



BOS! Belgium Outdoor Shack

ACTIVATOR GUIDE



How to Conduct a Valid ONBOTA Activation

Bunkers On The Air – Activator & Hunter Guide

MINIMUM CONTACTS

25 (for activation points)

ACTIVATION ZONE

max. 1 km radius

MAX. SIMULTANEOUS BUNKERS

5

Choose an official bunker → Check the 1 km activation area → Check access and safety → Prepare your portable station → Call CQ ONBOTA → Make at least 25 valid contacts → Upload your log.

ONBOTA – Bunkers On The Air is an amateur radio activity program dedicated to bunkers and military heritage. It combines portable amateur radio with the exploration of historical bunkers and defensive structures. ONBOTA is open to all licensed amateur radio operators worldwide — whether you enjoy activating bunkers or collecting them as a Hunter, ONBOTA offers a great way to combine amateur radio, outdoor activity and history.

1 Choose an Official ONBOTA Bunker

Select a bunker listed on the official ONBOTA website. Each official bunker has its own unique ONBOTA identifier — always use the official bunker reference when logging your activity.

Before departure, check: official ONBOTA bunker identifier, bunker name and location, official reference position, maximum activation distance, accessibility and access restrictions, whether the bunker is located on private property, safety considerations and local restrictions.

 Do not create or use unofficial bunker references.

2 The ONBOTA Activation Area

To activate an ONBOTA bunker, the activator must operate within a maximum radius of **1 kilometre** from the designated bunker reference, and must be portable or mobile within this activation area. The bunker itself does not necessarily have to be entered — a suitable operating position within the permitted activation area may be used.

Example — 450 metres from the bunker →  within the activation area. 1.5 kilometres from the bunker →  outside the activation area, not valid for activation credit.

3 Check Your Location

Verify your distance from the official ONBOTA reference using smartphone GPS, BOS!/ONBOTA maps, a GPS receiver, or mapping software. When in doubt, choose a location closer to the bunker. Activators may be required to provide GPS coordinates or other evidence to verify that the activation took place within the permitted area.

4 Only Five Bunkers Can Be Activated at One Time

ONBOTA allows an activator to activate a maximum of **five bunkers** at the same time. If several bunkers are close together, you may activate multiple references from the same operating location — but each bunker must independently meet the ONBOTA activation requirements, and the correct unique identifier must be recorded for each. Do not assume nearby bunkers are automatically valid.

5 Make Sure You Have Legal Access

An ONBOTA reference does not automatically give you permission to enter the bunker or surrounding land. Check whether the area is public or private property, obtain permission where required, respect opening hours and access restrictions, observe parking and antenna restrictions, follow nature reserve and local regulations. Never enter private property without permission.

6 Stay Safe

Many bunkers are old military structures and can contain hazards such as unstable structures, open shafts, broken concrete, rusted metal, difficult terrain, water and vegetation.

⚠ Safety first: You do not need to enter a bunker to activate it. Choose a safe operating position and never take unnecessary risks to get closer to a reference.

7 Prepare Your Portable Station

Transceiver, antenna and coaxial cable, battery, headset or microphone, logging device, smartphone/GPS, backup logging method, antenna support equipment.

Check before departure: battery charged, antenna tested, coax checked, logging software working, UTC configured correctly, ONBOTA reference entered, activation location checked, 1-kilometre activation area confirmed, access permission checked, safety conditions checked.

8 Announce Your Activation

Field	Example
Activator	ON3XXX/P
Reference	ONBOTA-XXXX
Bunker	[Bunker name]
Date	28 September 2026
Start	08:00 UTC
Bands	40m / 20m / 2m
Modes	SSB / FM / CW

9 Start Your ONBOTA Activation

“CQ CQ ONBOTA, this is ON3XXX portable activating ONBOTA-XXXX.” / “CQ ONBOTA, CQ ONBOTA, ON3XXX/P activating ONBOTA-XXXX.”

10 All Legal Bands and Modes Are Accepted

ONBOTA contacts can be made using all legally permitted amateur radio frequencies and modes (HF, VHF, UHF; SSB, FM, CW, digital modes), according to your licence. Always comply with your licence, national regulations, applicable band plans and power restrictions.

11 Repeaters Are Not Allowed

✗ Repeater contacts are **not** valid for ONBOTA. Contacts must be made directly between the participating amateur radio stations.

12 Minimum 25 Contacts for Activation Points

To qualify for ONBOTA activation points, the activator must make at least **25 valid contacts**. If you do not reach 25 contacts in one session, you may append your log across multiple days.

Example — Day 1: 12 QSOs, Day 2: 8 QSOs, Day 3: 5 QSOs → 25 valid QSOs total.

13 Accurate Logging Is Essential

Both Activators and Hunters must maintain an accurate log. Your logging program should support ADIF export for uploading to the ONBOTA dashboard. Recommended information: date, UTC time, callsign, band/frequency, mode, signal report, ONBOTA reference.

 **Tip:** Recommended logging application: **HAM2K PoLo** — particularly useful for portable amateur radio activities and supports ADIF logging/export.

14 Use UTC

All contacts should be logged using UTC, not local time.

15 Multiple-Day Activations

ONBOTA allows activators to append their log across multiple days in order to reach the required 25 contacts. Always ensure that the submitted contacts genuinely belong to the applicable ONBOTA activation.

16 Points System

ONBOTA points are awarded based on the number of unique bunkers activated or contacted. Always record the correct unique ONBOTA identifier.

17 Hunter Activity

You do not have to be an Activator to participate. As a Hunter, work ONBOTA activators from your own amateur radio station and collect unique bunker references: find an active ONBOTA station, confirm the ONBOTA reference, make a genuine QSO, exchange the required information, record the QSO accurately with the correct ONBOTA reference, export your log as ADIF when required, upload your log to the ONBOTA dashboard.

18 Upload Your Log

Export your log in ADIF format and upload it through the ONBOTA dashboard.

Before uploading, check: callsigns, UTC times, dates, bands, modes, ONBOTA references, accidental duplicates; verify the ADIF file.

19 Verification of Activations

ONBOTA may require an Activator to provide evidence that an activation was genuinely carried out within the required activation area: photographs of the bunker, photographs of the portable station, GPS coordinates, location information, other reasonable evidence requested by the ONBOTA coordinators. A photograph showing both the bunker and your portable station can be particularly useful.

20 ONBOTA Awards

Various awards are available for both Activators and Hunters, based on their achievements. To request your awards, contact the ONBOTA coordinators through the ONBOTA dashboard.

21 Amateur Radio Ethics

Use correct operating procedures, identify yourself as required by your licence, respect other operators, keep your log accurate, do not claim contacts that did not take place, do not deliberately manipulate logs or activation data, respect band plans and frequencies, follow the regulations of your licensing authority.

22 Respect the Bunker Heritage

ONBOTA also helps promote awareness of historical bunkers and military heritage.

Do: respect historical structures, use existing paths where possible, take your rubbish with you, keep antennas and cables safe, respect visitors, respect private property, follow local restrictions.

Do not: damage the bunker, remove historical objects, enter dangerous structures, enter private property without permission, attach equipment in a way that could damage the structure, leave cables or equipment where they create a hazard.

23 End Your Activation

"This is ON3XXX/P, ONBOTA-XXXX, going QRT. Thanks for all the contacts!"

Stop logging, check your log, save your log, take down the antenna safely, pack your equipment, remove all cables and materials, leave nothing behind — leave the bunker and surrounding area as you found it.

The 8 Golden ONBOTA Rules

- 1 OFFICIAL BUNKER — Always use an official ONBOTA bunker reference.
- 2 1-KILOMETRE AREA — Operate within the permitted 1-kilometre activation radius.
- 3 MAXIMUM FIVE — A maximum of five bunkers can be activated at one time.
- 4 25 CONTACTS — Make at least 25 valid contacts to qualify for activation points.
- 5 NO REPEATERS — Repeater contacts are not valid for ONBOTA.
- 6 ACCURATE LOG — Use a valid logging program and maintain an accurate ADIF-compatible log.
- 7 SAFETY FIRST — Respect private property, local regulations and the physical dangers associated with historical bunkers.
- 8 FAIR PLAY — Submit only genuine contacts and provide verification when requested.

Choose an official bunker → Check the 1 km activation area → Check access and safety → Prepare your portable station → Call CQ ONBOTA → Make at least 25 valid contacts → Export your ADIF log → Upload your log → Check your ONBOTA statistics → Work towards your next award!

ONBOTA - Bunkers On The Air. Explore history. Go portable. Make QSOs. BOS! Belgium Outdoorshack.

ONBOTA Activator - Quick Checklist

A. Before Departure

- ☐ Official ONBOTA bunker selected
- ☐ Unique bunker identifier checked
- ☐ 1-kilometre activation area checked
- ☐ Access permissions checked
- ☐ Safety conditions checked
- ☐ Battery charged
- ☐ Antenna tested
- ☐ Logging software tested
- ☐ UTC configured
- ☐ ONBOTA reference entered
- ☐ Activation announced

B. At the Location

- ☐ Safe operating position selected
- ☐ Within 1 kilometre of the bunker
- ☐ Legal access confirmed
- ☐ Station set up
- ☐ Antenna installed safely
- ☐ ONBOTA reference configured
- ☐ Logging started

C. During the Activation

- ☐ Call CQ ONBOTA
- ☐ Announce the bunker reference
- ☐ Log callsigns correctly
- ☐ Use UTC
- ☐ Record band and mode
- ☐ Do not use repeaters
- ☐ Make genuine QSOs
- ☐ Work towards at least 25 contacts
- ☐ Maintain safe operating conditions

D. After the Activation

- ☐ Announce QRT
- ☐ Check the log
- ☐ Save/export ADIF
- ☐ Take activation photographs where appropriate
- ☐ Record GPS information if required
- ☐ Upload the log to the ONBOTA dashboard
- ☐ Check your statistics
- ☐ Contact the coordinators regarding awards when eligible