

International Operating

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Overview

Amateurs sometimes visit other countries and naturally want to operate their amateur stations. The three types of reciprocal operating authority are 1) a [CEPT license](#); 2) an [IARP](#); and 3) a [reciprocal permit](#) from a country which does not participate in either of these two multilateral agreements. Always follow all of the communications rules of the country visited. To operate under CEPT or IARP, the amateur must be a licensee in the country of citizenship.

Canada is the exception to the above. The US and Canada share an automatic reciprocal operating agreement. US amateurs must carry proof of their US citizenship and their valid US license. Identification for US amateurs is the US call separated by a stroke and the appropriate Canadian prefix identifier (e.g. N1KB/VE3). In all other instances, or as specified by the national licensing body, the prefix goes *before* the call sign. For further information on US/Canadian operation, visit the [RAC](#) Web site.

Operation in the US by Foreign Amateurs

Foreign amateurs who wish to operate in the US and are not US licensees or citizens may do so in one of three ways:

1. If the country of which you are a citizen and an amateur licensee has entered into a [multilateral operating agreement](#) with the US, CEPT or IARP, no additional permit is required -- simply bring your CEPT or IARP documentation when you visit the US. Identify your station by the US call district identifier, such as W3/G1ABC. Use "W" and the number of the FCC call letter district in which you are operating followed by a slash and your home call sign (plus any other CEPT or IARP requirements). Amateurs must be a citizen of the country in which they are licensed. For a list of the US call districts listed graphically, see <http://www.arrl.org/awards/was/map.gif> and for a text listing, see <http://wireless.fcc.gov/services/amateur/about/recoperating.html>. This is intended for short visits.
2. *Or*, if your country of citizenship and amateur license share a bilateral [Reciprocal Operating Agreement with the US](#), the FCC allows foreign amateurs to operate with no permit. Simply carry your foreign amateur license and proof of your citizenship in that country. Identify using "W" and the number of the FCC call letter district in which you are operating followed by a slash and your non-US call sign, e.g. W3/G1ABC). Amateurs must be a citizen of the country in which they are licensed. Check these links for a list of the US call districts shown [graphically](#) or for a [text listing](#).
3. If your country of citizenship and amateur license is *not* named in [lists of countries](#) that have such agreements with the US, then no operating agreement is in effect between the US and that country--and *operation is not possible in the US based on your home license*. Should you wish to seek such an agreement between your home country and the US for the future, you may want to contact your national Amateur Radio society to request that they contact the

responsible government official to request such an agreement with the US. US citizenship is *not* required to obtain a [US license](#), but a US mailing address is. Once a person is prepared to take the US license examinations, licensing is possible in as little as a few days to a week. *If a US license is held, no other reciprocal operating authority may be used for operation in the US*

Check the [list of countries](#) which have signed a reciprocal operating agreement with the US. If your country of citizenship and amateur license is not named in the list above, see if it is possible to obtain a CEPT license or an IARP from your home country. If none these are possible, then no reciprocal operating authority is in effect between the US and that country and operation is not possible in the US.

Foreign amateurs may, however, obtain a US license by taking and passing the appropriate license. To find information on obtaining a US license, see <http://www.arrl.org/hamradio.html>. A US mailing address is required for application purposes. If a US license of any class is held by the foreign amateur, it supercedes any other operating authority when operating in the US. In that case, the US license **MUST** be used in place of any other operating authority. If the country holds no reciprocal operating agreement with the US and does not participate in CEPT or IARP, a US license is the only option.

- [Foreign Amateur Operation in the US](#)
- [US Call Sign Region Map](#)
- [International Travel Host Exchange \(ITHE\)](#)

Operation Outside the US by FCC-Licensed Amateurs

US amateurs and citizens may operate under a multilateral agreement (CEPT or IARP) very easily. Countries which have entered into a Reciprocal Operating Agreement with the US, but are not part of CEPT or IARP arrangements require that a permit be obtained. Even if a reciprocal agreement does not exist, it may still be possible to obtain a permit from the foreign government.

- [CEPT -- For US Amateur Operation in Most European Countries](#)
- [List of CEPT Countries](#)
- [IARP -- For US Amateur Operation in Certain Countries of the Americas](#)
- [List of IARP Participating Countries](#)
- [Reciprocal Permit--For US Amateurs in non-CEPT or IARP Countries](#)
- [Status of Force Agreement \(SOFA\)](#)
- [International Travel Host Exchange \(ITHE\)](#)

Operation in International Waters

Amateurs sometimes cruise in International Waters but are still under the jurisdiction of their licensing authority. Once they enter the territorial waters of another country, they fall under that countries licensing jurisdiction.

- [Operation in International Waters](#)
- [FAQ's on International Operating](#)
- [ITU Region Limitations](#)

Notes:

- Frequencies are Limited by the Country of Operation
- Amateurs operating outside the US are bound by the restrictions of their operating authority. See the Washington Mailbox in June 2001 *QST*, page 98.

Miscellaneous Information on International Operating

- [European Repeater List](#)
- [IARU Recognized National Amateur Radio Societies](#)
- [US Reciprocal Operating Agreement Countries List](#)
- [US Third Party Countries List](#)
- [US Department of State Travel Warnings](#)

1) Operation in the US by Foreign Amateurs

Foreign Amateurs who wish to operate in the US may do so if the country of which they are a citizen and amateur licensee has entered into a bilateral or multilateral reciprocal operating agreement with the US. Such agreements can include a reciprocal licensing agreement, CEPT license, or IARP permit. No additional permit is required -- simply bring your original license, issued by your home country when you visit the US; and be sure to identify your station while operating by the US call district identifier (e.g., followed by your non-US call sign.W3/G1ABC).

If your country of Citizenship and Amateur Licensing is not named in the [lists of countries](#) that have such agreements with the US, then no operating agreement is in effect between the US and that country--and operation is not possible in the US based on your home license. Should you wish to seek such an agreement between your home country and the US for the future, you may want to contact your national Amateur Radio society to request that they contact the responsible government official to request such an agreement with the US.

Operation in the US by any person is possible if you seek a US amateur license. Any person, other than a representative of a foreign government, can do so. Once a person is prepared to take the US license examinations, licensing is possible in as little as a few days to a week. A US mailing address is required for application purposes. Information about US licensing is available [elsewhere](#) on the Web site. If a US license is held, no other reciprocal operating authority may be used.

2) Operation Outside the US by FCC Licensed Amateurs

FCC-licensed amateur operation outside the US by US citizens is possible in certain areas in one or more ways:

CEPT

European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administrations (CEPT) radio-amateur license -- allows US Amateurs to travel to and operate from [most European countries](#) without obtaining an additional licensee or permit. For a US citizens to operate an amateur station in a CEPT country, certain requirements of the CEPT European Radio Committee (ERC) must be met for participation by non-CEPT Administrations (the US is a Non-CEPT administration who has obtained permission to allow its licensees the privilege of operation from CEPT countries). Under the CEPT Agreement, to activate operating authority, a traveler would have to carry credentials in English, French and German that the person, if a US citizen, and if a Commission-authorized amateur operator, is entitled to certain amateur station operating privileges in the specific countries

that have implemented the CEPT Agreement. Under the CEPT agreement, US Amateurs need to bring three things when traveling to a participating CEPT country: 1) Bring their original US license; 2) Bring proof of US citizenship (generally in the form of a Passport); and 3) Bring a copy of the [FCC's Public Notice](#) (this notice contains its information in three languages, English, French and German) which details what US Amateurs need to consider, and bring with them, when traveling to a CEPT country. [Note: While FCC does not state that your original hardcopy license is a document you must carry in CEPT areas, the actual CEPT agreement the US agreed to indicates that US Amateurs will possess such a document; so be sure to bring your FCC-issued original hardcopy license document when you travel and operate in CEPT areas].

Classes of license/operation. For US amateurs, there are two classes of CEPT. Class 1 requires knowledge of the international Morse code and carries all operating privileges (Technician (with the 5 WPM code) , General, Advanced or Extra class US licensees qualify for Class 1). For foreign amateurs, Class 1 is equivalent to our current Amateur Extra Class. Class 2 does not require knowledge of telegraphy and carries all operating privileges above 30 MHz. It is, therefore, equivalent to our current (codeless) Technician Class operator license. There is no equivalent Class description for the US Novice license, therefore the US Novice license is not eligible. See also:

- [CEPT Information for US Amateurs](#)
- [List of CEPT Countries and Prefixes](#)
- [FCC Public Notice: Amateur Service Operation in CEPT Countries \(Adobe PDF File\)](#)

IARP

International Amateur Radio Permit --- For operation in certain countries of the Americas -- allows US amateurs to operate without seeking a special license or permit to enter and operate from that country other than the IARP. For a US citizen to operate an amateur station in a CITELE country, an IARP is necessary. According to the CITELE agreement, the IARP may be issued by a member-society of the International Amateur Radio Union (IARU)--for the US, the IARU member society is the American Radio Relay League (ARRL). The permit describes its authority in four different languages. The ARRL offers this service to US citizens for their use when they travel to CITELE countries. The ARRL provides this service on a non-discriminatory basis, at no expense to the United States Government. An IARP application is available [here](#) (Adobe PDF file).

Classes of license/operation. For US Amateurs, there are two classes of IARPs. Class 1 requires knowledge of the international Morse code and carries all operating privileges (Technician Plus, General, Advanced or Extra class US licensees qualify for Class 1). For foreign amateurs, Class 1 is equivalent to our current Amateur Extra Class. Class 2 does not require knowledge of telegraphy and carries all operating privileges above 30 MHz. It is, therefore, equivalent to our current (codeless) Technician Class operator license. There is no equivalent Class description for the US Novice license, therefore the US Novice license is not eligible.

Participating IARP Countries: Amateurs can find a list of the countries which accept an IARP at <http://www.citel.oas.org/iarp.asp>. They are: Argentina, Brazil, Canada, El Salvador, Panama, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago, United States of America, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

See also:

- [IARP Application for US amateurs](#) (Adobe PDF file)

3) Other Countries

For operation in countries that are not participants in either CEPT or IARP, see [Operating Permit Information by Country](#).

Page last modified: 11:28 AM, 23 May 2006 ET

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