

Online Amateur Radio Exams

Notes from Personal Experience
in 2020

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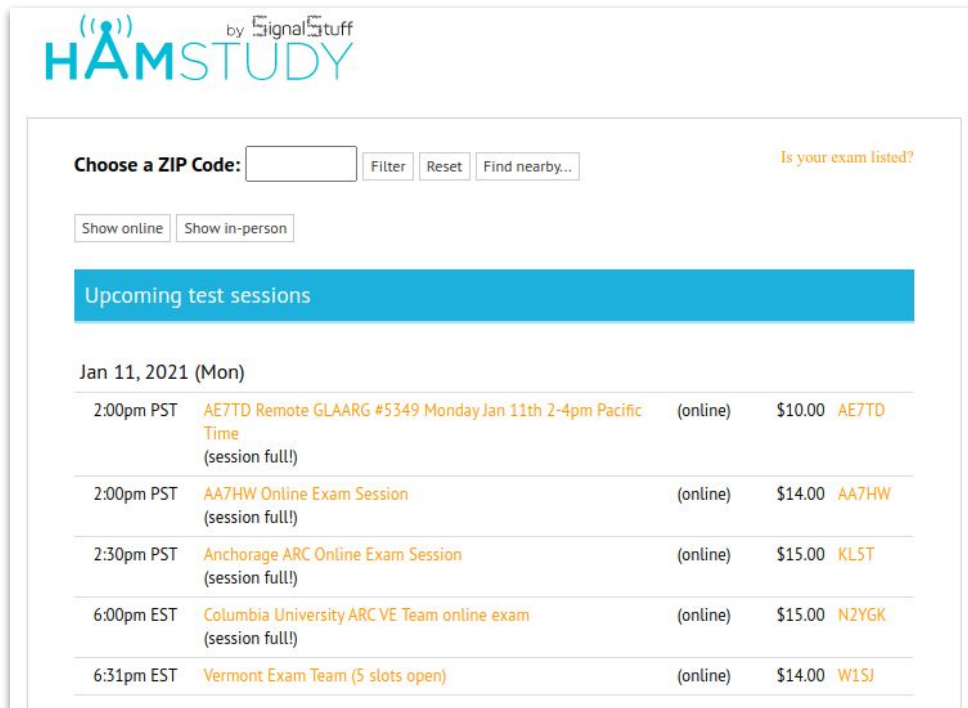
**It's Convenient,
It's Robust,
It's COVID-Safe!**

Step-By-Step Process At-A-Glance

- Study for the test(s) until you're ready to pass!
 - You can usually take more than one test in a single exam session
- Search HamStudy.org for an online session
- Sign-up for a session
 - Pay (nominal) exam fee
- Read the rules of engagement
 - Understand how the VEs ensure the integrity of the testing process
- Show up on-time and be patient
 - Demand is high!
- Pass the exam (of course!)
- Sign documents (all online!)
- Celebrate!

Finding A Session: HamStudy.org

- HamStudy.org is the clearing-house
 - Central location for testing sessions provided by many (all?) VECs offering them
- Filter search by zip code
 - You can take an online test from any offering VEC,, but pay attention to time zones
- I elected to use the Greater Los Angeles Amateur Radio Group VEC (GLAARG)
- Session list is oriented by date
- Demand is high!
 - Sessions with available space may be at least a few days away
 - However, lots of options to choose from



The screenshot shows the HamStudy.org website interface. At the top, the logo reads "HAMSTUDY by signalstuff". Below the logo is a search bar with the text "Choose a ZIP Code:" followed by an input field, and buttons for "Filter", "Reset", and "Find nearby...". To the right of the search bar is a link that says "Is your exam listed?". Below the search bar are two buttons: "Show online" and "Show in-person". A blue header bar reads "Upcoming test sessions". Below this, the date "Jan 11, 2021 (Mon)" is displayed. A table lists several test sessions, all of which are marked as "(session full!)".

Time	Session Name	Mode	Price	VEC
2:00pm PST	AE7TD Remote GLAARG #5349 Monday Jan 11th 2-4pm Pacific Time (session full!)	(online)	\$10.00	AE7TD
2:00pm PST	AA7HW Online Exam Session (session full!)	(online)	\$14.00	AA7HW
2:30pm PST	Anchorage ARC Online Exam Session (session full!)	(online)	\$15.00	KL5T
6:00pm EST	Columbia University ARC VE Team online exam (session full!)	(online)	\$15.00	N2YKG
6:31pm EST	Vermont Exam Team (5 slots open)	(online)	\$14.00	W1SJ

GLAARG VEC



- One of the 14 FCC-approved VECs, operating since 1984
- Administered over 2000 remote exams since April 2020
- They are not a radio club, just a VEC
- *Lots* of information on their website at [GLAARG VEC](#)
 - Testing FAQs
 - Detailed instructions
 - HamStudy.org session list, filtered for GLAARG
- All GLAARG exam sessions are \$10 (\$5 for youths)
 - You may take multiple exams in a single session
 - Notify them ahead of time, for planning purposes

Preparing For The Exam

- Read the detailed emails you receive following registration
 - Everything is in there!
- Meet the technical requirements
 - If you can “Zoom” already, you’re probably set
- Meet the “environment” requirements
 - Be ready to demonstrate that you can take the test in a “clean” environment
 - The administering VEs will walk you through an inspection of your location
- Everything is now done online
 - No need to send paper verification of existing licenses - they look it up in the ULS
 - All application forms filled out and signed electronically at the time of the exam
- *Study and be ready to pass!*

My Experience

- I took the Extra exam on a Saturday in October 2020
- As with most sessions, mine was full - over 70 exams administered that day
- Despite the volume, the GLAARG team did a great job making the wait enjoyable
 - Multiple zoom “waiting rooms” setup in which “hosts” answered questions about the testing process, chatted about amateur radio, and generally made everyone feel welcome
- Test was continuously monitored by 3 VEs
- Three steps:
 - Confirm identity - DL, existing license, etc.
 - Confirm security of test environment - video “tour” that no unapproved testing “aids” are within reach/view
 - Take the test - VEs see everything you see/do
 - When you pass, complete and sign forms
- I saw results in the FCC ULS within a few hours!

GLAARG runs a professional remote testing program! They are experienced and dedicated to providing secure licensing to everyone, despite COVID-19.