

Newcomers and Elmers Net – Apple and Android Apps for Amateur Radio Jan. 4th & 11th 2015 Robert AK3Q

Most of this list comes from a collection of Apps routinely updated by the SWLing.com blog. At the end I have included a list of some of the apps I have found useful on my Android, but these are just for information's sake – as they say, your mileage may vary!

Exam preparation

- **Amateur Radio Exam Prep** ([iOS](#); \$4.99) There are several ham radio exam apps out there, but I find this one to be the best. It's simple, adaptive, and keeps track of the elements and questions you incorrectly answer. While it costs \$4.99 per exam (Tech, General and Extra), you can try the free version first, which allows you to explore and learn two of the exam elements before buying. Still, a much better deal and far more portable than an exam book.
- **PalmVE** ([Android](#); Free) PalmVE allows you to take sample amateur radio written examinations, track your test history, search question pools, and will display question figure images where appropriate. PalmVE can also use your GPS info to find a Volunteer Examiner session nearby.
- **Ham Radio Exam** ([iOS](#); Free) A very simple exam study tool, Ham Radio Exam allows you to cruise exam question pools and note the correct answer. You can also take sample tests and focused quizzes. While not quite as versatile as paid apps (like Amateur Radio Exam Prep, above), it may be all you need to get your ticket!
- **Amateur Radio Exams 1.0 Pro** ([Android](#); \$2.99) Out of all of the Android offerings, Amateur Radio Exams 1.0 Pro is my favorite exam practice app. It is free to try, and only costs a modest \$2.99 to buy.
 - **EchoLink** ([iOS/Android](#); Free) Why not turn your smartphone into an HT? After all (as I often say), phones are actually radios...right? I only recently discovered the EchoLink app, but it has quickly become the most useful ham radio app I use. From this app you can talk to any repeater connected to the EchoLink network; all you need is a WiFi connection or cellular data service. I recently traveled to Belize City and used EchoLink to connect with hams in the US and Canada and even check in on a net. It worked flawlessly. I couldn't recommend it more. Did I mention it's absolutely free, with no ads?
 - **Ham Square** ([iOS](#); Free) A very simple app to track and display your Maidenhead designation in a matter of seconds. For the Android OS check out **HamGPS**([Android](#); Free). All three of these apps use your smartphone's GPS to quickly resolve your Maidenhead location.
- **Repeater Book** ([iOS/Android](#); Free) An absolutely revolutionary app, in my opinion. Using your phone's GPS, you can quickly reference local repeaters—any band, any mode—with full details, as you travel. This free app has replaced my need for the annual repeater atlas (which I've always found to be a little unhandy to use). Live in, or traveling to, the UK, Australia, Europe, and/or New Zealand? [Repeater Book has a global version as well.](#)

- **QRZ Callsign Search** ([iOS/Android](#); Free) The companion app to the popular callsign database site, QRZ.com. Their app is very basic, but makes it easy and convenient to do callsign lookups...although I do wish you could log contacts to QRZ.com via the app (hint, hint, developers!). Also check out HamRadio Call ([iOS/Android](#); Free) as it even shows a map pinpoint for the QTH address on record.
- **PSK31** ([iOS](#); \$2.99) Launch this app, place it in front of your radio which you've tuned to a PSK31 signal, and it decodes on the fly. Very simple to use, and quite effective as long as your microphone is near the radio speaker. Meanwhile, Droid PSK ([Android](#); \$5.49) will decode and even encode PSK31, if you want that feature.
- **Hellschreiber** ([iOS](#); \$2.99) Decode and send Hellschreiber text without a PC: place your mobile device near the speaker of your transceiver and this app will decode Hellschreiber on the fly. Connect the audio output from the headphone jack of your mobile device to your transceiver and you can even send Hellschreiber.
- **ISS Detector** ([Android](#); Free) Chis Cooper comments: "this is one of my most often used Amateur Radio apps on my Android. It not only tracks and alerts on ISS passes with specified criteria, but with the pro upgrade, it will also track amateur radio satellites."
- **PocketSat3** ([Android](#); \$24.99/iOS) PocketSat software allows you to predict when satellites will be visible in your location and where to look in the sky in order to see them. *The price for this app is steep and the developers ask that you download and evaluate the free (PocketSat3 LE [Android/iOS](#)) version before committing to purchase.*
- **WSPR Watch** ([iOS](#); Free) According to SWLing Post reader, Peter Marks, who developed WSPR Watch, "the app shows reported WSPR beacon spots as a list, on a map, and draws some graphs."
- **APRSdroid** ([Android](#); \$4.95) APRSdroid is an APRS application that allows you to report your position as well as sending and receiving messages. It also conveniently displays nearby stations as a list or on a map. Be sure to [check out the developer's website](#).
- **Pocket HAM bands Transceiver** ([Android](#); Free) This application remotely control several ham radio sources via an Android smart phone or tablet. It can link to Ham Radio Deluxe, control any Yaesu FT8x7 transceiver via Bluetooth or USB cable (bi-directional CAT only, no sound) and multiple WebSDR servers around the globe. Not exactly plug-and-play as some connection methods require configuration and audio via an IP source. Read their notes and watch videos of Pocket HAM Bands Transceiver [on the developer's website](#).
- **QRSS Beacon** ([Android](#); \$3.99) QRSS Beacon is a full-featured slow CW beacon application for Android. QRSS will allow you to select a DIT duration from 1 to 60 seconds and choose one of the 3 supported modes: QRSS, FSK/CW and DFCW. Simply connect the audio out of your Android device to the audio in of your radio and an enable VOX.
- **MacLogger DX HD** ([iOS – iPad](#); \$39.99) MacLoggerDX HD is an application that monitors the spots from your favorite DX Cluster for DXing, Contesting or casual rag-

chewing. It Alerts you to rare Ham Radio contacts or band openings by looking up and displaying real time propagation paths on a zoomable map.

Reference

- **Ham Radio Reference** ([iOS](#); Free) This is a simple app that puts a few vital pieces of information in front of you. I wish I had this in my early days on the air, as it has a simple list with all of the Q codes, US & Canadian Amateur Band Limits, Country Codes, Band Plans, Radiogram Numbered Messages, Grid Square and Location, Q Codes, Local and UTC Time, RST, The Phonetic Alphabet, Unit Abbreviations, Metric Prefixes and more. Also check out **HamIAm** ([iOS](#); Free).
- **Ham Radio Tools** ([Android](#); Free) A very simple reference guide that includes logging (even the ability to export and import logs). It also has short Q code reference sheet, common formulas, and an antenna calculator. It has a very intuitive interface and no ads.
- **HamLog Mobile Logging** ([iOS](#); \$0.99) An all-in-one app for the mobile operator. This app will export your logs to most any logging program, including Logbook of the World. The newest version even includes a rig control interface. This app also includes many ham reference guides.
- **HamAntCal** ([iOS](#); Free) Need to calculate the length of a resonant dipole for the field? HamAntCal is a very simple application to help you do just that. Simply choose a configuration (Half Wavelength, Quarter Wavelength or Inverted Vee) and it will do the math for you.
- **Morse It** ([iOS](#); \$0.99) This app not only reads but teaches CW. This is a 99¢ app, which, like many, offers several premium add-ons at additional cost. I like the interface and simplicity of this morse trainer. It also serves as a morse code reader. Simply place your iOS device in front of your radio's speaker and watch it decode Morse code in real time. I've noticed that it decodes CW fairly well around 13-20 WPM; any slower or faster sometimes leads to more error. Still, it's a great app for those who want to learn code, or who want to translate what they hear on the radio.
- **Morse Code Trainer** ([Android](#); Free) This is another excellent CW trainer, and will work on even the oldest Android OS versions.
- **MUF Predictor** ([Android](#); Free) Enter your transmitter and receiver location, and this simple calculator will help you determine maximum usable frequency.

DXing Spots/Databases

- **iCluster DX DB** ([iOS](#); Free) This app allows you to create alarms for needed DX countries, call signs, modes and more with a nice, simple layout. You can also filter spot results with the same criteria. Use multiple cluster servers, including your own, via telnet or the web. The app is free, but if you pay a \$1.99 sponsorship fee, it enables a map mode which shows DX on a map. **DX Hunter** ([iOS](#); \$9.99) is more advanced and even sends push notifications from spot servers.
- **DX Cluster** ([Android](#); \$2.49) Much like DX Hunter, the primary purpose of this Android app is to operate in the background and send notifications when needed DX stations are spotted.

- **DXFunCluster** ([Android](#); \$1.13) Though reviews are mediocre on [DXFunCluster's Google Play page](#), SWLing Post reader, John, recommends this app as a DX cluster interface.
 - **SOTA Goat** ([iOS](#); \$4.99) If you like to activate summits (via Summits On The Air) or log them, this is a fantastic app. It's one of the best designed apps for this purpose I've seen. SOTA Goat has a clear, intuitive interface, and is true to the iOS look and feel. Hands down, it has the best user interface of any ham radio application. With SOTA Goat in hand, you can plot and activate a summit while notifying the SOTA community automatically. Best yet, most of the app's functions (including their summit database and map) are available offline! Yes, it's \$4.99, but if you're into SOTA, it's worth every penny.
 - **CommCat Mobile** ([iOS](#); *Free*) With CommCat, you can watch DX spots, control your radio, and log contacts from anywhere an Internet connection is available. SWLing Post reader, Michael, comments: "With CommCat Mobile you can not only control your rig remotely, but you can log contacts and even sync that log with your home log! Not many programs allow that. Also, there's a complete DX spotting list available, so with a single finger click, you can tune your remote rig right to the DX and then key the mic and talk into the iPhone / iPad to work the DX! With another single click the entire thing has been logged and sent to your home station!"
 - **QRZ Now** ([Android](#); *Free*) QRZ Now is a simple app with links to amateur radio news sources and a DX cluster display.
- **Shortwave Broadcast Schedules** ([iOS](#); \$1.99/[Android](#); \$0.99) In my opinion, *this is the best app for mobile SWLing*. I used this app on my iPhone while travelling in Central America this summer, and could immediately pull up shortwave schedules even without an Internet connection. It has a very easy function for updating schedules, and can even be set to check for updates each time you open the app. Best yet, you can sort listings by what's on the air now, by station, by time, by frequency, and more. Also, you can quickly pull up frequencies for a particular meter band at the touch of a button.
- **Shortwave Radio Schedules** ([Android](#); *Free*) This app provides schedules and frequencies for shortwave radio broadcasts throughout the world. Information is also included on some utility stations, Firedrake, jammers etc. Broadcast frequencies and schedules are pulled from the Eibi schedule and AOKI Schedules. This app also features a unique map representation of broadcast footprints.
- **Global Tuners** ([Android](#)/*Free*) This is a unique app that allows you to actively control remotely-linked receivers scattered across the globe. Whether you want to tune a receiver in France during your morning commute on the train, or if you're a ham and want to check if your signal can be heard in Asia, Global Tuners can help. [Click here for a recent post about Global Tuners](#).
- **glSDR** ([Android](#); *Free*) SWLing Post reader, Paul N6EV writes: "glSDR is an excellent Android app which allows you to connect to a handful of SDR receiver servers around the world. For each server, the first connection becomes the "master", able to control the frequency, mode,

filter, AGC, dsp, etc. Subsequent connections are “slave” and have no control but get to listen. When the master drops off, the next slave in line (oldest connection) becomes the new master.” [Click here for a map of available servers.](#)

- **HF Weather Fax** ([iOS/Android](#); \$2.99) A super-simple app for decoding HF weather fax transmissions on the fly. Simply start the app and place your device in front of the radio speaker.
- **SSTV** ([iOS](#); \$2.99) As with HF Weather Fax, simply launch the app, and place it in front of your radio. You can even leave it unattended and it will decode and save the images automatically. Supports all major SSTV protocols. This is also the best app I’ve seen for decoding pirate radio eQSLs on the go! Though I have not personally tested it, Android users might wish to consider **DroidSSTV** ([Android](#)/\$6.99) which allows you to receive *and send* SSTV images.
- **Interval Signal Ringtones** ([Android](#); \$1.99) A simple app that will let you set your ringtone to one of 40+ shortwave interval signals.

Scanning Apps

- **Scanner Radio** ([Android](#); Free) A brilliant free scanner application which streams scanner feeds from across the planet—intuitive and easy to use. **Scanner Radio Pro** ([Android](#)/\$2.99) eliminates ads.
- **Action Scanner Lite** ([iOS](#); Free) Easy to use, and loaded with scanner feeds. Although I prefer the search functionality in Scanner Radio (above), Action Scanner is a great app for iOS with many accolades. The developer has also published **Action Scanner** ([iOS](#)/\$2.59) which has more Police, Fire, EMS and Amateur Radio feeds and **Action Scanner Pro** ([iOS](#)/\$2.99-\$4.19) which has the most comprehensive list of feeds and features.

Marine Apps

- **DroidNavtex** ([Android](#); \$9.99) DroidNavtex decodes NAVTEX messages from your receiver through your phone/tablet’s microphone or through a connected interface. Special audio filters decode very weak signals through your Android device’s microphone. W4ASZ comments, “Droid Navtex has worked well for me using a Grundig YB400 PE operating off the internal ferrite antenna.”

Radio-Related Apps and Tools

Following are a couple of handy apps that, while not necessarily intended for ham radio, SWLing, or scanning, are nonetheless indispensable to me as a radio hobbyist; you may find them just as useful as I do:

TuneIn ([iOS/Android](#); Free) This remarkable app turns your Android or iOS device into a web radio—it makes your local station a global one. I use TuneIn to listen to AM stations in Australia, music from Paris, The International Radio Report on CKUT, and even some international broadcasters that are no longer on shortwave radio. Indeed, only recently, [TuneIn radio began streaming our own Shortwave Radio Audio Archive](#). I now have TuneIn on all of my mobile devices. **TuneIn Radio Pro** ([iOS/Android](#); \$0.99) gives you the ability to record streaming live radio directly on your phone. Note that (sadly) the Pro version does not eliminate ads.

If you like, keep checking back here on [The SWLing Post](#) and my ham radio blog, [QRPer.com](#), where I plan to post updates and reviews of new apps as they become available.

Some Apps I find useful for Android:

- PrediSat Pro – satellite/iridium flare predictor
- NCDXF Beacon – beacon network program
- RF Calculator – various utilities for Amateur Radio
- Space Weather – various information on solar conditions/propagation
- ACARS – airplane location software to read ACARS transmissions
- Color Note – not amateur radio-related, but a useful note taking tool
- Echolink and IRLP Finder – 2 programs for finding local repeaters for Echolink and IRLP
- Droid Prop – propagation program with a lot of nice features
- SDR Touch – an app for using an SDR Dongle with a tablet or smartphone; you will need to research a bit for your connections as there needs to be an adapter cable between the USB and phone, but these are fairly inexpensive; an RTL driver must be loaded as well, but once everything is set up it works very well