

How do I?

An occasional series

This week: A few of my favorite things



Picture 1: clockwise from top: UHF Right angle connector, UHF push on connector; UHF push on connector and SO-239 bulkhead connector.

Everyone has favorites: radios, antennas, operating modes, etc. But there are some overlooked items that can just make your ham radio life easier.

Let's take a look at a few of my favorites:

1. The UHF Male-Female Right Angle Connector: Your transceiver, antenna tuner, SWR meter and other devices are typically equipped with a SO-239 UHF female connector. Coax cables typically have a PL-259 male end. Andy AF3I taught me a trick a few years ago and I have since seen it mentioned in *QST* magazine. Instead of fastening the coax to the equipment directly, install a right angle connector first. Yes, you have a slight signal loss for every connector added, but it doesn't really matter in most cases. The benefit is if someone cross threads the connector while attaching cables, instead of having to replace the connector on the radio, you simply replace the right angle connector. The connector is simply a PL-259 joined at a 90 degree angle to a SO-239. The PL-259 end attaches the radio and the SO-239 end is ready to receive your coax cable.



80 meter band pass filter with Right Angle connectors

2. The PL-259 Push-on connector: Not sure who I stole this idea from. May have found them at John Beech N1GNV Quicksilver Radio <https://www.qsradio.com/index.html> booth at the Shenandoah Valley Amateur Radio Club hamfest in Berryville, VA. If you thought right angle connectors were fun, these are really cool!. In my shack I use a window pass-through connector to get outside to the antenna. Especially in summer time, I unhook from the antenna when I am done playing radio. Constantly screwing and unscrewing cables onto the SO-239 is eventually going to cause a problem. The solution: I attach a push-on connector to each end of the coax jumper. One end plugs into the last SO-239 coming out the radio and the other plugs into the SO-239 at the window. It now takes seconds to unplug!

3. The bulkhead connector: These are a little more work to install. They are simply 2 SO-239s connected end to end. At my station I have a 1x4+board with bulkhead connectors through it. The board sits in the open window and provides an easy way to get your antenna connection to the outside. The cable from the antenna is screwed onto the outside SO-239 in the usual way, with coax sealer to keep the moisture out. The inside one simply has a coax jumper with a push-on connector. The push-on PL-259 connects to the SO-239 on the pass through.

Catch ~~ya~~ on the air!