

# ? Start Here — Getting Started Guide

**Welcome to the Mesh America Mesh Library.** This book is your launchpad - whether you're completely new to LoRa mesh networking or just want to orient yourself before diving deeper.

## ? New? Start With These Three Pages

1. [What is LoRa Mesh Networking?](#) - The plain-English explanation of what this technology is and why it matters
2. [MeshCore vs Meshtastic: Quick Decision Guide](#) - Which platform is right for you? Answered in under 5 minutes
3. [What You Need to Get Started](#) - The minimum hardware and software to get on the mesh today

## ? What's In This Book

### Understanding the Technology

- [How LoRa Works](#) - Chirp spread spectrum, range, and the physics behind it
- [LoRa Range: Realistic Expectations](#) - Actual ranges by terrain, antenna height, and preset
- [LoRa vs LoRaWAN: What's the Difference?](#)
- [The 915 MHz ISM Band](#) - Why this frequency and what the rules are

### Your First Node

- [Hardware Buyer's Guide for Beginners](#)
- [Where to Buy Hardware](#) - Sources, prices, what to avoid
- [Getting Your First Message Through: Meshtastic](#)
- [Getting Your First Message Through: MeshCore](#)
- [Day 1: Getting Your Node Online](#)
- [Day 2 - 7: Exploring the Mesh](#)

# Legal, Licensing, and Ham Radio

- [FCC Part 15 Compliance for LoRa Mesh](#) - No license needed, but here are the rules
- [Getting Your Ham Radio License](#) - Why it's useful even though it's not required
- [Operating in Canada: ISED Rules](#)

## Comparing LoRa Mesh to Other Options

- [LoRa Mesh vs Satellite Messengers](#) (Garmin inReach, SPOT)
- [LoRa Mesh vs FRS/GMRS Two-Way Radios](#)
- [LoRa Mesh vs Ham Radio \(VHF/UHF\)](#)

## Maintaining Your Node

- [Node Maintenance Schedule](#) - Monthly, quarterly, and annual checks
- [Total Cost of Ownership](#) - What a mesh node actually costs over 5 years
- [Updating Meshtastic Firmware](#)
- [Updating MeshCore Firmware](#)

## ?? Where to Go Next

Your Goal	Go To
I chose Meshtastic - now what?	<a href="#">Meshtastic book</a>
I chose MeshCore - now what?	<a href="#">MeshCore book</a>
I want to buy the right hardware	<a href="#">Hardware Guide book</a>
I want to set up a solar repeater	<a href="#">Solar &amp; Power Systems book</a>
I have quick questions	<a href="#">FAQ book</a>

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