

# Welcome to the Amateur Radio

This page lists basic information that new hams are probably wondering about. For information specific to our club, see [this page](#).

## What to Buy

Traditionally, the major radio brands have been Icom, Yeasu, and Kenwood. Recently, many Chinese radios have appeared on the market that can be much cheaper (both in cost and quality). As a result, many new hams get a Baofeng handheld as their first radio. Unfortunately, the issue with (only) using a handheld is that even though they might hear the local repeaters just fine, they often have difficulties talking to them because of their lower power.

In general, the antenna is the most important part of the system and the radio is the least important. So for those on a budget, the **minimum** setup should consist of an external antenna (mounted on the side of the house or on a balcony for example), with a cheap Chinese mobile radio like the [QYT KT-8900](#).

A very good basic antenna is the [Comet GP-3](#). If the coax line is not too long, RG-8x works, but if you're able to mount the antenna higher (and height makes a huge difference!), then it's worth buying good coax like LMR-400.

## Where to Buy

Looking to buy some equipment, check out these pages:

- [Retailers](#)
- Our club's [Inventory](#) page.

## Frequencies

Here are some good places to find out which frequencies to use:

- [Simplex](#)
- [Repeaters](#)
- [Programming your radio with Chirp](#)