BOS! Belgium Outdoor Shack

ACTIVATOR GUIDE

How to Make a Valid BELMOTA Activation

Belgian Mills on the Air – Activator Guide

MINIMUM QSOS	ACTIVATION AREA
11 (activator credit)	max. 350 m + line of sight

SEND CONFIRMATION

info@belgiumoutdoorshack.be

Choose a mill → Check the reference → Check the 350 m activation area → Confirm direct line of sight → Set up your station → Make at least 11 QSOs → Upload your log → Send your confirmation/photo.

BELMOTA – Belgian Mills on the Air is the Belgian radio amateur program that promotes and highlights Belgian mill heritage. It combines portable amateur radio with visits to historical windmills, watermills and other registered mills. As an activator, you visit an official BELMOTA reference, set up your portable radio station and make radio contacts with other radio amateurs. Your activity is then processed through the BOS! Logbook.

1 Choose an Official BELMOTA Reference

Not every mill is automatically a BELMOTA reference. Always start by checking the official BELMOTA database and BOS! maps and select the mill you want to activate. A BELMOTA reference identifies the specific mill and must be correctly entered in your activation and log.

Before leaving, check: the official BELMOTA reference, the name of the mill, the type of mill, the exact reference location, the 350-metre activation radius, whether the mill will remain in direct line of sight from your station, access restrictions, any local restrictions.

> ⚠️ Do not use a self-created or unofficial reference.

2 Understand the BELMOTA Activation Area

This is one of the most important requirements for a valid BELMOTA activation. Your radio station must be located within a maximum radius of 350 metres from the BELMOTA mill reference. However, being within 350 metres alone is not sufficient — the referenced mill must remain in **direct line of sight** from your activation location throughout the activation.

Example — A location 180 metres from the mill, clearly visible → ✅ may qualify. A location 220 metres from the mill, but completely hidden behind buildings, trees or another obstruction → ❌ do not use this location.

> ⚠️ **Important:** The 350-metre distance is measured from the official BELMOTA reference location. Before starting your activation, verify your position using GPS, smartphone, BOS! maps and BELMOTA reference information. When in doubt, choose a location that clearly satisfies both requirements.

3 Multiple BELMOTA References from One Location

A single activation may qualify for multiple, unlimited mill references, provided that all references are activated from the same location. Each reference must individually satisfy the BELMOTA requirements: it is official, your station is within 350 metres, the mill remains in direct line of sight, and the activation is carried out from the same physical location. Do not assume that nearby references automatically qualify.

4 Make Sure You Have Legal Access

A BELMOTA reference does not automatically give you permission to enter private property or restricted mill grounds. Check whether the mill is publicly accessible, whether permission is required, whether the land is private, opening hours, parking restrictions, antenna restrictions, local regulations. If the mill itself cannot be entered, you may use another suitable location within the 350-metre activation radius, provided the mill remains in direct line of sight throughout the activation.

5 Respect the Mill Heritage

BELMOTA is not only about radio — the program also helps promote and preserve awareness of Belgian mill heritage.

Do: respect the monument, use existing paths, install your antenna carefully, take all your rubbish with you, take photographs of your activation, consider other visitors, respect restricted areas.

Do not: climb on the mill without permission, attach antennas to vulnerable or historical structures, damage historical constructions, enter private property without permission, place cables where they create a safety hazard.

6 Prepare Your Activation

Consider taking: transceiver, antenna, battery, coaxial cable, headset, laptop/tablet or logging device, backup logbook, rope and antenna equipment, smartphone/GPS.

Check before departure: battery charged, antenna tested, coax checked, logging software working, UTC configured correctly, BELMOTA reference entered correctly, activation location checked, 350-metre radius confirmed, direct line of sight confirmed.

7 Announce Your Activation

Field	Example
Activator	ON3XXX/P
BELMOTA	[reference]
Mill	[name]
Date	28 September 2026
Start	08:00 UTC
Bands	40m / 20m / 2m
Modes	SSB / FM / CW

Announce your activation through the BOS! agenda, website and social media.

8 Verify Your Position on Site

When you arrive, check your position using GPS, smartphone, official BELMOTA information and BOS! maps. Confirm that your station is within 350 metres of the BELMOTA reference and that the referenced mill is clearly visible from your station. The mill must remain in direct line of sight throughout the activation.

> 💡 **Tip:** Take a photograph showing the mill and your portable station if possible.

9 Set Up Your Radio Station

Choose a safe and suitable location that satisfies the BELMOTA requirements. Set up in order: your antenna, your transceiver, your battery, your logging equipment. Check: SWR, battery voltage, antenna, coax, frequency, logging, position. Make sure your station does not create a hazard for visitors.

10 Start Your BELMOTA Activation

> “CQ CQ, this is ON3XXX portable, activating BELMOTA.” / “CQ BELMOTA, CQ BELMOTA, this is ON3XXX/P.”

Regularly mention your BELMOTA reference: “ON3XXX portable, BELMOTA reference XXXXXX.” If you are activating multiple BELMOTA references from the same location, clearly indicate the references you are activating.

11 Make Valid QSOs

A valid QSO requires an actual radio contact between your station and another amateur station.

> Activator: “ON4ABC, 59.” — Chaser: “59, thank you.” You can also mention the reference: “ON4ABC, you are 59, BELMOTA reference XXXXXX.”

Log every valid contact accurately.

12 Minimum of 11 QSOs

To receive BELMOTA activator credit, a minimum of **11 QSOs** must be completed during each activation. Hunter credit remains valid regardless of the number of QSOs made by the activator — so if an activator makes fewer than 11 QSOs, the contacts may still count for the hunters.

13 Work Different Stations

The goal of a BELMOTA activation is to give as many radio amateurs as possible the opportunity to work the mill — Belgium, the Netherlands, France, Germany, the United Kingdom, other countries. A good pile-up is often one of the most enjoyable parts of a portable activation.

14 Work Multiple Bands

40 metres (7 MHz SSB), 20 metres (14 MHz SSB), 2 metres (FM). Always follow the applicable band plan and the conditions of your amateur radio licence.

15 Use UTC in Your Log

Correct time recording is essential — always use UTC, not local Belgian time. Make sure your computer or logging software is correctly configured for UTC.

16 Use the Correct BELMOTA Reference

Make sure the correct mill reference is stored in your log, using the reference shown in the BOS! BELMOTA system. When using ADIF, store the reference according to the format supported by the BOS! Logbook. The important question is: *which BELMOTA mill did I activate?* If activating multiple references from the same location, make sure all applicable references are correctly recorded.

17 Handle a Pile-Up Carefully

A popular mill may attract many chasers. Work systematically: “ON4ABC, 59, thank you. Next station.” Do not try to work too quickly — a correct log is more important than a fast log. A wrongly recorded callsign can cause a chaser to miss BELMOTA credit.

18 Check Duplicate QSOs

During a pile-up, a station may call more than once — check whether the station has already been worked. A second QSO may be relevant if it is made on a different band or mode, but do not simply record the same contact again. Use logging software that can automatically identify possible duplicates whenever possible.

19 Combining BELMOTA with Other BOS! Programs

Portable radio sometimes allows several activities to be combined from one location: BELMOTA, WWFF/ONFF, TOTA, BCA, other applicable programs. Each reference must independently comply with the rules of its respective program. For BELMOTA specifically, always verify the 350-metre radius and direct line-of-sight requirement.

20 Photograph Your Activation

The mill, your antenna, your transceiver, your portable station, the surrounding area. If possible, make a photograph showing both the mill and your station.

21 Send Your Activation Confirmation

After each BELMOTA activation, activators are requested to send a confirmation together with a photograph of the activated mill to **info@belgiumoutdoorshack.be**, or share it on the BOS! Facebook page. A suitable confirmation includes: activator callsign, BELMOTA reference, mill name, date, activation location, number of QSOs, photograph of the mill/activation.

22 End Your Activation

> "This is ON3XXX/P, BELMOTA reference XXXXXX, going QRT. Thanks for all the contacts!"

Stop logging, check your log, take your final photographs, remove your antenna, pack your equipment, remove all cables and materials, make sure you have left no rubbish behind.

23 Check Your Log Before Upload

Correct callsigns, date, UTC times, band, mode, RST, BELMOTA reference, activator callsign, no incorrect or accidental duplicate QSOs, at least 11 valid QSOs for activator credit.

24 Upload Your Log to the BOS! Logbook

Activators should use the BOS! Login page to upload their logs and receive BELMOTA credit. After uploading, check your BELMOTA statistics: activated mills, number of QSOs, activator progress, chaser contacts, award status, possible missing contacts. If you notice a problem, contact the BOS! team — do not repeatedly upload the same log.

25 BELMOTA Is More Than Just Radio

BELMOTA combines amateur radio and Belgian mill heritage: radio + history + heritage + outdoor activity. Whenever possible, take some time to appreciate the mill and its surroundings.

🏆 The 7 Golden BELMOTA Rules

1. OFFICIAL REFERENCE — Always use an official BELMOTA reference.
2. 350-METRE RADIUS — Your station must be located within 350 metres of the BELMOTA reference.
3. DIRECT LINE OF SIGHT — The referenced mill must remain in direct line of sight from your station throughout the activation.
4. 11 VALID QSOs — Make at least 11 valid QSOs during the activation to receive BELMOTA activator credit.
5. ACCURATE LOG — Use correct callsigns, UTC times, bands, modes and BELMOTA references.
6. CONFIRMATION & PHOTO — After the activation, send a confirmation together with a photo of the activated mill to BOS!, or share it on the BOS! Facebook page.
7. UPLOAD — Upload your log through the BOS! Logbook and check your BELMOTA statistics afterwards.

Choose a mill → Check the reference → Check the 350-metre radius → Confirm direct line of sight → Set up your station → Call CQ BELMOTA → Make at least 11 QSOs → Take your photo → Send your confirmation → Upload your log → Check your BOS! statistics.

BELMOTA – Promoting Outdoor Hamradio and the Belgian Mill Heritage.

✅ BELMOTA Activator – Quick Checklist

BEFORE DEPARTURE

- ☐ Official BELMOTA reference selected
- ☐ Reference checked in BOS!
- ☐ 350-metre activation radius checked
- ☐ Direct line of sight to the mill confirmed
- ☐ Access checked
- ☐ Battery charged
- ☐ Antenna tested
- ☐ Logging software tested
- ☐ UTC configured
- ☐ Activation announced

ON LOCATION

- ☐ Within 350 metres of the reference
- ☐ Mill clearly visible
- ☐ Direct line of sight maintained
- ☐ Safe location selected
- ☐ Station set up
- ☐ Antenna installed
- ☐ SWR checked
- ☐ BELMOTA reference entered
- ☐ Logging started

DURING THE ACTIVATION

- ☐ CQ BELMOTA called
- ☐ Reference mentioned regularly
- ☐ Correct callsigns logged
- ☐ UTC used
- ☐ Band and mode recorded correctly
- ☐ At least 11 QSOs completed
- ☐ Duplicate QSOs avoided
- ☐ Pile-up handled correctly
- ☐ Mill remains in direct line of sight

AFTER THE ACTIVATION

- ☐ QRT announced
- ☐ Log checked
- ☐ Photos taken
- ☐ Confirmation prepared
- ☐ Confirmation/photo sent to BOS! or shared on BOS! Facebook
- ☐ ADIF exported if required
- ☐ Log uploaded to BOS!
- ☐ BELMOTA statistics checked
- ☐ Problems reported to BOS! if necessary