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You can communicate from the top of a mountain, your home or behind the wheel of your car, all without relying on the Internet or a cell phone network You can take radio wherever you go! In times of disaster, when regular communications channels fail, hams can swing into action assisting emergency communications efforts and working with public service agencies. For instance, the Amateur Radio Service kept New York City agencies in touch with each other after their command center was destroyed during the 9/11 tragedy. Ham radio also came to the rescue during Hurricane Katrina, where all other communications failed, and the [devastating flooding in Colorado in 2013](#).

You can communicate with other hams using your voice and a microphone, interface a radio with your computer or tablet to send data, text or images, or Morse code, which remains incredibly popular. You can even talk to astronauts aboard the International Space Station, talk to other hams through one of several satellites in space, or bounce signals off the moon and back to Earth!

Some hams like to build and experiment with electronics. Computer hobbyists enjoy using Amateur Radio's digital communications opportunities. Others compete in "DX contests," where the object is to see how many hams in distant locations they can contact. Mostly we use ham radio to form friendships over the air or through participation in one of more than 2000 Amateur Radio clubs throughout the country. There are over 600,000 radio amateurs in the United States and over 2,000,000 worldwide.

Read real person comments in "[Why I Love It!](#)"

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