

# Choosing a Radio

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# Disclaimer

- I am not going to tell you what radio to buy
- All hams have a bias (positive or negative) toward manufactures and radios including me
- To find the best radio for you, you will have to do the work
- A better antenna will improve you signal more then a better radio

# My Biases

- In our household we have three ICOM radios and one Yeasu radio
  - IC-7100 Mobile HF, VHF and UHF, IC-7300 base HF, IC-7610 base HF
  - Yeasu FTM-400XD C4FM, Mobile VHF, UHF used as a base
- Previous Radios
  - ICOM-740 80-10M HF only receive ham bands (my first radio, used for 5 years)
  - Kenwood TS-850S 160-10M HF (used for over 20 years)
  - ICOM IC-821H All Mode VHF, UHF, Satellite base (used for 10 years)
  - FlexRadio 6600M 160-6M HF (used for 3 months)

# Overview

- Questions you must answer before you start
- Types of Radios
- How to evaluate radio choices
- How to get hands on with your short list
- Where to buy
- Survey of New Radios
- The Sea of Used Radios

# Questions Only You Can Answer

- How much money can you spend?
- What do you want the radio to do for you?
- How will it fit in with your current or planned station?

# Current Radio Manufacturers

- The Big Three: Icom, Kenwood and Yeasu
- The Other Guy: Alinco
- Boutique: Elecraft and Flexradio, Ten-Tec
- Esoteric: ANAN, Elad
- Chinese: Baofeng, Xeigu, AnyTone

# Types of Radios VHF/UHF

- Handheld Transceiver (HT)
  - Analog \$75 — \$250
  - Digital (DMR, D-Star, C4FM) \$175 — \$390
- Mobile \$150 — \$570
- Base Station
  - FM only (use mobile radio) \$150 — \$570
  - Multi-mode (DX, Satellite) \$900 — \$1,500

# Types of Radios HF

- Portable, Low Power (QRP) \$110 — \$2,500
- Mobile \$650 — \$1,000
- Base Station
  - Entry Level \$650 — \$1,700
  - Main Stream \$3,000 — \$5,000
  - High End \$7,000 — \$12,500



# How to Evaluate Radio Choices

- QST Magazine reviews: <http://www.arrl.org/reviews-listed-by-manufacturer>
- eHam user reviews: <https://www.eham.net/reviews>
- YouTube search
- Hamvention, after COVID shutdown
- Dx Engineering, after COVID shutdown

# How to Get Hands on With Your Short List

- Ask a local ham that has one for a demo, most hams love to show off their gear
- Visit a store or hamfest that has one
- Buy one and if you don't like it, sell it and buy the next one on your list

# Where to Buy

- DX Engineering — new
- Ham Radio Outlet — new and used
- R&L Electronics — new and used
- Hamvention — new and used
- QRZ Online Swapmeet — used
- Ebay — used

# New HT Analog Only

- BaoFeng BF-F8HP 2M, 70CM, 8 Watts \$75 eHam 4.3/23
- YAESU FT-65R 2M, 70CM, 5 Watts \$90 eHam 3.9/36
- Alinco DJ-500TB 2M, 70CM, 5 Watts \$120 eHam 4.4/18



# New HT Digital

- YAESU FT-70DR C4FM, 2M, 70CM \$175 eHam 4.1/58
- Alinco DJ-MD5XTG DMR, 2M, 70CM \$190 eHam 3.8/16
- Anytone AT-D878UV DMR, 2M, 70CM \$220 eHam 4.2/21



# New VHF/UHF Mobile

- ICOM IC-2730A 2M, 70CM \$270 eHam 4.1/36
- Kenwood TMV71A 2M, 70CM \$380 eHam 4.6/106
- YAESU FTM-300DR C4FM, 2M, 70CM \$460 eHam 4.3/7



# New VHF/UHF Base Station

- ICOM IC-9700 2M, 70CM, 23CM \$1,500 eHam 4.3/34



# New HF Portable



- Xiegu G90 160-10M 20 Watts \$450 eHam 4.4/44
- ICOM IC-705 160-6M, 2M, 70CM 10 Watts \$1,300 eHam 5.0/12
- Elecraft KX3 160-6M 8-10 Watts \$2,600 eHam 4.8/152



# New HF Mobile

- YAESU FT-891 160-6M 100 Watts [\\$640](#) eHam 4.3/109
- ICOM IC-7100 160-6M, 2M, 70CM 100 Watts HF [\\$970](#) eHam 4.3/159



# New HF Base Station Entry Level

- ICOM IC-718 160-10M 100 Watts \$585 eHam 4.6/424
- ICOM IC-7300 SDR 160-6M 100 Watts \$1,100 eHam 4.7/365
- YAESU FT-991A 160-6M, 2M, 70CM, 100 Watts HF \$1,130 eHam 4.9/16



# New HF Base Station Intermediate

- KENWOOD TS-590SG 160-6M 100 Watts \$1,680 eHam 4.8/95
- YAESU FTDX-10 160-6M 100 Watts \$1,700 eHam 4.7/7
- YAESU FTDX3000D 160-6M 100 Watts \$1,740 eHam 4.7/173



# HF Base Station Contester/DX

- ICOM IC-7610 160-6M 100 Watts \$3,000 eHam 4.5/101
- YAESU FTDX-101D 160-6M 100 Watts \$3,100 eHam 4.5/24
- KENWOOD TS-890S 160-6M 100 Watts \$3,700 eHam 4.9/57



# Sample Used HT

- Yeasu VX-5R, 6M, 2M, 70CM \$125 — \$150 eHam 4.2/257
- Yaesu VX-6R, 2M, 1.25M, 70CM \$165 — \$215 eHam 4.4/132,
- Kenwood TH-F6A, 2M, 1.25M, 70CM \$150 — \$200 eHam 4.3/248
- ICOM IC-W32A 2M, 70CM \$85 — \$170 eHam 4.1/113

# Sample Used VHF/UHF Mobile

- Yaesu FT-7800R 2M, 70CM \$150 — \$275 eHam 4.6/195
- ICOM IC-2100H 2M \$150 — \$200 eHam 4.5/194
- Kenwood TM-G707A 2M, 70CM \$215 — \$250 eHam 4.5/114
- Alinco DR-130T 2M \$30 — \$70 eHam 4.7/17

# Sample Used HF

- ICOM IC-9100 160-6M, 2M, 70CM \$1,300 — \$1,450 eHam 4.3/66
- Kenwood TS-2000 160-6M, 2M, 70CM \$920 — \$1,000 eHam 4.4/453
- Yaesu FT-857D 160-6M, 2M, 70CM \$850 — \$1,550 eHam 4.5/432
- ICOM IC-718 160-6M \$300 — \$700 (new \$585) eHam 4.6/424
- ICOM IC-7300 160-6M SDR \$850 — \$900 (new \$1,100) eHam 4.7/365

# Sample Used Vintage HF

- Drake TR-4C 80M, 40M, 20M, 15M, 10M (1970's) \$425 — \$600  
eHam 4.7/35
- Collins KWM-2A 80M, 40M, 20M, 15M, 10M (1960's) \$550 — \$2,200  
eHam 4.5/37



Thanks