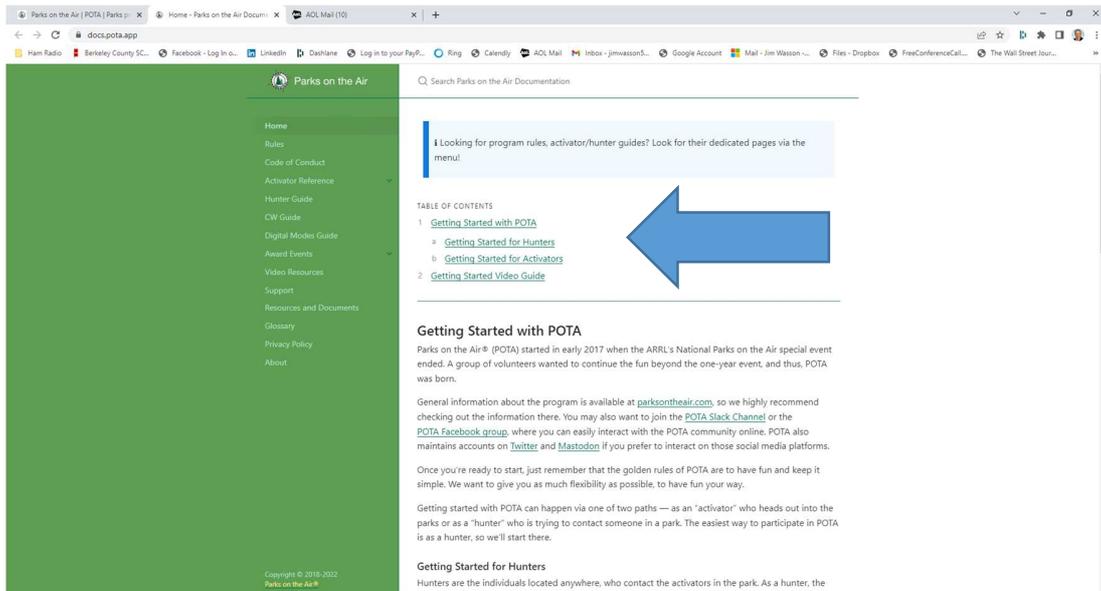
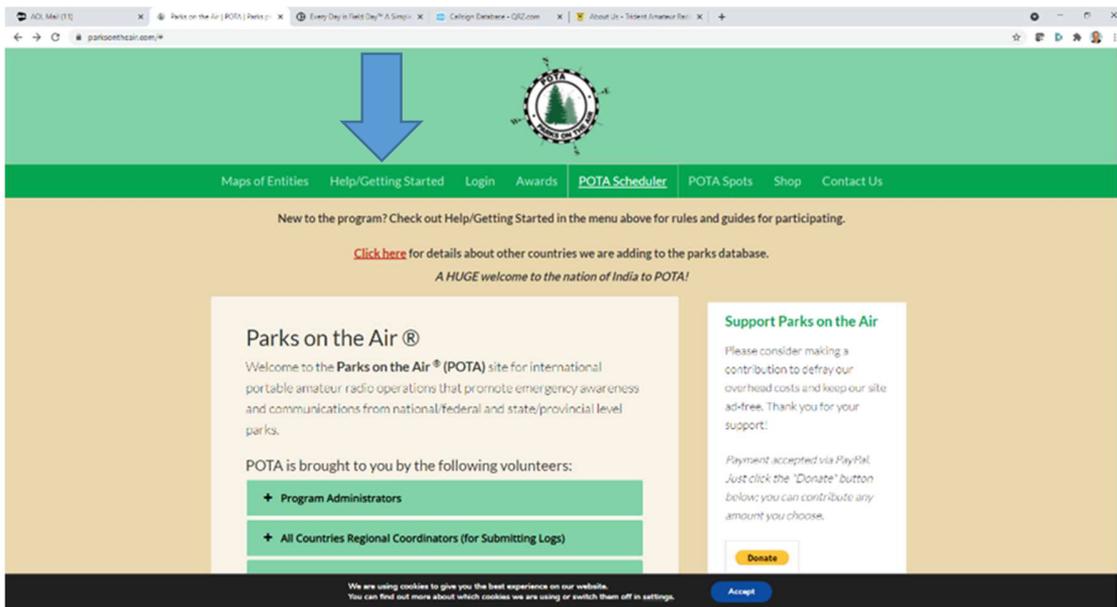


BE A POTA ACTIVATOR

Getting Started: Step-by-Step Instructions

By Jim Wasson (KO4MNB), Tom Valencia (W4ID), and John Satterfield (KK4JS)

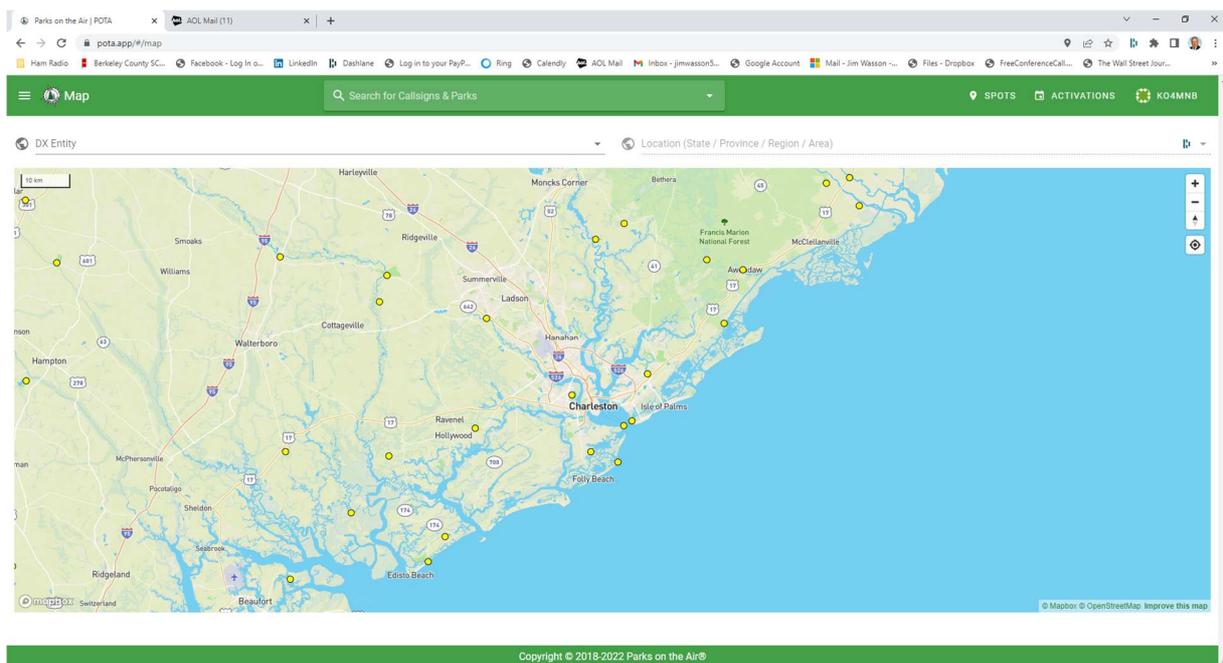
Parks on the Air® (POTA) started in early 2017 when the ARRL's National Parks on the Air special event ended. A group of volunteers wanted to continue the fun beyond the one-year event, and thus, POTA was born. General information about the program is available on the POTA website at <https://parksontheair.com>. Click on the "Getting Started" tab to review the rules, download the guides, and watch the informative videos. Below is a screen shot.



As explained on the POTA web site, activators are those amateurs who operate portable from within POTA designated parks. Hunters are those amateurs who make contact with Activators who are operating portable from within POTA designated parks. Awards can be earned for both activators and hunters, for example: Bronze Award is obtained by activating or hunting 10 different parks, Silver Award is 20 different parks, Gold Award is 30 different parks, etc.

Once you have reviewed the POTA website, we highly recommend that you go out to a park with a club member to do an activation, and then sit down with that club member to review and discuss the following step-by-step instructions that we prepared to cover everything from finding a park to submitting your log to get credit for your activation and to view your awards.

Step #1. Find a POTA park at <https://parksontheair.com> “Map of Entities” tab. Write down the park number (K-XXXX). Copy and paste the coordinates into your GPS. Research the park at <https://www2.dnr.sc.gov/ManagedLands> or <https://southcarolinaparks.com/park-finder> to determine the days and hours of operation and if there are any restrictions. Print out the park map, if one is available, to find your way around. In addition, you may want to print out a satellite view from Goggle Earth to find a clearing to set up a table, chairs and an antenna.



Regarding restrictions, some parks, such as National Historical Monuments (NHM), will not allow you to put stakes in the ground or wires in the trees. Other parks, such as Wildlife Management Areas, will not allow visitors during hunting season. In addition, if you are planning to activate at Fort Moultrie NHM, Fort Sumpter NHM, or at Charles Pinckney NHM it is advisable to contact Tim Sveum, the Chief Park Ranger, to let him know as a courtesy that you intend to activate. Tim can be reached at tim_sveum@nps.gov or 843-277-4503. If not, be

prepared for the Park Rangers to pay you a visit as they often think our vertical whip antenna on a tripod is a rocket launcher, which is of course, prohibited.

Special RaDAR (Rapid Deployment) awards are given for transitioning between multiple entities during a 24-hour period. If you plan to activate multiple parks in 24-hour UTC period to qualify for a RaDAR award, it is suggested that you make a flight plan, such as the one below. You can earn a RaDAR Rhino award for activating 3 parks in one day, which is quite easy to accomplish.

No.	Park	Name	Latitude	Longitude	Miles	Min	Meters	ETA	UTC	ETD	UTC	Comments
1	K-9201	Fort Lamar WMA	32.7047	-79.9457	22	35	35406	09:00	13:00	9:30	13:30	
2	K-2900	Dungannon Plantation WMA	32.7475	-80.195	22	38	35406	10:15	14:15	10:45	14:45	
3	K-0529	Ernest F. Hollings ACE Basin National Wildlife Refuge	32.6968	-80.3813	14	23	22531	11:15	15:15	11:45	15:45	Closed Tues & Hunting
4	K-3889	Botany Bay Plantation Heritage Preserve WMA	32.5498	-80.26	19	28	30578	12:15	16:15	12:45	16:45	
5	K-2894	Edisto Beach State Park	32.504	-80.2965	4	5	6437	1:00	17:00	1:30	17:30	Cheetah is 5 parks
6	K-3896	Edisto River WMA	32.9794	-80.4016	41	53	65983	2:30	18:30	2:45	18:45	
7	K-2895	Givhans Ferry State Park	33.0272	-80.3853	4	9	6437	3:00	19:00	3:30	19:30	Ostrich is 7 parks
8	K-3873	Colonial Dorchester State Historic Site	32.9492	-80.1706	16	21	35750	4:00	20:00	4:30	20:30	Backup park
		Return home to Daniel Island			23	31	37015	5:00	21:00			
		Totals			165	243	275543					

Step #2. Spot an Activation on your cell phone after you arrive at <https://pota.app/#/> with a clear frequency that you found by asking if anyone is using that frequency. Enter your operating mode in the comments section. Stay in the General portion of the bands for best results and stay off the even frequencies. Repost “QSY” in comments when changing frequencies. Enter a comment such as ATNO (All Time New One) if it’s the first time that this park has ever been activated by anyone. You need a minimum of 10 QSOs to count as an activation – go for at least 12 QSOs in case one or two are not valid. When you have made all the contacts you wish, repost with “QRT” in the comments sections, to let everyone know that you are done.

The screenshot shows the POTA app interface. At the top, there's a search bar and navigation tabs for 'SPOTS', 'ACTIVATIONS', and 'KO4MNB'. Below this is a grid of park activation cards. Each card shows a green dot indicating the last heard time, a 'RE-SPOT' button, and a 'HISTORY' button. The cards display park details such as call sign, name, location, frequency, and distance. A blue arrow points to a plus sign icon with the text 'Click here to add your spot!' below it.

Step #3. Download free HAMRS logging software at <https://www.hamrs.app/> and create your profile. If you have a QRZ logbook subscription (<https://www.qrz.com/>), enter your QRZ

password in to your profile so that HAMRS will display the name and address of each of your QSOs as you log them in to HAMRS.

Once your profile is completed, click on the top right corner to create a new logbook. Create a filename "CallSign@ParkNumber-YearMonthDay" (Example: KO4MNB@K-2895-20211023). Select the template labeled "Parks on the Air" and hit enter. A new page appears as shown below. Enter on the right side of the page your call sign, the frequency and mode, and your park number. Enter information concerning each QSO on the left side, including their call sign, RST they sent, RST you received, their park number (if park to park), and current date and UTC time.

If you log in real-time while activating, HAMRS will keep track of the UTC time for you. Hit save when done and the information will appear in the logbook shown below. You can make corrections by clicking on the gear icon next to each entry.

The screenshot shows the HAMRS Logbooks interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with "HAMRS Logbooks", "Settings", "Profile", "Help", and a search box for "Enter Callsign". The main heading is "KO4MNB@K-9199-20201007". Below this is a form for logging a QSO. The form has several sections: "THEIR CALLSIGN" (empty), "RST SENT" (59), "RST RCVD" (59), "THEIR PARK" (Comma separated), "COMMENTS" (empty), "TIME" (18:23), "DATE" (10/18/2021), "FREQUENCY" (14.280 MHz), "BAND" (20m), "POWER (W)" (empty), "MODE" (SSB), "MY PARK" (K-9199), and "MY CALLSIGN" (KO4MNB). There are "Clear" and "Save" buttons. Below the form is a table of "Entries" with columns: TIME ON, CALLSIGN, RST ↑, RST ↓, STATE, FREQUENCY, BAND, MODE, THEIR PARK, and a search icon. The table contains 7 entries, each with a gear icon for editing.

TIME ON	CALLSIGN	RST ↑	RST ↓	STATE	FREQUENCY	BAND	MODE	THEIR PARK	
14:48	N4HLH	59	59	SC	14.280	20m	SSB		✓
14:47	K4TAC	59	59	SC	14.280	20m	SSB	K-3872	✓
14:47	K4TAC	59	59	SC	14.280	20m	SSB	K-9196	✓
14:46	KK4JS	59	59	SC	14.280	20m	SSB	K-3872	✓
14:46	KX4MI	59	59	SC	14.280	20m	SSB		✓
14:45	WWTTA	55	59	SC	14.280	20m	SSB		✓
14:43	W4ID	59	55	SC	14.280	20m	SSB		✓

Step #4. Create ADI format file: Select Logbooks at the top of the page and you should see your logbook appear. Click on the gear symbol on the right side of the page next to your logbook and select "Export.ADI" to your desktop. Go to the POTA app <https://pota.app/#/> and underneath where your call sign appears click on "My Log Uploads". You will see a box to upload your ADI file. Answer the questions and hit submit and it will appear as shown below. You can go to "My Activations" and "View" on the right side of the page to review your POTA logbooks.

Upload Activation Logs

Click here or drag and drop to upload ADIF logs from your activation.

All files must be compliant with the ADIF specification, see <https://adif.org>. Please refer to the [ADIF for POTA Technical Reference](#) for a list of required ADIF fields.

Need help? See the [Submitting Logs](#) section of the POTA Activator Reference or contact the support team by clicking the Request Support button.

Prefer to log on paper? [MANUAL LOG ENTRY](#)

Once your log is processed, it may take up to 24 hours for your logbook and stats to fully reflect your uploaded QSOs. Most awards are granted within a few days, but some awards may take a few weeks.

Thank you for being patient!

Uploaded Logs

Status	Submitted	Processed	Callsign	Park	First QSO	Last QSO	Log QSOs	Accepted QSOs
Processed	2022-08-22 15:41	2022-08-22 15:41	KO4MNB	K-1048 Monte Sano State Park (US-AL)	2022-08-20 00:40	2022-08-20 00:55	12	12
Processed	2022-07-31 21:36	2022-07-31 21:36	KO4MNB	K-3719 Hofwyl-Broadfield Plantation State Historic Site (US-GA)	2022-07-30 16:54	2022-07-30 17:52	12	12
Processed	2022-07-29 23:37	2022-07-29 23:37	KO4MNB	K-0926 Fort Frederica National Monument (US-GA)	2022-07-29 16:07	2022-07-29 16:23	18	18
Processed	2022-07-17 18:13	2022-07-17 18:13	KO4MNB	K-3906 Old Island Heritage Preserve Wildlife Management Area (US-NC)	2022-07-16 14:56	2022-07-16 16:22	68	67
Processed	2022-07-17 18:13	2022-07-17 18:13	KO4MNB	K-2899 Hunting Island State Park (US-SC)	2022-07-16 17:54	2022-07-16 18:15	15	15
Processed	2022-06-20 00:00	2022-06-20 00:00	KO4MNB	K-0518 Cape Romain National Wildlife Refuge (US-SC)	2022-06-18 16:01	2022-06-18 16:27	25	25
Processed	2022-03-21 18:02	2022-03-21 18:04	KO4MNB	K-9203 Palmetto State Trail (US-SC)	2022-03-19 14:04	2022-03-19 17:25	20	20
Processed	2022-03-21 18:02	2022-03-21 18:04	KO4MNB	K-4522 Francis Marion National Forest (US-SC)	2022-03-19 14:04	2022-03-19 17:25	20	20
Processed	2022-03-21 18:02	2022-03-21 18:03	KO4MNB	K-0932 Fort Sumter National Historical Park (US-SC)	2022-02-17 16:17	2022-02-17 16:35	21	20

You can also import your HAMRS ADI files (ADIF) directly into your QRZ logbook with a paid QRZ subscription so that you don't have re-enter the data. Go to your QRZ logbook and click on "Settings" on the top right of the screen and the following page will appear. Click on "ADIF Import" and select the same file that you uploaded in to the POTA.app and your QRZ logbook will be updated to show all your POTA QSOs. Note that QRZ will reject the file if it has the club call sign (used for club events), so create a duplicate ADI file that does not contain the club call sign but contains your call sign instead.

KO4MNB Logbook List Incoming Awards Leaderboard Help Refresh Settings

Settings [Need Help?](#) Check out our [Logbook Handbook...](#) Book #304764

Logbook Info [Logbook Properties](#)

Name: KO4MNB Logbook [Edit](#) Additional users can be granted access to this logbook. Users with access are listed below.

Book #: 304764

Owner: KO4MNB [Authorized Users:](#) [Edit](#)

Flagged: 0

Start Date: 2021-02-18

End Date: 2041-02-16

Modified Date: 2021-07-31 21:51:47

Logbook of the World Integration [LoTW Settings](#)

Access: **Enabled**

Last Export: 2022-09-09 20:36:08

Last Import: 2022-09-17 19:53:49

[Need Help?](#) Check out our [LoTW Certificate Import Quick Start Guide](#) or the [LoTW Certificate Troubleshooting Guide](#)

QRZ Logbook API

API Key: [redacted] [Show](#)

Note: This key allows full read/write access to this logbook. Treat it as you would any other password.

[Need Help?](#) Check out our [QRZ Logbook API Developer Guide](#)

ADIF Import/Export

Import Upload an ADI file from your computer and import the contents into your QRZ Logbook.

Export Save the contents of your QRZ logbook to an ADI file and download it to your computer.

Logbook of the World Import/Export

Import Retrieve records and confirmations from your Logbook of the World account.

Export Sign and submit records from your QRZ Logbook to Logbook of the world for processing.

We hope you found this article to be helpful. Any one of us would be glad to go out with you on your first activation or invite you to one of our activations as well. Most amateurs are hooked on POTA once they experience their first activation - it's a great way to enjoy nature and have some fun in the park. We hope to hunt you down someday. Enjoy!