

Portable station checklist

Packing checklist for POTA, SOTA, Field Day, and portable HF operations. Never forget a critical item.

RADIO & POWER

- ☐ Transceiver
- ☐ Battery (charged!)
- ☐ Battery charger
- ☐ DC power cable
- ☐ Spare battery
- ☐ USB cable for radio
- ☐ Microphone / headset

ANTENNA SYSTEM

- ☐ Antenna wire
- ☐ Matching transformer / balun / unun
- ☐ Counterpoise wire
- ☐ Throw line and weight
- ☐ Mast / trekking pole / fishing pole
- ☐ Coax feedline (correct length)
- ☐ Antenna analyzer (NanoVNA)

CABLES & ADAPTERS

- ☐ Coax adapter (BNC to SO-239 if needed)
- ☐ SMA adapter (if needed)
- ☐ Paddle / key cable
- ☐ USB-C cable (charging)
- ☐ Earbuds / headphones
- ☐ Phone charging cable

Why a checklist

The most common failure mode for portable operations is not equipment failure. It is forgetting something. Arriving at a summit or park and discovering you left the antenna counterpoise, the paddle cable, or the correct adapter at home wastes the trip.

This interactive checklist is organized by what you actually forget, not by what seems important. Nobody forgets the radio. Everyone has forgotten the earbuds.

Before you leave

Use this checklist for any portable activation: POTA, SOTA, Field Day, EMCOMM deployment, or casual portable operating. Check off items as you pack them. The list saves to your browser so your checked items persist between visits.

keyandcarrier.com/tools/portable-checklist/ – data verified 2026-08-11 – verify against current regulations before transmitting.

OPERATING ACCESSORIES

- ☐ CW paddle or key
- ☐ Log book or logging app
- ☐ Pen
- ☐ Phone (for POTA/SOTA spotting)
- ☐ Watch / clock
- ☐ Frequency reference (band plan card)
- ☐ Clipboard or writing surface

PERSONAL & SUPPORT

- ☐ Water
- ☐ Snacks
- ☐ Sun protection
- ☐ Rain gear
- ☐ Chair or sit pad
- ☐ Bug spray
- ☐ First aid basics
- ☐ Car keys (do not lock in car)