

## Hints and Hacks from On the Air Magazine by KI5LNM

The first place I like to look when the On the Air magazine arrives is the Hints and Hacks page. It often has interesting cheap ways to get a job done. Some are quite interesting. So I thought I would share some here if you haven't seen them. If you would like to see the post but do not have the magazine, you can get the ARRL Magazine app or let me know and I can share.

1. In the current issue Jul//Aug 2022. Microphone Connector Protection. When transporting equipment the small ends to mics could get banged and it would be nice to protect them. One such item is the microphone connector. Brent, N4BDW, found he could buy the small travel toothbrush covers. These just go over the head of the brush and can protect the ends of wires and plugs so they don't get broken or damaged in travel.
2. In the same issue. Alkaline versus Heavy-Duty Batteries. Kirk, KI4RK, Talks of using batteries. These batteries look alike yet the "heavy duty" ones have a different chemistry to them. This makes them great for items that you do not use regularly. Where alkaline batteries over time can leak, the heavy duty ones dry up instead. So the heavy duty are less likely to damage your equipment. Alkaline can last longer but the heavy duty ones are safer when used in equipment that is used less often. But for any equipment that is power hungry you will still want to use alkaline batteries.
3. In the Nov/Dec 2020. Use your Smartphone or Tablet as a Magnifier. I'm sure most of us have figured this out. When we need a closeup and/or larger view of a small bit of work, using our phone's camera as a magnifier can be a big help. John, KK4ITX, in this hint tells how he made a cheap stand that can hold his tablet and he can even take photographs easily with it for future reference. Whether you try and do this the way he did, it could give you an idea of how to make something out of what you have and get it to work.
4. In the Jan/Feb 2021. Marine-Grade corrosion Defense. Needless to say, the people who deal with boats on water deal with the problem of water and corrosion. Chip, NN4U, found that LanoCote, which was created for use at sea, works great on towers with anchor bolts, antenna clamps, stainless steel bolts that are inserted in aluminum rotor mast clamps etc. LanoCote does not harden and can be taken apart, as well as doesn't wash away. One may find many uses for it, and it can be found at marine supply and big box stores.
5. In the Mar/Apr 2021. Turn a Pair of Pliers into a "Third Hand". Here Phil, KE3FL, needed help with holding a piece to solder. He found that he could take regular pliers or needle nose pliers and place the pieces he needed held tight in it. Then he could use a strong rubber band around the handles to hold it tight. It can then hold and stand up while you work on it.
6. In the same issue. Protecting your Soldering Gun Tip. This could work on any long tip that needs protection. Roy, KC3KPG, got a thread cone and connected some elastic on the wider end in a loop from one side to the other. Then he could put the cone over the tip and pull the elastic over the back of the gun. If anyone is interested in this idea, I have weaving yarn tubes that would work the same but could be a bit longer than the ones for sewing thread.
7. In Jul/Aug 2021. Low Cost Insulators. Ron WD8SBB, shares that he found that when he needs insulators on wires outside that one can use plastic ones, but they do wear out fairly quickly over time. He found that ceramic insulators for the job are better but expensive. Then he found that if you get ceramic insulators for electric fencing that they are much cheaper and can be found at many places. Just look for "corner post ceramic fence insulators".
8. Nov/Dec 2021. Zee Best Way to Say It. Bill, K1NS. shares this reminder. One thing that we often don't consider when speaking is how people will interpret what we say. A bit of advice when talking to people from other countries on the radio is to remember that Americans are about the only people that call the last letter of the alphabet a Zee. The rest of the English speaking calls this

letter is called Zed. Often when we say Zee someone in Australia may interpret that as Ceee or Eeeee. But Zed is pretty easy to understand. The person you are talking to will appreciate that extra care.

9. In the Mar/Apr 2022. Inexpensive Noise Reduction. If you are helping at an event and you are trying to listen to the radio with an earphone, but the noise around still makes it difficult to hear, Jim, N4FAF, found a way that helps him. He bought a set of inexpensive sound reducing earmuffs. In one side he removed the sound deadening foam and then drilled a couple holes in that side. Then he can put the ear piece in his ear on the other side. He can hear what is being said through the radio much better but also can still hear if someone is talking to him.

These are the hints and tricks for this training.