

by Charlie Knadler W7CEK

CHIRP is a free, open-source tool for programming amateur radios. Its main focus is reading and writing your radio's memory channels. It works on Windows, MacOSX, and Linux computers. It currently supports 16 brands of radios including Alinco, Baofeng, Icom, Kenwood, and Yaesu.

I use CHIRP for several reasons

- 1) To get a new radio programmed quickly.
- 2) To have different radios have the same frequencies in the same memory number.
- 3) To have different memory assignments when I go on a trip, for example to San Diego.

I have used it to program

a Baofeng UV-82HP,
a Yaesu VX-8DR,
and a Yaesu FT-8800R

using a Mac Laptop; I've also tested it on Windows.

I first used CHIRP to program the Baofeng UV-82HP with all the Repeaters in Utah and Salt Lake County. In less than a hour, I was able to download and install CHIRP and import the repeater information from the "Repeater Book" work out my radio memory map, upload the repeater information, and access the Utah County repeaters on 2 m and 70 cm.

This was possible because I bought the USB programming cable and the radio at the same time from Amazon. Some programming cables use counterfeit chips and might not work, because your computer's drivers recognize them as counterfeit.

I following the directions on the CHIRP download page for MacOS users and I clicked on the MacOS Tips to get the instructions on how to install the software (handle the Mac security requirements). Installation is easier on Windows and Linux.

You can save your memory images on your computer, this allows to have several versions for different purposes.

Next I programmed a Yaesu VX-8DR Important—The ADMS-VX8 cable from RT Systems will not work with CHIRP (without some workaround that I don't know).

I bought a Yaesu VX-8 USB programming cable from Amazon and had no trouble. I was quickly able to have the same memory assignments as the Baofeng and added the local 50MHz and 222MHz repeaters.

Next I programmed a Yaesu FT-8800R with a programming cable purchased from Amazon matching the memory assignments for the same frequencies as my other radios.

I keep the memory assignments in my UCARES notebook.

Note for Baofeng owners the Miklor website <http://www.miklor.com> has much useful information for Baofengs (and other Chinese brands) including FAQs, Programming, Drivers, and Reviews.