

How do I?

An occasional series

This week: So I Failed my radio exam! What do I do now?

Wow.

Sorry to hear that. But at least you came to the right place! Not to make you feel worse, but thousands of folks attempt and successfully pass amateur radio licensing exams every year. So while you are not there yet, we can get you there.

Some people just do not take tests well or have issues taking tests. If you have vision problems, etc, make sure the VE team doing the exam knows in advance that you may need help. Do not wait until the day of the test. Reach out to the VE team ahead of time. If you need the exam read to you for example, that requires 3 Volunteer Examiners just for that. A minimum session really requires 7 or 8 VE's, so accomodating special needs may require the team leader to find more VE's than typically show up. The examiners are volunteers, so please don't wait until the last minute.

If you haven't already, make sure you have the correct question pool. The Extra pool is from 2016 and will change 7/1/2020. The General pool is from 2015 and will change on 7/1/2019. The NEW questions are already out. If you can pass with the new questions, you should be Ok with the old ones. But if you want to be sure, make sure you have the correct pool. The Technician exam changed last year and is good though June 30, 2022.

People study different ways. I like to start with the free sample tests at eham.net (make sure its the correct pool). I take a test to use a base line. Then read the ARRL license guide for that class. Then start taking the tests several times a week until I consistently get 88-95% correct, then I am ready for the real thing. Do not use just 1 website. Other free practice test options will give the questions in a different order. If you just use 1 you may never or rarely see some questions. If you get nervous, 1) calm down and 2) remember: just as the lowest person to graduate medical school is still a doctor, you will be licensed whether you pass by one question or get a perfect score.

Once you are ready-remember-you have been through this once. Relax! Get a good night's sleep. Don't stress. Be early to the test site. The examiners took the same types of tests too. This only a hobby.

Catch ya at an exam session!