

FAQ for Visiting Radio Amateurs to Singapore

Q1. Does Singapore issue amateur licenses to visitors?

A. Yes. Any licensed radio amateur from overseas is eligible to apply for a temporary license to operate in Singapore. There is no specific list of eligible countries or license classes which are acceptable, and each application is assessed on a case-by-case basis. If your license is not in English, it is advisable to submit a translation along with your license copy.

Please note that a CEPT license does not automatically allow you to operate in Singapore without authorization.

Q2. Is it possible to operate from a hotel?

A. Though it's technically possible, the chances are pretty slim. To operate from a hotel you will need to obtain written permission from the hotel management to erect an antenna, and approval from the telecom authorities (IMDA) to use a semi-public facility like a hotel. At the moment this is nearly impossible due to the dense, urban layout of Singapore, rooftop security issues, and a general lack of knowledge of Amateur Radio. At present we know of no hotels allowing ham radio.

Q3. If I can't operate from a hotel, can I use your club station?

A. Unfortunately, there is no club station in Singapore.

Q4. If I can't operate from a hotel or club, then what options do I have?

A One option is to use an existing 9V1 station as a guest operator. This is because the station address, equipment and antenna are already pre-approved with Singapore's telecommunication authority (IMDA). Your local host will need to issue you a letter authorizing you to use of his or her premises and equipment. Submit this letter of consent along with all the other documents required in your license application.

Q5. What frequency bands and power will I be allowed to use?

A. The latest rules for radio amateurs in Singapore can be downloaded here:

<https://www.imda.gov.sg/~media/imda/files/regulation%20licensing%20and%200consultations/licensing/licenses/amateurhandbook.pdf>

Q6. How do I apply for my 9V1 visitor license?

A. You will need to download and fill up page 5 of this form:

<https://www.imda.gov.sg/~media/imda/files/regulation%20licensing%20and%20consultations/licensing/licenses/guideamateur.pdf>

Submit it along with a copy of your home license, a copy of your passport and a letter of consent at the location you are staying to:

<Amy.CHENG@imda.gov.sg>

Be sure to state the exact arrival and departure dates in your email.

Q7. How long does the license application take to approve?

A. Anywhere from 2 weeks to 12 weeks. Certain nationalities have been known to have longer processing times than others, so it's advisable to apply 3 months in advance of your arrival date.

Q8. How much does the license cost and how do I pay?

A. Your license will cost SGD 50. Once your license is approved you will receive an email from IMDA asking you to pay the license fee through their online licensing system called "TLS". You can use any major credit card to make payment.

Q9. The TLS system is very complicated. How do I use it?

A. Since you are not a Singapore resident IMDA will issue you a temporary "*TLS User ID*" in order to log in. There are several tricky verification steps you will need to go through in order to activate your TLS account, but once you're up and running you can use your credit card to pay the license fee. The TLS system was designed primarily for commercial dealers and businesses in Singapore, so as an ordinary user from overseas you may find it difficult.

Q10. How long will my license be valid? Can I choose my callsign?

A. Visitor's licenses are issued for the duration of your intended stay in Singapore, up to a maximum of 90 days. Your callsign will be 9V1/home call. Singapore does not issue full or special 9V1 callsigns to visitors.

Q11. May I bring my own transceiver?

A. Yes. Provided you are in possession of a valid license issued by IMDA, and the exact model and serial number is listed on your visitor license, you will be allowed to bring it in. Be sure to list your equipment details on your license application.

Q12. May I operate from a public park?

A. To operate from a public park is possible, but often very tricky (even for locals!). You must first obtain your visitor's license registered to a physical address. Once you have that you can apply by email to IMDA to operate from a temporary portable location. IMDA will require you to first get written permission from the National Parks Board (or whoever controls the land) you intend to use.

Q13. I am passing through Singapore and will have a transceiver with me. I do not have a Singapore license, and have no intention to operate. Will I face any difficulty at customs?

A. It's very unlikely you will face difficulty with Singapore Customs. Officially, all radio communication equipment is classified as "Controlled Goods", and without a valid license issued by IMDA you do risk having this equipment impounded. However, the law controlling equipment is really intended for commercial dealers importing gear for sale or for people who wish to use their radios in Singapore,. As a bona fide traveller with no intention to use the equipment its highly unlikely you will be asked any questions on arrival.

Q14. My ship is passing through Singapore waters, can I contact you on VHF?

A. No. Once you are in Singapore waters, operation with your home maritime mobile callsign is no longer legal. You cannot use your home call / MM, and you cannot just use 9V1/ home call/MM. The only legal path is to first apply for a land-based visitors license with IMDA. This will require a local address. You can then apply for a maritime mobile exception.

Q15. What is HF propagation in Singapore like?

A. Since we are almost on the equator, the lower frequencies experience a lot of attenuation from a very thick D layer. Unless you have a decent antenna in a good location, DX is almost absent from 0900-1600hrs local time. The popular 20-15m bands are active from late afternoons onwards. 160m is almost not useable due to QRM/QRM. 80m is occasionally good on late nights but you need a decent efficient antenna. 40m is good for a single hop in the daytime and useable for DX during sundown hours. There are lots of pirates on 40m. 12-10m are primarily daytime bands and good especially with a high Sunspot Number