How do I find other mesh users in my area?

Finding local mesh users is one of the most common early questions - and one of the most important, since a single node is useful but a community is transformative.

Start With Online Resources

- **Community maps** - For Meshtastic, use the official map linked from meshtastic.org (community maps such as meshmap.net also exist); for MeshCore, use map.meshcore.io. Zoom to your area and see nodes that have reported positions. Note: these maps show only opt-in nodes that have position reporting enabled, so an empty or sparse map does not mean there are no users near you - many nodes disable position reporting for privacy.
- **r/meshtastic on Reddit** - Active community with a strong culture of welcoming new users. Post "[State/City] - Anyone here?" and you'll typically get responses within hours.
- **Official Meshtastic Discord** - discord.gg/ktMAKGBnBs - Has regional channels organized by continent, then country, then US state. The most active community hub.
- **MeshCore Discord** - Separate community from Meshtastic; search for regional channels or post in #general asking about your area.
- **r/meshcore** - Smaller but growing subreddit for MeshCore users.

Local Amateur Radio Clubs

Ham radio clubs are increasingly interested in LoRa mesh. Find clubs at:

- **arrl.org/find-a-club** - ARRL club finder by zip code
- **QRZ.com club section** - Many clubs post there

Contact the club's net manager or digital committee. Even if they don't have mesh nodes yet, they may be interested in starting - and ham clubs are excellent vehicles for building community mesh networks.

Actually Going on the Mesh

The most reliable way to find local users is to simply get on the air with the default LongFast preset and listen. If there are active users in your area, you'll see their nodes in your node list within minutes. Send a message on the primary channel introducing yourself. Keep in mind the default channel is effectively public (it uses a well-known shared key): use it for discovery and general chat, but move any sensitive or incident-coordination traffic to a private channel.

If you hear nothing after 30 minutes in an area where you'd expect users, try:

- Moving to a higher elevation (rooftop, parking structure, hilltop)
- Checking a community map for nearby nodes and messaging them on Discord to arrange an on-air test

Note: don't switch to a slower preset (such as LONG_SLOW or VERY_LONG_SLOW) just to "find" users. All radios on a mesh must share the same modem preset to hear each other, so changing your preset away from the local default makes you invisible to everyone still on the default - the opposite of what you want when hunting for unknown local users. Only change presets if the whole local mesh has agreed to use the same one.

Revision #3
Created 2026-05-03 06:56:25 UTC by Mesh America Admin
Updated 2026-06-08 19:53:25 UTC by Mesh America Admin