



Summits on the Air

Stories and tips from a beginner's journey

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Conejo Valley ARC, Saturday, March 13, 2021





SOTA basics

“ SOTA is an award scheme for radio amateurs that encourages portable operation in mountainous areas.”

-two-way radio contact between an activator on a recognized summit, and a chaser. Both stations get credit for the contact.

Contacts are coordinated in the SOTA database. There is no charge to establish an account





SOTA basics, cont.

Started in the UK, but is popular worldwide.

Summits are determined by local associations. We are in W6 (California) There is an [Association Reference Manual](#)

Summits must have 150 meters *prominence*, and in W6, have points determined by their altitude.

Each summit has an *activation area* that is within 25 meters altitude of the summit





SOTA basics, cont.

Summits can be hard or easy to reach. You must be away from vehicles and bring your own power source.

All bands and all modes count for contacts. Activations just have to be simplex.

VHF activation with an HT works great near urban areas. But if you want a pileup, activate on 20 meter CW!

E





Chasing

Look on SOTA Watch or Apps

Record contacts in SOTA database

Become a Shack Sloth!

Be nice. Activator may be working a pileup, and holding her antenna up in the wind at the same time...

11:36 100%

SOTA Spotter - 19:36 UTC

SPOTS		ALERTS
KX0R	14.0629 CW	W0C/FR-057
19:34 UTC (2 minutes ago)		4 pts.
[RBNHole] at K3LR 20 WPM 24 dB SNR		▼
W7UM	10.1120 CW	W0C/FR-057
19:28 UTC (8 minutes ago)		4 pts.
[RBNHole] at K07SS 19 WPM 28 dB SNR		▼
KC3GOP	14.285 SSB	W7I/CU-337
19:15 UTC (20 minutes ago)		4 pts.
null		▼
N1SMB	14.061 CW	W7A/AW-013
19:15 UTC (20 minutes ago)		10 pts.
[N1SMB{GB}]:		▼
N1SMB	14.061 CW	W7A/AW-013
19:15 UTC (20 minutes ago)		10 pts.
null		▼
W4JL	7.063 CW	W4C/EM-058
19:09 UTC (26 minutes ago)		4 pts.
null		▼
KF9D	7.0406 CW	W9/WI-010
19:08 UTC (28 minutes ago)		6 pts.
[RBNHole] at KQ8M 24 WPM 13 dB SNR		▼
KX0R	7.0330 CW	W0C/FR-057
19:07 UTC (29 minutes ago)		4 pts.
[RBNHole] at K07SS 20 WPM 18 dB SNR		▼



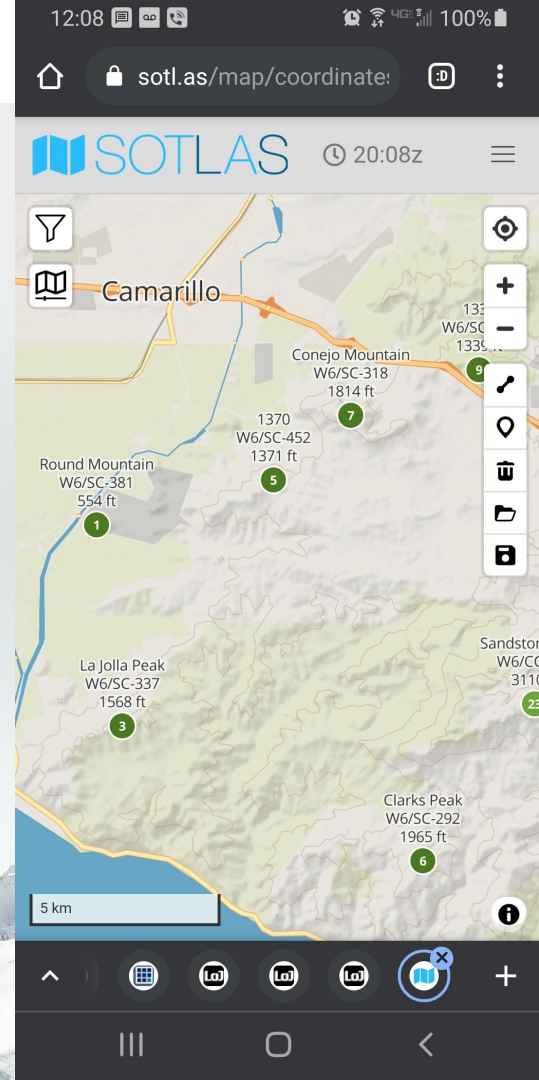
Activating

Find summits

Record contacts in SOTA database

Become a Mountain Goat!

Safety first! Don't get too distracted on the mountain





Equipment

Many options for QRP radios

End fed antennas with a balun are most popular

A pole or tree to get the antenna in the air

LiPO batteries are the way to go





Resources:

<https://sotawatch.sota.org.uk/en/>

<https://sotl.as/>

Outd log on Apple and Google Play stores

<https://www.sota.org.uk/>

<https://www.sotadata.org.uk/en/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dTYxMPZnYAg> WA9STI SOTA presentation





Resources, end.

SoCal SOTA group <https://groups.io/g/socalkota/topics>
<https://kg6mzs.com/sota-2/>
<https://halskota.wordpress.com/>

Lists of John
Peak Bagger

