



Technet Presentation

Hamfests - - Hamvention® 2026

There are three things that happen every year

- 1. The swallows return to San Juan Capistrano, CA on March 19th**
- 2. The buzzards return to Hinckley, OH on March 15th**
- 3. The Hams go to Dayton (Xenia) May 15, 16, 17 (2026)**

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Hamfests - - Hamvention® 2026

What Are Hamfests? (Per [WIKIPEDIA](#))

A Hamfest is a convention of amateur radio enthusiasts, often combining a trade show, flea market, and various other activities of interest to amateur radio operators. In the United Kingdom the term rally is more commonly used for amateur radio conventions. "Hamfests" were noted as early as 1924 in the U.S.

- The biggest Hamfest (Hamvention®) in the world is Dayton (Xenia). Hamvention® is a registered trademark of DARA, Dayton Amateur Radio Association.
- This Technet talk will primarily talk about Hamvention® in Xenia AKA "Dayton".
- Hamfests around the country side usually benefit a local Ham club and are usually not on the same scale as Dayton.
- Dayton attendance is 30K plus for all three days in recent years. Vendors and attendees are from all over the world. One year, the Japanese chartered two DC-8's to attend. (~360 People)
- There are two other large US conventions, Orlando, FL (Hamcation) and Huntsville, AL (Huntsville Hamfest).
- Hamvention® (DARA) is a multi-million dollar event. It is well worth the effort to attend.

Hamvention® is run by the Dayton Amateur Radio Association Inc. (DARA)

DARA is a Nonprofit Designated as a 501(c) (3) organization

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Why Attend a Hamfest/Hamvention®?

All industries have sectional, national, and International conventions.

There are companies that specialize in putting on these conventions.

Companies send representatives to these meetings at great cost.

Such commercial meetings are the CTIA (Cellular Telephone Internet Association), NAB (National Association of Broadcasters), SEMA Show – Las Vegas, EAA AirVenture Oshkosh, SUN 'n FUN Aerospace Expo, Cosmetology conventions, Medical Doctor Specialty groups, Electric Power Industry, etc.

Meeting venues are frequently at cities with good transportation access.

- A Hamfest/Hamvention® is Amateur Radio's version of these commercial conventions.
- **Dayton (Xenia) is in your backyard.**
- DARA puts their Hamvention® together with ham radio volunteers from around the world
- In Ohio and surrounding states, there are normally a number of Hamfests every weekend.
- These Hamfests are put on by local clubs to support their activities. Hamfests fund their local repeaters, club activities, club public service events and other club expenditures.
- The listing of the 2026 Ohio Hamfests are shown on the Ohio Hamfest Pages later in this presentation.

Hamfests & Hamvention® are Educational Opportunities

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Hamvention® History

The first Hamvention occurred on March 22, 1952, at the Biltmore Hotel in Dayton (QST March 1952). Hara Arena had been the home of the Dayton Hamvention since 1964. The Hara Arena announced its closure in 2016 with the 2017 Hamvention being forced to move as a result.

Prior to 1973, the Hamvention® was a one day event. In 1973 it became a two day event. The following year, 1974, it became a three day event.

Inside view of the Hara ice rink



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Xenia (New Dayton) In 2017 Moved to the Greene County Fair Grounds due to the closing of Hara Arena in 2016.

Outside Aerial View



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A May 28, 2019 Tornado took out most of Hara Arena. The city of Trotwood, OH demolished the rest starting in 2020.



See more pictures of the 2019 Tornado damage:

<https://www.daytondailynews.com/news/local/photos-what-tornado-damaged-hara-arena-looks-like-from-above/vY64e0Pk6j7USx4qr6OmqL/>

Many Hams have fond memories of the place.

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Xenia inside displays



DX Engineering



ICOM

One of many 2025 video tours: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TBC63losuZM>

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Manufacturers: (Inside)

Apache Labs, Elecraft, Flex Radio, Icom, Kenwood, Yaesu, and others are a few MAJOR manufacturers with LARGE DISPLAYS.

HF Manufacturers

Elecraft



Flex Radio



Icom



Kenwood



Yaesu



Apache Labs



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Xenia FLEA Market (Outside Treasures)



The weekend of the 2026 Hamvention® covers a lot territory. It is almost impossible to cover everything in the three days. Start planning your visit now.

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Hamvention® Advertisement (<https://hamvention.org/>)

When is the show?

Friday May 15th, 2026 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM
Saturday May 16th, 2026 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM
Sunday May 17th, 2026 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Where is the show?

Greene County Fair and Expo Center
210 Fairground Road, Xenia 45385
Coordinates are 39.702 N – 83.9420 W

Are you ready for an Adventure?

Each year, Hamvention invites the amateur radio community to come together in celebration of innovation, friendship, and the limitless spirit of radio. For 2026, we are proud to announce our new theme:

Radio Adventure

Radio has always been about exploration — of ideas, technologies, distances, and possibilities. From the earliest spark-gap pioneers to today's digital experimenters, satellite operators, contesters, emergency communicators, and outdoor enthusiasts, amateur radio continues to be a gateway to discovery.

Begin your trek to Hamvention — three days filled with learning, discovery, innovation, and community. Whether you come to shop the flea market, attend forums, explore new technology, volunteer, or reconnect with friends old and new, your adventure awaits in Xenia.

Our volunteers are working hard to make this the best show yet!

73,
Brian Markland, N8UDQ
General Chairman, Dayton Hamvention 2025
And all the amazing volunteers who bring it to life



Friday May 15th, 2026 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM
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Sunday May 17th, 2026 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Greene County Fair and Expo Center
[210 Fairground Road, Xenia 45385](https://www.greencountyfair.com/)

Coordinates: 39.702 N 83.9420 W

Coordinates: 39° 42' 7.2" N 83° 56' 31.2" W

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Hamfests/Hamvention® Ham Radio Conventions in General.

- ARRL National and Sectional Conventions
- Flea Markets
- Retail Vendors
- Seminars (Forums)
- Net Meetings (OSSBN, COTN, Sectional nets, etc...)
- Fox Hunts
- New Technologies Discussions
- Technical Talks
- ARES meetings
- Weather Net meetings
- Balloon Launches & tracking
- Software (Rig control, SDR, Digital Modes, etc...)
- Contesting -- with / without automatic station control
- Eyeball QSOs with your friends from around the world

If you don't see it at Dayton, it probably doesn't exist.

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NEW HAMS AS WELL AS THE OLDER HAMS

This is an excellent opportunity to touch and feel the equipment and talk with the vendors and attend meetings (forums)

Many Hamfests have meeting rooms for **FCC testing**, talks and specialized ham groups.

Hamvention® usually has meetings covering these topics:

- Traffic net meetings
- DMR, DSTAR, Fusion
- SDR
- Antennas
- ATV (Amateur TV)
- Raspberry Pi, Android, Hot Spots
- Contesting
- VEC / FCC License Exams***.

See the forum schedules and descriptions URLs on the next page.

Free license exams will be given across the street from Hamvention® at:

Memorial United Presbyterian Church
343 West Ankeney Mill Road, (Fairgrounds Road).

*****Due to recent changes by the FCC it is very important that new license applicants obtain an FCC FRN registration before arriving to test. Failure to do so will delay being able to test*****

The FCC is now charging for the initial license. License upgrades and Administrative Modification are free.

See <https://hamvention.org/event-details/exams/> and www.arrl.org for more information.

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FORUMS Schedule 2026

See: <https://hamvention.org/event-details/forums/>

More details on each forum can be found in the following PDF files:

Friday: https://hamvention.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/HVF_2026_Friday.pdf

Saturday: https://hamvention.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/HVF_2026_Saturday.pdf

Sunday: https://hamvention.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/HVF_2026_Sunday.pdf

Or all three days in one file: https://hamvention.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/HVF_2026_Combined.pdf

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FLEA MARKET & INSIDE VENDORS

New Equipment & Parts R US

- ARRL (Membership, literature, books, etc ...)
- Vendors & Manufacturers
- New and used equipment
- Connectors
- Coax / Feedline / insulators / Baluns
- Wire
- Towers & tower supplies
- Soldering stations and tools
- Specialized parts
- Collectors' items
- Old Boat Anchors ...err... treasures
- Newer hams may want to look at the Appendix

How to prepare for a Hamfest.

Items you may need

- An admission ticket: Usually sold at the gate or website or email.
- Money: Cash. Dealers will usually take credit cards.
- Cart: To haul all your treasures
- HT: To communicate with your friends in case you get lost.
- **Clothing: Make sure you are properly dressed for the conditions including proper shoes**
- **Food: Bring your own if you like. Make sure you have plenty of fluids to stay hydrated.**

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Notes to New Hams

Purchasing Items

- **If you're new to ham radio, buddy up with a more experienced ham who can help you spend your money ... err..... advise you on your purchases**
- **Most prices are negotiable, especially in the afternoon of each day. Deals go quickly.**
- **Most vendors aren't interested in trades, but no harm in asking.**
- **Hamfests are good places to buy accessories for your radio. Batteries, mobile mounts, power supplies, etc at reduced prices.**
- **Many Hamfests have AC power available. If at all possible, try out the item before leaving.**

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OHIO HAMFESTS 2026

April 25, 2026 **Tusco Amateur Radio Club's 2026 Hamfest, Computer & Electronics Show**

Location **Dover, OH**

Sponsor **Tusco Amateur Radio Club W8ZX**

Website <https://www.w8zx.net/hamfest>

[Learn More](#)

April 26, 2026 **Athens Hamfest**

Location **Athens, OH**

Sponsor **Athens County Amateur Radio Association**

Website <http://ac-ara.org>

[Learn More](#)

May 2, 2026 **Lucas County ARES Hamfest**

Location **Toledo, OH**

Sponsor **Lucas County Amateur Radio Emergency Service, Inc.**

Website <https://www.qsl.net/w8mtu/>

[Learn More](#)

May 14-17, 2026 **Four Days In May**

Location **Fairborn, OH**

Sponsor **QRP Amateur Radio Club International**

Website <http://qrparci.org/fdim>

[Learn More](#)

May 15-17, 2026 **Hamvention, 2026**

Location **Xenia, OH**

Sponsor **Dayton ARAspan>**

Website <https://hamvention.org/>

June 6, 2026 **FCARC SummerFest**

Location **Delta, OH**

Sponsor **Fulton County Amateur Radio Club**

Website <https://k8bxq.org/hamfest>

[Learn More](#)

July 11, 2026 **2026 Mansfield Mid Summer Trunkfest**

Location **Mansfield, OH**

Sponsor **Intercity Amateur Radio Club**

Website <http://w8we.org>

[Learn More](#)

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July 19, 2026 **Van Wert Hamfest**

Location **Van wert, OH**

Sponsor **Van Wert Amateur Radio Club**

[Learn More](#)

August 1, 2026 **Columbus Hamfest**

Location **Grove City, OH**

Sponsor **Aladdin Shrine Audio Unit**

Website <https://aladdinshrine.org/hamfest/>

[Learn More](#)

August 15th, 2026 **Cincinnati Hamfest, ARRL Great Lakes Division Convention**

Location **Owensville, OH**

Sponsor **Milford Amateur Radio Association**

Website <https://cincinnatihamfest.org/>

[Learn More](#)

August 16th, 2026 **Warren Hamfest**

Location **Cortland, OH**

Sponsor **Warren Amateur Radio Association**

Website <http://w8vtd.com/hamfest>

[Learn More](#)

September 13th, 2026 **Findlay Hamfest**

Location **Findlay, OH**

Sponsor **Findlay Radio Club**

Website <https://findlayradioclub.org/>

[Learn More](#)

September, 27/2026 **Cleveland Hamfest**

Location **Berea, OH**

Sponsor **Hamfest Association of Cleveland**

Website <https://www.HAC.org>

[Learn More](#)

October 10, 2026 **Williams County ARA Hamfest**

Location **Montpelier, OH**

Sponsor **WCARA**

Website <https://ka8ofe.weebly.com/>

[Learn More](#)

November 1st, 2026 **Massillon ARC Hamfest at MAPS**

Location **MAPS – N Canton, OH**

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Sponsor [Massillon Amateur Radio Club](#)

Website <http://w8np.net/>

Dayton 2026 Hamvention® Vendor information

<https://www.make-it.ca/hamvention/> Scroll down the web page

Dayton 2026 Hamvention® Vendors

[Indoor Commercial Vendor Listings](#)

[Outdoor Flea Market Vendor Listings](#)

These lists are lengthy. Be sure to scroll through the advertisements

Vendor Spaces (Inside and flea market) maps

<https://hamvention.org/vendor/> (also on the above vendor listings)

Previous Dayton Hamvention® Program Supplements

The Hamvention® 2022 Program is available at:

https://hamvention.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/2022-Program_Web.pdf

The Hamvention® 2023 Program is available at:

<https://hamvention.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/2023-Program-Web.pdf>

History of the Dayton Hamvention® (1952 - present)

<https://hamgallery.com/gallery/D/hamvention.htm>

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APPENDIX

Contest University 2026

- Contest University is a daylong seminar held the Thursday before Hamvention® at a local Dayton area hotel
- The title is misleading. Seminars include contesting as well as other amateur radio topics, i.e. grounding, receiver testing, antenna designs, etc....
- Contest University is not free. Registration is required to attend. I believe the event is filled.
- Not all is lost. The day of the Seminar, it is streamed on YouTube. See CTU <https://www.contestuniversity.com/> or DX Engineering <https://www.dxengineering.com/> on the morning of the event.
- **This year's seminar topics and schedule are at <https://www.contestuniversity.com/course-outline/>**
- The Professor's Bios are at <https://www.contestuniversity.com/professor-bios/>
- The You Tube stream may be viewed at a later date too.
- Last year's video (and previous years) are at <https://www.contestuniversity.com/videos/>
- *I highly recommend looking at this year's event as well as previous year's videos.*

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APPENDIX



And you thought Amateur Radio Was Wireless????

A ham requires additional equipment to get on the air and keep on the air. This includes tools, connectors, and feedlines just to keep ahead of “Mother Nature”.

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APPENDIX

ALL Hams may want to look for these items at a Hamfest.

The items shown below are suggested item to look for at a Hamfest (New & Used). They can be acquired as needed. These items do NOT have to break the bank.

Documentation (Purchasing at Dayton, you might save shipping and other fees)

- ARRL Handbook
- ARRL Antenna Book
- ARRL Grounding Documentation
- Specialized subject material ... See ARRL.ORG for more literature.

Basic test equipment

- Digital Multimeter (~\$10 - \$50), Clamp on AC & DC AMP Meter
- Patch cables – PL-259/SO239, Type N M/F, SMA M/F ...etc
- RF Connectors/adapters – PL-259/SO239, Type N M/F, SMA M/F ... etc
- RF Feedlines, connectors, mounting hardware, etc ...
- Oscilloscope - Advanced Item (~\$100 - \$400)

Tools

- Soldering equipment (Soldering stations, Irons, Guns, etc...)
- Solder - various gauges, solder sucker, solder wick, etc
- Clip leads – various wire gauges and alligator clip sizes
- iFixit tool set <https://www.ifixit.com/Tools>
- Socket sets
- Screw drivers (for various types of heads)
- Various types of pliers and cutters

RF Accessories

- Antenna Matching device (i.e. antenna tuner for coax and balanced line)
- Average and peak reading Watt Meter. This may be included in the Antenna Tuner / matchbox.
- Coax and grounding items.... DX Engineering, The wireman, etc.....
- Coax seal

Some of these items can also be found on line as well as locally.