



What is Amateur Radio?

Amateur radio is a hobby exploring radio, electronics and digital technologies. Once licensed, you'll get a personal worldwide-unique call-sign and can operate (and build) radio equipment capable of international and space-based communication. It's both a social & technical hobby.

Enjoy

- building and testing radio equipment and antennas (aerials)
- national & worldwide communication from your backyard - without Internet or cellphones
- blending tramping and off-grid radio stations, and competing in contests
- chatting with amateurs on the International Space Station
- blending Raspberry Pi / Arduino with radio to make digital voice gateways & other projects
- a head-start for a career in electronics, communications and digital technologies
- providing emergency communications for your community: aid search-and-rescue (SAR), Civil Defence and Amateur Radio Emergency Communications (AREC).

HamCram — obtaining an Amateur Radio Licence

Like driving, becoming licensed requires passing a technical competence test so the Manawatu Amateur Radio Club has organised *HamCram* – a tutorial course to help you pass.

The 2026 Course: eight Tuesday evening classes 7pm - 9pm starting May 19th, concluding with a full weekend program on July 18th and 19th to prepare you for the official multi-choice Amateur Radio License test on the Sunday afternoon.

Do I need a technical background?

Definitely not. We've had people aged from 13 to 70+ and from wide variety of backgrounds successfully complete the course. The classes and the HamCram weekend will take you through everything you need to become licensed.

How do I enrol in the HamCram program?

Enrol online at www.tinyurl.com/hamcramPN-Register, via the QR code, or download an application form via this page www.zl2ko.org.nz/hamcram and submit it via email or post.



What does it cost and what's included?

The cost of the HamCram course is \$125, with a big student discount. This includes the complete program, license exam fee, a PDF study guide for you to download/print, and weekly classes.

The HamCram Weekend has an full-day program on both Saturday and Sunday.

Included are:

- teaching sessions by experienced tutors
- the official amateur radio licence exam
- morning & afternoon teas and a light lunch on both days

On passing, you'll also receive:

- a worldwide-unique call-sign for use on the air (e.g. the club's one is ZL2KO)
- free membership of NZART (National Association) for 12 months (usually \$125)
- free membership of selected local NZART branches

Leading up to the weekend, there are weekly classes as detailed below. Ideally you'll attend in person but they are available via Zoom too.

Weekly Classes: Tuesday 7pm – 9pm, via Zoom too

Although not required to attend the HamCram weekend, we'll have eight weekly classes to cover topics including:

Basic electricity and electronics, radio receivers and transmitters, aerials, the best frequencies to use (radio propagation), digital modes using your computer, safety, selecting equipment and setting up your station, both at home and "off-grid".

We'll introduce the topics in the Tuesday classes & revisit them all during the final weekend.

The classes are held at our clubrooms in Palmerston North & will also be streamed via Zoom.

Don't be daunted: if you can use a calculator, you're good to go!

Outside the region and too far to travel?

Although the course is structured for those who can be at the HamCram Weekend in Palmerston North in September, if this isn't possible for you, you can attend just the weekly classes online via Zoom. Then having covered the material, arrange a time to sit the license test with an amateur radio club close to you. We can help you find a local club and examiner. There's a \$20 fee for this "Zoom only" option.

What happens once I pass the exam?

Once you've passed the exam, you will be eligible for issue of a call sign. This entitles you to operate on a limited number of amateur bands until you have fifty logged on-air contacts.

We'll also have two follow-up sessions covering topics such as selecting a radio and setting up your station.

Questions?

Email them to newham@ZL2KO.org.nz and we'll get back to you ...