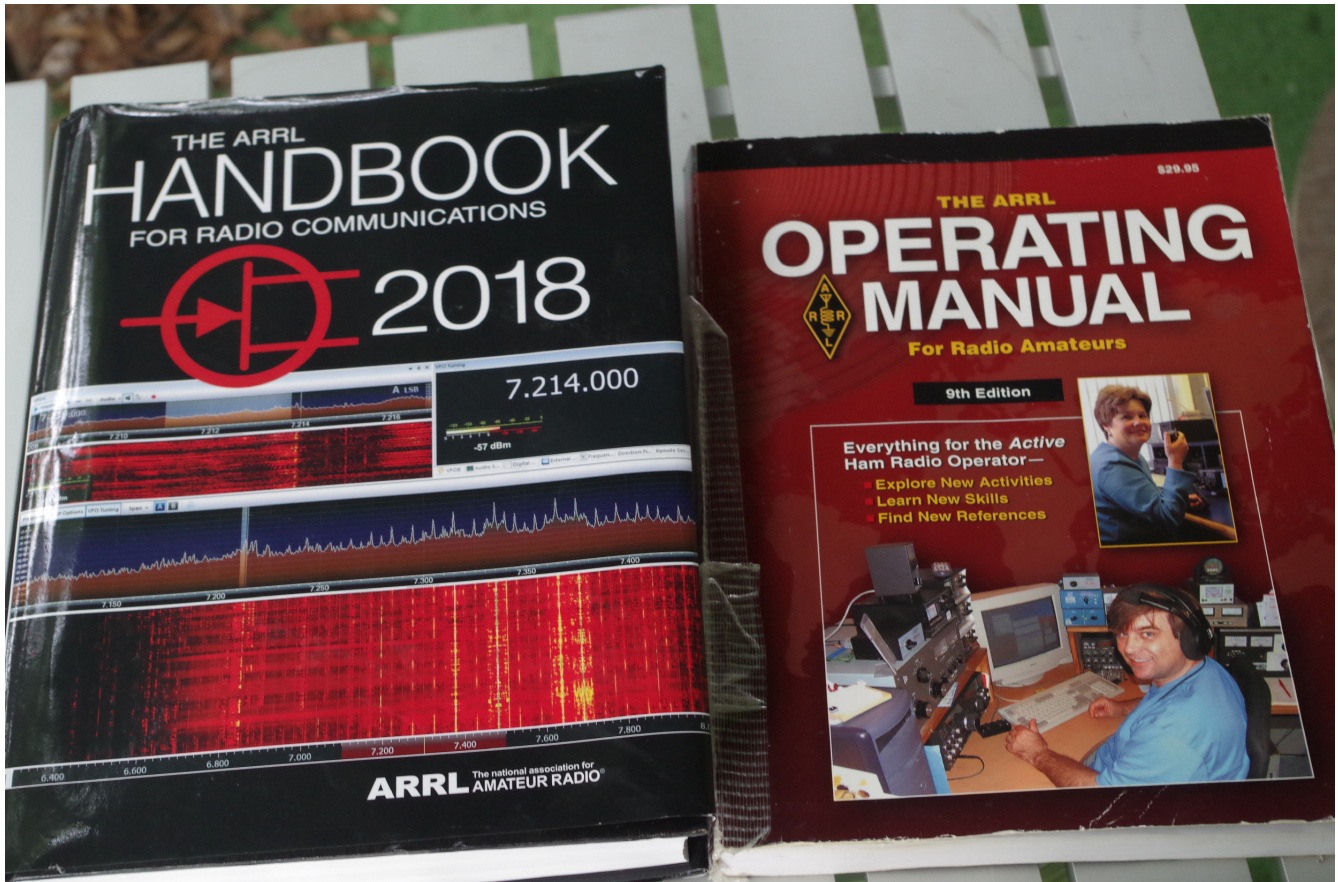


How do I?

An occasional series

This week: New technician!



2 essential books for every amateur operator: The ARRL Handbook and the ARRL Operating Manual

Congratulations! You passed the test! You went on line and found your new call sign at wireless.fcc.gov. You printed a copy. What's next?

I know, you just cannot wait to get on the air! Your new Technician class license has opened a world of opportunity. But where do you start?

Hopefully you have a good *elmer*. An experienced ham who will be there to provide advice and guidance. If you don't already have one, join a local club! Better yet, join two! A club has many individuals of various backgrounds and experience. Want to get on the air asap? A local club may have an equipment library and can loan you a radio, power supply, antenna, etc and help you get on the air. Operating will let you try different

bands, techniques, modes, etc and guide you to what you want in your own station. A club is a good way to meet other hams. You may have an interest in public service and clubs are a great way to help with local bike races, horse back rides, etc.

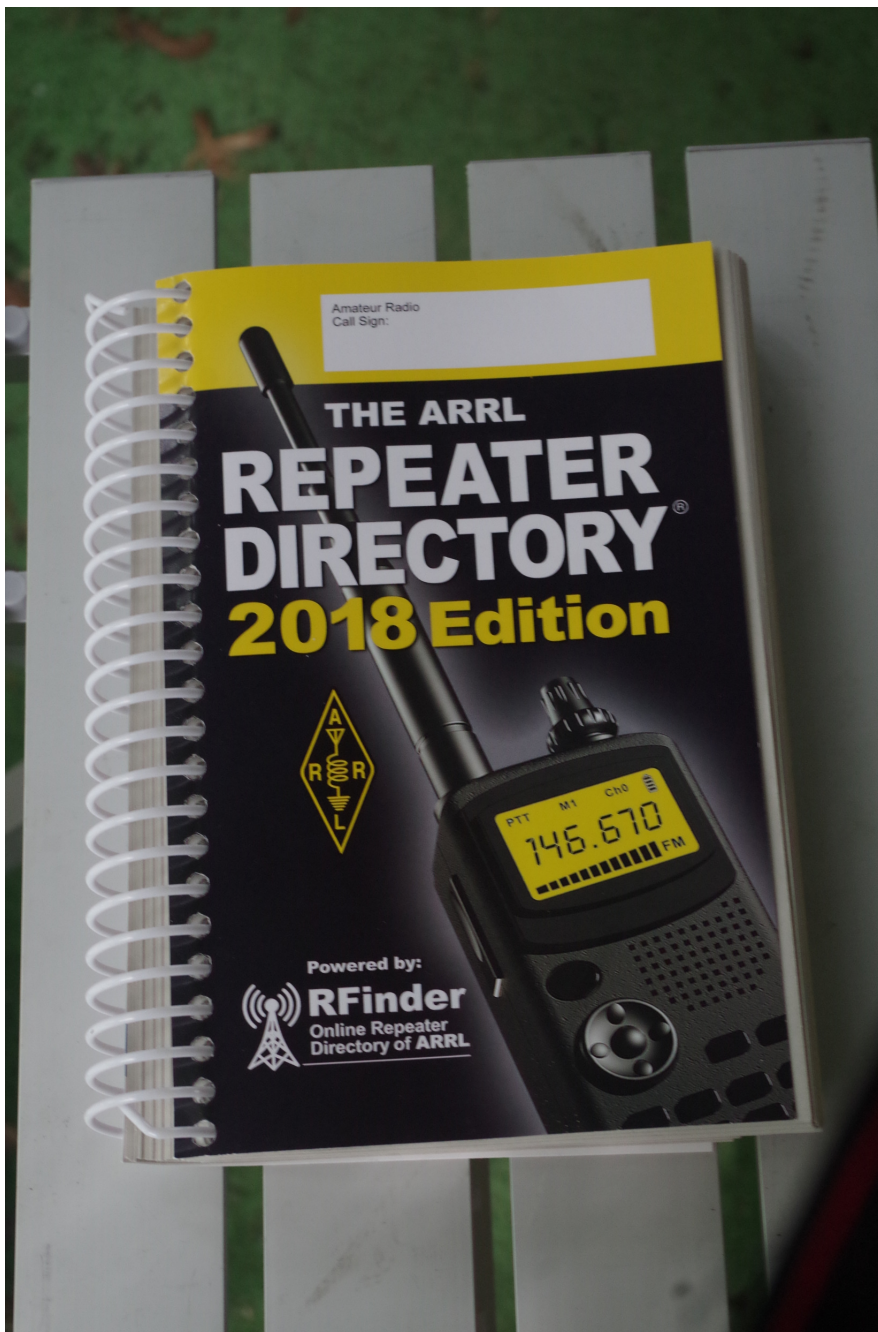
Join the American Radio Relay League (ARRL). This national organization is over 100 years old. Amateur Radio in the US would not be where it is today without it. *QST* is an invaluable monthly publication that comes as a part of membership. It has info on activities, hamfests, special events, etc and ads.

Learn! This author grew up in a pre-internet era so books are my first go to. Every ham should have an *ARRL Handbook*. This is published annually. It's pretty cool to have one from the year you were first licensed. It has 800 pages or so of information about the hobby, projects, specifications, reference tables, how to's, etc. A companion is the *ARRL Operating Manual*. I refer to mine frequently. In the back I keep notes regarding my location (grid square, CQ zone, etc) that I may need when setting up a new computer program.

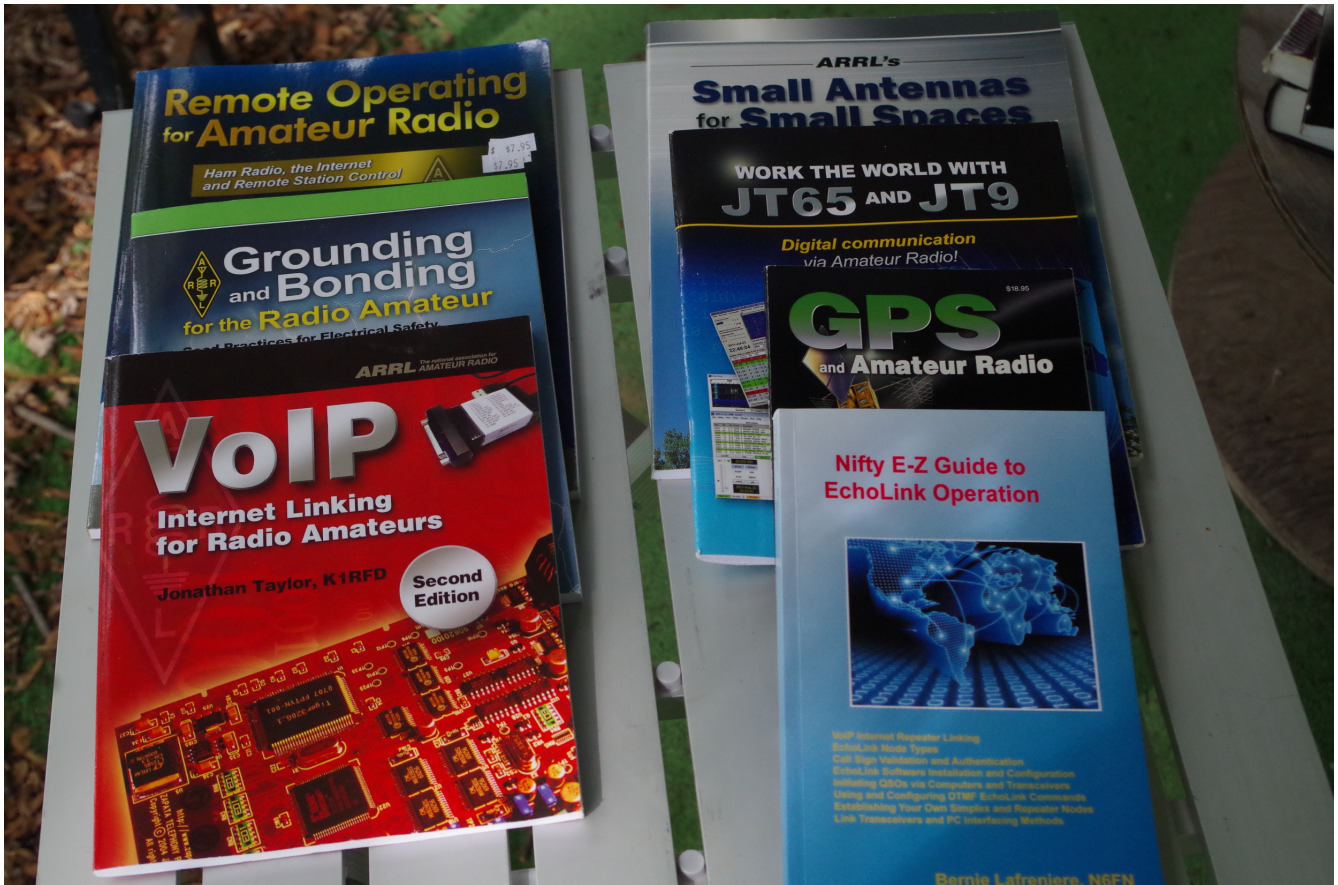
The *ARRL Repeater Directory* is issued annually. It lists not only 2 meter but also 70cm, 1.25m, 6m, 10m and other repeaters across the US. Since many new hams begin with a hand held "HT" and use the local repeaters, supporting the club that owns them is an easy way to help make sure they are there when you want to use them. *The Repeater Map Book and Directory* published semi occasionally by ArtSci is a very handy guide for travellers. I like the maps as I can find repeaters near me instead of having to use the directory and a road map.

The ARRL and other sources publish a multitude of special interest publications. No matter what your interest: CW, digital, sideband, VHF/UHF, satellite, towers, antennas, there is a book for you!

I came to this hobby from the model railroading community. When I was in my teens a local teacher introduced me to the area's model railroader. Among the first things he told me was "you cannot model what you don't know about: acquire all the books you can". I finally got into amateur radio 25 or so years later and still believe in acquiring knowledge. doesn't mean I will use it, but I hope I know where to find it when I need it!



The ARRL Repeater Directory



Other useful books (there are many more!)