

The Uncertain Future of Ham Radio

An interesting article on the [IEEE Spectrum website](#) describes some of the current challenges that ham radio faces.

One of the big questions is: what could draw younger people to ham radio? People used to be drawn to ham radio for its ability to:

- Contact others while mobile or away from the home. Now we have cell phones.
- Communicate with others around the globe. Now we have the internet.
- Tinker and build equipment using the latest technologies. Now kids learn to program computers.

“Instead, many [younger hams] are interested in the capacity for public service, such as providing communications in the wake of a disaster, or event comms for activities like city marathons.”

Another issue is that ham radio uses a finite resource that is in greater demand today: the radio spectrum. If we stop using our allocated slices of the spectrum, it's very easy to imagine that it will be allocated to other groups.

“Sustained interest is essential because potential hams must clear a particular barrier before they can take to the airwaves: a licensing exam.”