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Aside from the Ziff Davis over digital radio aside, whether it's satellite or HD, let's get one thing straight: FM Radio was selected by the FCC to supplement AM and FM with a CD-quality digital stream, but as far as anybody knows, your favorite tuner will work until its transistors fall out. As a matter of fact, not browsing around the Ziff Davis Web site, it's easy to conclude that FM radio is everywhere, from iPod adapters to MP3 players, cell phones and even Pocket PCs. Here's a peek at some of the latest.It's kind of amazing how many cell phones have FM radios built in. A quick turn around PC Magazine's Web site finds stories on Nokia's 7710 smart phone and keypad-less 7280 Fashion Phone. Want more info on phones with FM built in? Check out the stories on the Siemens SX1 and the Sony Ericsson K700i.Apple's super-popular iPod doesn't offer FM radio built in, but many MP3 players do. Creative's Zen Micro, MuVo Slim and Iriver's H140 all have FM tuners to complement their MP3 playback.FM is also the most popular and cable-free way to bring satellite radio, or your MP3 collection, into your car's stereo. (Or your rental car's stereo!) Along with its other nifty features, Delphi's XM Roady2 has a built-in FM modulator that lets you tune in your satellite radio.On the iPod front, Belkin TuneBase FM and Sonnet PodFreq both combine an FM transmitter and an iPod charger for use in the car. Kensington offers a similar gadget for your iPod, the iPod FM Audio Transmitter/Auto Charger.Did we mention there's FM radio for a Pocket PC personal digital assistant? That's exactly what the Pocket PC FM Radio delivers: an FM radio built into a CompactFlash Card. Drop it into an open slot, and it turns your Pocket PC into an FM receiver.While we didn't list anything in the way of AM gadgetry, there's no cause to worry: It's here for the long haul, too. Given its lower audio quality and complications with high-tech circuitry (we've never seen an AM tuner for a PC, for example), it's just not the focus of this sort of gadgetry. Which is fine by us: There are few more simple pleasures than tuning in a far-away station on an ancient AM radio. Did you know you can listen to FM radio on a smartphone or tablet without an active data connection? You'll need an activated FM chip and the right app for it to work. This article explains how to listen to FM radio on your mobile device without a working cellular data connection or Wi-Fi. The information below should apply to any Android device. You'll need a few things to listen to FM radio on your phone without a data connection: A phone with a built-in FM radio chip: Your phone needs FM radio capability, and that capability needs to be switched on. This requires the manufacturer to activate the functionality, and the carrier to accept the feature. Wired earbuds or headphones: FM radio only works with an antenna. When you listen to an FM radio broadcast on your phone, it uses the wires in your earbuds or headphones as the antenna. An FM radio app: Even if your phone has an FM radio chip, you need an app that's capable of accessing the chip, such as NextRadio. NextRadio is an ad-supported radio app that you can download from the Google Play store. It has similar functionality to other radio apps that stream radio stations over the internet. It's also capable of tapping into your phone's FM radio receiver chip. If you have an active data connection, you can listen to streaming radio stations or local FM broadcasts. When you lose your data connection, activate the FM only mode. To activate the FM only mode in NextRadio: Launch the NextRadio app. Tap the ≡ (three horizontal lines) menu icon. Tap Settings. Tap FM only mode so that the toggle switch moves to the right. If your phone does not have an enabled FM chip, the FM only mode option isn't available. With FM only mode activated, NextRadio defaults to the built-in FM receiver chip instead of streaming local stations over the internet. If your local data service goes down or you lose cell service, you'll still be able to listen to any FM station that's in range. After you activate FM only mode in the NextRadio app, you're ready to listen to local FM radio on your phone without using your data plan. To accomplish this, you'll need wired headphones or earbuds. Wireless headphones won't work because the phone needs to use the wires as an antenna. To listen to local radio with the NextRadio app: Plug in your headphones or earbuds. Launch the NextRadio app. Tap the ≡ (three horizontal lines) menu icon. Tap Local FM Radio. Tap the station you want to listen to. If you have an active data connection and the station supports it, NextRadio displays a logo for the station and information about the song or program that you're listening to. Otherwise, you'll have to identify the station you're looking for by its call letters. NextRadio also includes a basic tuner function that works like any other FM radio. Instead of looking for a station in a list of local stations, this function presents you with a tuner that you can use to search for local stations. Either go to the station you want or use the seek function to see what's available. To use the basic tuner in NextRadio without an internet connection: Plug in your headphones or earbuds. Launch the NextRadio app. Tap the ≡ (three horizontal lines) menu icon. Tap Basic Tuner. Use the interface to search for stations: Tap the − and + buttons to adjust the frequency.Tap the back and forward buttons to use the seek functionality. When you tune into an active station, it plays automatically. Tap the stop button to stop listening. FM radio isn't a feature that any smartphone manufacturer intentionally builds into their phones. It's a byproduct of some of the chips manufacturers use, which have built-in FM receivers in addition to the features that the smartphone manufacturers are interested in. Smartphone manufacturers often disable built-in FM radio receivers. In some cases, carriers have requested the feature be disabled, possibly to encourage the use of data-hungry radio apps or to avoid consumer complaints about poor radio reception. While the FM chips for many phones are turned off, this feature is available on many handsets. Manufacturers, including HTC, LG, Motorola, and Samsung, offer a handful of phones with working FM chips. Every major cellular provider in the United States is compatible with at least one FM-enabled phone. The major exception is Apple, as there are no iPhones with activated FM chips. While the iPhone 6 and older models included FM chips, Apple says there is no way to connect an antenna to the chip. The only way to listen to FM radio on an iPhone with a radio app, and radio apps only work when you have a decent data connection. That means you can't rely on your iPhone for FM radio during emergencies. The FCC urged Apple to enable the FM chips in their phones in 2017, but Apple responded with a claim that their latest phones don't have FM chips. Even if they did have FM chips, they don't have headphone jacks. FM chips typically aren't capable of receiving signals without headphone wires to act as an antenna. While iPhone owners can listen to FM radio with radio apps for iOS, you can't count on the local cellular and data networks remaining up during a disaster. Radio apps are great for regular entertainment use, but if you need to access crucial information during a disaster like a hurricane, invest in a battery-powered or emergency radio. Thanks for letting us know! Get the Latest Tech News Delivered Every Day Subscribe Tell us why! Blu-ray discs can include movie soundtracks in any of the following formats (we list them first, then follow with more detailed descriptions for each item listed):PCM (aka Linear PCM or LPCM)Dolby DigitalDolby Digital PlusDTS-HD High ResolutionDolby TrueHDDTS-HD Master AudioBefore we tackle these formats, in the order of appearance in the preceding list, note that Dolby technologies originate at Dolby Laboratories, a well-known purveyor of professional, prosumer, and consumer audio noise reduction and multi-channel surround sound technologies. Likewise, DTS (also called Digital Theater Systems) comes from DTS, Inc., an equally well-known purveyor of digital sound capture and representation technologies that compete with those from Dolby Labs.PCM (aka Linear PCM or LPCM)PCM stands for pulse code modulation, and provides a digital representation of an analog signal where that signal is sampled regularly at uniform intervals, and represented in terms of binary digital values. In addition to its use for digital audio in computers and compact audio discs, PCM is also used in some digital telephone systems, and in some kinds of digital video formats. In PCM, sampled values are represented using varying bit depths; sound track audio is typically sampled using bit depths in a range from 12 to 24 bits, with 16 bit depth pretty typical of what studios use when encoding audio for writing to Blu-ray discs.A PCM track can be an exact replica of the studio master, encoded to disc without compression, if the bit depth is the same as the master. If bit depth is reduced — as is often the case to save on the space devoted to storing audio information on disc — this may involve downsampling the data from 24 bit resolution to 16 bits instead. Technically speaking, downsampling is not the same as compression, though it does reduce the fidelity of the resulting audio information.All Blu-ray players must support PCM Audio to comply with the Blu-ray specification, but not all Blu-ray discs include this format. Numerous movie databases provide detailed audio information about Blu-ray discs, most notably notably HighDefDigest and AVS Forum which offer moving ratings and reviews that include audio details. A typical listing indicates the Audio Codec used (LPCM 5.1 is only PCM format represented), the number of channels this encoding delivers on the disc (for LPCM, you'll see values of 2.0 for stereo, and 5.1 with an occasional 6.1 or 7.1 sprinkled here and there). Occasionally you will also see Audio Fidelity (usually 48 kHz/24 bit or 48 kHz/16 bit) as well as audio bit rate (the highest value we find there is 13824 kbps for an unusual 96 kHz/24 bit entry, with 6912 and 4608 kbps most typical for 48 kHz/24 bit and 48 kHz/16 bit entries, respectively).See Table 1 for information about sound schemes, SPDIF, and HDMI handling for PCM. The "good news" about PCM is that if your PC can deliver some form of this data via HDMI to your receiver, and that receiver handles PCM data streams, it can probably convert that stream into high-definition 5.1 or 7.1 audio, depending on how the bitstream is encoded and how many channels it contains. And any type of HDMI connection will do where PCM or LPCM is concerned, from HDMI 1.0 all the way up to HDMI 1.3a. Get instant access to breaking news, the hottest reviews, great deals and helpful tips.