http://www.hamradio.com/detail.cfm?pid=H0-010448>  
<https://powerwerx.com/ss30dv-desktop-dc-power-supply-powerpole>

For research on portable setups, I started here:

[http://www.ar15.com/forums/t\\_10\\_22/648273\\_The\\_EMCOMM\\_Box.html](http://www.ar15.com/forums/t_10_22/648273_The_EMCOMM_Box.html)

I looked at all their ideas and stole from them shamelessly.

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I firmly believe there are more antennas and DIY antenna designs than there are types of radios. I will list a few links, but there are hundreds more out there.

<http://www.arrl.org/shop/Antennas/>  
<http://www.arrl.org/building-simple-antennas>  
<http://www.digitalham.co.uk/wire-antennas/>  
<http://www.iw5edi.com/ham-radio/>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4uPk0IAEwhc>  
<http://www.hamuniverse.com/easydipole.html>  
Slim Jim - <http://www.n9tax.com/slim%20jim%20info.html>  
Ed Fong - <http://www.ebay.com/itm/111884204187>

Coax -- In general, I use U-213 coax in 50' lengths.

<http://www.escelkin.com/catalog/?id=00000000RG213U50>

I also use RG-8, RG-8x and RG-58 for special applications.

### **Various vendors**

<http://www.dxengineering.com/>  
<http://www.gigaparts.com/>  
<http://www.aesham.com/>  
<http://www.cheapham.com/>  
<https://www.hamcity.com/store/pc/home.asp>  
<http://www.hamradio.com/>  
<http://www.universal-radio.com/>  
<https://powerwerx.com/>  
<http://www.qsradio.com/index.html>  
<http://www.westmountainradio.com/>

List I put together for a buddy out of state.

[http://www.universal-radio.com/catalog/fm\\_txvrs/0080.html](http://www.universal-radio.com/catalog/fm_txvrs/0080.html)  
[http://www.universal-radio.com/catalog/fm\\_txvrs/0790.html](http://www.universal-radio.com/catalog/fm_txvrs/0790.html)  
[http://www.universal-radio.com/catalog/fm\\_txvrs/0588.html](http://www.universal-radio.com/catalog/fm_txvrs/0588.html)

[http://www.ar15.com/forums/t\\_10\\_22/648273\\_The\\_EMCOMM\\_Box.html](http://www.ar15.com/forums/t_10_22/648273_The_EMCOMM_Box.html)  
<http://www.gigaparts.com/Product-Lines/HF-6M-VHF-UHF/Yaesu-FT-857D.html>  
<http://www.universal-radio.com/catalog/hamhf/1857.html>  
[http://www.westmountainradio.com/product\\_info.php?products\\_id=ss-30dv](http://www.westmountainradio.com/product_info.php?products_id=ss-30dv)  
<http://www.powerwerx.com/power-supplies/powerwerx-30-amp-desktop-switching-power-supply-powerpoles.html>

<http://www.powerwerx.com/power-supplies/variable-digital-meters-30-amp-desktop-power-supply.html>

<http://www.universal-radio.com/catalog/hamtune/5429.html>  
[http://www.ebay.com/itm/Dual-Band-VHF-UHF-Base-Antenna-Ham-Commercial-MURS-GMRS-FRS-DBJ-1-/121467477149?pt=US\\_Radio\\_Comm\\_Antennas&hash=item1c48069c9d](http://www.ebay.com/itm/Dual-Band-VHF-UHF-Base-Antenna-Ham-Commercial-MURS-GMRS-FRS-DBJ-1-/121467477149?pt=US_Radio_Comm_Antennas&hash=item1c48069c9d)

<http://www.universal-radio.com/catalog/hamantm/3910.html>  
<http://www.universal-radio.com/catalog/hamantm/cometx.html>  
<http://www.universal-radio.com/catalog/hamantm/3914.html>  
<http://www.powerwerx.com/crimping-tools/tricrimp-crimping-powerpole-contacts.html>

<http://www.radioshack.com/22-range-pocket-digital-multimeter/2200820.html#q=Multimeters&start=1>

Get 50

<https://powerwerx.com/anderson-powerpole-connectors-30amp-unassembled>

Get 40

<http://www.powerwerx.com/anderson-powerpoles/housings-contacts/1332-15-amp-powerpole-contacts.html>

Get 40

<http://www.powerwerx.com/anderson-powerpoles/housings-contacts/261G2-lpbk-45-amp-powerpole-contacts.html>

I usually get this at Texas Electric Supply (Crazy Joe's)

<http://www.powerwerx.com/wire-cable/red-black-zip-cord.html>

Wire 14ga stranded spool 500ft

Wire 14ga solid spool 500ft

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Ham radio is not a “one size fits all” program. Every operator has different interests, plans, budgets, space requirements, etc. Take this guide, ask questions, then tailor it to fit your needs.

Holler if you have any questions, answers or thoughts on life.

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