

A Good Portable Wire Antenna

By Joseph Parish

When dealing with emergency communications there is one simple item that you really must have and that is a good communications antenna. Many survivalists have asked if there is such a thing as a simple antenna made specifically for shortwave listening. The main concern here is one, which could be transported in a backpack and rigged up in only a couple of minutes. The basic principle here is the option of stringing it up quickly between several trees.

In general, there are usually instructions enclosed with radio receivers, which cover these details, however sometimes the manufacturer fails to include them in the operator's manual or you may have purchased the receiver used and not obtained the operators manual with it or even worse you may have constructed your own radio receiver from scratch. Either way you have no way to know how to setup an antenna. The short answer to this question is that you can do it either as simply or as complicated as you would like. Several questions that you may initially have to ask yourself are does the unit have an external antenna input or merely a telescopic antenna. Can you locate a suitable ground connection on the back of the radio receiver? This connection is generally located near the external antenna terminals should it be there.

A quick solution to create an antenna that will work fairly well is to run approximately 50 to 100 feet of number 22 through number 30 gauge insulated hook up wire out into the woods. You may possibly suspend it above ground by means of monofilament fishing line. To complete the installation simply tie the far end to the monofilament line, then run it 50 foot away and place a weight on the end and finally toss it over a nearby convenient tree. Next, proceed to pull the monofilament line until the antenna wire is elevated and tight, and then tie it off securely.

Another trick you can try should you be located on a ridge and you are unable to drive a proper ground rod into the soil, is to duplicate the 50 to 100 feet of antenna wire, however this time connect it to the ground connection. Run these wires in opposite directions with the radio receiver located at the mid-point of the wires. This is an effective method if setup properly. If you wanted to get really fancy you could progress from these simple antenna versions to one a bit more complicated and having its own antenna tuner or matcher, but to setup and use a radio receiver under emergency conditions requires something that is very quick and easy to setup. The antenna tuner could perhaps be considered for another article where your communications is centered upon your home, as this would make the tuner more feasible. Should your radio not have an antenna connection in the rear you can still improve your radio reception with the use of an alligator clip and attach the antenna wire to this clip and then the clip in turn to the antenna.