



HOW TO BUY AND SELL USED HF RADIO EQUIPMENT

AND HOW NOT TO BE TAKEN

BY AC5S

USED EQUIPMENT FOR SALE

- Transceivers (HF, VHF, UHF, Mobile, Handheld, QRP)
- Antenna Tuners and Analyzers
- Antennas
- Power Supplies
- Accessories (mics, cables, batteries, miscellaneous)
- Amplifiers

HF TRANSCEIVERS

- Manufactured in the last 15 years
- Older than 15 years

15 YEARS OLD OR NEWER

Pros

- Most have Digital Signal Processing (DSP)
- Very good receiver designs
- Solid state throughout
- Accessories still available from major dealers (mics, power cords, option boards, etc.)
- Most cover HF **AND** 6 Meters and may have specific digital modes (i.e. USB Data)
- Many have USB connections for rig control and digital operation (very seamless integration)
- Most manufacturers will service the radios
- All have data and accessory ports for remote control, amp keying, etc.
- **Main reason: Most radios are excellent values: (\$450 to \$1,200)**

BEST OPTIONS

- Yaesu FT-450, Yaesu FT-450AT, Yaesu FT-450D
- Yaesu FTDX-1200 and FTDX-3000
- Yaesu FT-891
- Yaesu 991/991A
- Icom 7100
- Icom 7200
- Icom 7300
- Icom 7410
- Kenwood 590S and 590SG
- Kenwood 480SAT

POSSIBLE OPTIONS

- Flex 3000/6300
- Icom 7600
- Icom 7610
- Icom 703
- Kenwood TS-2000
- Yaesu FT-817
- Icom 7000

BAD OPTIONS

- Icom 756, 756 Pro Series (I, II, III)
- Icom 706
- All Elecraft radios
- Yaesu 897/857
- Kenwood TS-570 (all versions)
- Kenwood TS-480HX
- Any Alinco
- Yaesu FT-100
- Chinese HF radios (all)
- "Kit" radios (some exceptions)
- Most Flex radios

OLDER TRANSCEIVERS

Pros

- Some have tubes that glow in the dark (very cool)
- Excellent receivers
- Lots of knobs and buttons with minimal menus (very cool)
- Full of history
- Easier to work on
- Some radios are excellent values/low price (i.e. Kenwood TS-520S recently found at \$295 shipped)

OLDER RADIOS

Cons

- You will have to work on them
- Not all cover WARC bands
- Limited or non-available parts (i.e. Icom 756 Pro III and TS-570 displays)
- Manufacturers will not perform repair services
- You will have to work on them, often (or have someone do it for you)
- May not interface well with computers; more difficult to run digital
- **Some models priced higher than many late model radios and have less features (don't be fooled by "classics")**

WHERE TO BUY? BEST PLACES TO PURCHASE

- Best
 - From a friend or club member
 - From a Ham referral
 - Ham dealer that sells used equipment and may provide a warranty or have a return policy (HRO, Main Trading Co, etc.)
 - On-line (QTH, E-Ham, QRZ, etc.)
 - Craigslist (okay and beware)

WORST PLACES TO BUY A TRANSCEIVER (MY OPINION)

- Hamfest/Swapfest
- Ebay
- Neighborhood garage sale
- Dayton Hamvention
- Commercial flea market

FAVORITE ON-LINE SITE

- QTH.com
 - Easy to use with some safety features
 - Well managed site
 - Good selection of categories
 - Picture imports seamless
 - Personally bought and sold more on QTH than any other site
 - Hard to explain, but there seems to be a higher caliber of Hams on this site
 - E-Ham and QRZ similar

ON-LINE BUYING – BEST PRACTICE

- What to do
 - Always speak to seller on the phone (I will NEVER buy anything if this does not happen)
 - Always check sellers QRZ page, their web site if they have one, Goggle their call sign, etc.
 - Important: Find picture of their station if possible. Why?
 - Always buy a radio as close to original condition as possible. Scratches, dents, other cosmetic flaws dictate you pay less; always
 - Ask Ham related “catch” questions (i.e. When running digital nodes, how do you set the ALC? What rig control software do you run?)
 - Don’t buy radios that need work unless you are a tech and have the equipment to work on that radio and have a parts supply lined out. Basically know what you are getting into and pay very little; it’s a broken radio. Hams can pay way too much for these. If seller tells you there is one issue, assume there are many issues
 - Discuss payment options. Usually only two options: PayPal and Money order (PayPal preferred)
 - Discuss shipping costs and if you have a favorite shipper, discuss that as well
 - When will the seller ship? Tracking? Insurance? If local can you pick up?
 - Has the radio ever been back to the manufacturer or other service facility?

ON-LINE BUYING-BEST PRACTICE

- Always ask if radio is from a “smoking” environment (radios from a smokers shack can bring 40% less on resell and you will never get the smell out of the radio)
- Having original manufacturers boxes and accessories can be worth up to 20% on resell. Make sure you ask
- What accessories are included?
- Original owner? (original owner radios are worth more because you usually can get full and accurate history of the radio; this is very important)
- With some exceptions, don't buy “estate” equipment on-line; okay if local
- Are they open to a trade?
- No picture, no contact
- No price, no contact
- Don't be afraid to walk on the deal. There are lot's of radios for sale if you look over time
- And always ask if there are any issues with the radio
- Why are they selling?

FINAL THOUGHTS

- Have a game plan going into negotiations; I write it down ahead of time
- Know shipping costs and other costs/fees ahead of your conversation with seller if possible
- Have your upper limit clearly defined. Don't overspend unless it is a very special deal. Lots of radios for sale
- Be flexible on the shipping date; they are not Gigi-Parts or DX Engineering
- Burned three times (Flex 1500, Icom 706 and Icom 725)
- Never ship overseas and never do business in Canada
- Money order "101". Reality and personal limits
- PayPal personal limits
- Wire transfers, cashiers' checks (other than USPS) and cash
- Questions?