

A Compact and Effective 40-10 Meter Portable Station

By Phil Salas – AD5X

Introduction

I occasionally carry an HF station with me when travelling. Over the past few years I've evolved my portable set-up to make it more compact and transportable without sacrificing performance. This article describes my current, very compact portable station that is easily carried on "planes, trains and automobiles".

The Basic Station

I prefer to use a full 100-watt rig for portable operation so as not to suffer any potential power disadvantage. While I use an IC-706MKIIG, you certainly have many different compact transceivers to choose from. The basic accessories I've added to this transceiver are an MFJ-4125 switching power supply (possibly the smallest and lightest 25 amp peak switcher currently available), and the MFJ-902 travel tuner. For an antenna, I use a simple 40-10 meter portable dipole described elsewhere on this website, along with 15- and 25-foot sections of RG-174 coax and a balun. My portable key of choice is the Palm Paddle. And finally, I've fit the entire station into an MFJ-6404 carrying case.

The MFJ-6404 carrying case is perfect for transporting your portable station. Besides being externally rugged, its internal foam padding and foam insert easily customized for your particular equipment. The foam insert is easily modified by hand. The MFJ-6404 also comes with a carrying strap, and includes keyed latches to secure your equipment.

Conclusion

Portable operation with minimal compromises is extremely easy with the compact equipment available today. I've described a very compact portable station that is hard to justify NOT taking with you on trips. Certainly you can substitute other equipment, but you get the general idea. So get out of the house and have fun operating HF portable!



Foam Insert



All the foam that is left



Case ready to load



Portable Station ready-to-go



Portable Station in condo