

How to Upgrade an Amateur Radio License

To upgrade an existing amateur radio license, all you need to do is to attend an examination session and either pass one or more multiple-choice written tests, or present proof of element credit, or both. There is no application fee to upgrade your class of license.

Taking the Examination

To upgrade your license class, you must pass the one or more examinations according to the following schedule:

Current License Class	Upgrade to License Class	Element 2 (35-Question Test)	Element 3 (35-Question Test)	Element 4 (50-Question Test)
Novice	Technician	X		
	General	X	X	
	Amateur Extra	X	X	X
Technician	General		X	
	Amateur Extra		X	X
General	Amateur Extra			X
Advanced	Amateur Extra			X

Exams can be taken in any order during the same exam session or over several exam sessions.

If you can provide proof of previously holding an amateur radio license, you can get credit for certain elements according to the following schedule:

Previous License Class	Element 3	Element 4
Technician Granted Before March 19, 1987	X	
General	X	
Advanced	X	
Amateur Extra	X	X

When you pass an exam element or qualify for a license by exam or element credit, you will receive a *Certificate of Successful Completion of Examination (CSCE)*. A CSCE is valid for 365 days from the date it was issued. The CSCE will indicate:

- The location and date of the exam session.
- The exam element(s) passed, if applicable.
- The class of license for which the applicant is qualified, if applicable.
- The name, mailing address, and signature of the applicant.
- The signature and call sign of the three VEs certifying the results indicated on the CSCE.

After the test session, the VE Team will forward the session data and paperwork to the VEC for processing. The amount of time required for the VEC to process the session and submit the results to the FCC will vary. For the Laurel VEC, sessions are normally submitted to the FCC the next business day after the test session.

After Your License is Granted

When your application is granted, the FCC will notify you by e-mail. The e-mail will include a link that will allow you to view, download, and print an official copy of your license.

Testing Fees

Depending on which VEC is coordinating a team's exam sessions, a VE team may charge a fee to take an exam or to provide other licensing services. The exam fees can vary between the VECs, but are typically \$10-\$15.

- **Laurel VEC VE teams do not charge a fee for any of the licensing services they provide.**

Basic Qualification Question

If you have ever been convicted of a felony in any federal, state, or local court, you will also have to provide the FCC with an explanation of the conviction before they will act on your application. The FCC must receive your explanation within 14 days after the file number is assigned or your application will be dismissed. See the [Felony Question Info](#) page for further information on providing your explanation.