



# How to Find the Digital Mode of PSK31 on the Amateur Radio Bands

PSK 31: Hot new digital mode on the amateur radio bands.

One of the most popular digital modes on the amateur radio bands is PSK 31. It is one of the easiest of modes to set up and operate. See you on the bands!

## Steps

**1 Know what it is.** PSK 31 stands for phase shift keying. The 31 is the bandwidth in Hertz (31.25 Hz to be precise) of the transmitted signal. The mode can be found on all amateur bands but the most popular seems to be on 20 metres at 14.070 Megahertz. An appealing aspect is that high power is not needed or encouraged. The author uses 40 Watts and a dipole antenna. Here is what is needed to start a digital station:

- An amateur radio capable of all bands.

**2 Get a digital interface network.** This is needed to connect either a desktop or a laptop's sound card to your amateur radio. There are many different models of interfaces available from RigBlaster, MFJ and others.

**3 Have a desktop or laptop computer with at least a 400 MHz Pentium II processor, 256 Megabytes of ram and a sound card.** The sound card is probably the most important part because the software you will be using uses the computer's sound card to transmit the necessary tones to send and receive PSK 31 messages.

**4 Find PSK 31 software.** There are many freeware programs on the internet. The most popular are DigiPan 2.1; and HamScope. There are payware programs with more modes and features for very little money. For example, there is MixW 2.19 and other software.

**5 Here are some popular digital frequencies:**

- 10 metres 28.070-28.130 MHz
- 12 metres 24.920-24.930 MHz
- 15 metres 21.060-21.099 MHz
- 17 metres 18.100-18.110 MHz
- 20 metres 14.060-14.099 MHz (very active)
- 30 metres 10.120-10.150 MHz
- 40 metres 7.060-7.099 MHz
- 80 metres 3.580-3.640 MHz

## Tips

- Adjust the computer's sound card so it does not over-drive your signal into the radio. You want a clean signal so that you won't splatter or have a wider signal than is necessary.
- An excellent reference is ARRL's HF Digital Handbook by Steve Ford, WB8IMY. The price is \$19.95 from the ARRL.
- This mode combines the best of CW with RTTY (radio teletype) and if you are a typist, keeps up your typing speed!

## Warnings

- This mode is a 100% duty-cycle for your amateur transmitter. Be sure not to operate at more than 50% of your power. PSK31 encourages low power output, 40-50 Watts.

## Sources and Citations

- An excellent source of free information is [www.psk31.org](http://www.psk31.org)

## Made Recently

Did you try these steps?  
Upload a picture for other readers to see.