

HAM RADIO ETIQUETTE

Congratulations on your new ham license. We understand that getting on the air can be a bit intimidating. Don't worry; we all were new hams once.

- Take the time to listen to the repeaters.
- Speak like you were talking to someone face to face. Key the mike, AND THEN start to talk. Don't start speaking as you key the mike. Repeaters have a short delay before transmitting. If you start speaking too soon, your first few words may not be heard. Make sure you have finished talking before you un-key the mike.
Give your call sign clearly, and slowly.
- Use English and avoid jargon as much as possible. Q-codes are really a Morse code short hand. They have their place when voice communications are marginal. Say, "My wife" rather than the "xyl".
- Avoid falling into the habit of using cute-isms: "Roger Roger", "QSL on that"...
- Avoid phonetics unless you are asked to do so. When using phonetics, use standard phonetics. "Alpha, Bravo, Charlie"... etc.
- If you are listening and would like to have a conversation, just give your call sign. You can add "monitoring", or "listening". Using the term "CQ" on a repeater is generally discouraged.
- When you wish to communicate on a frequency, listen for a while before talking, there may be a conversation in progress.
- If you want to join into a conversation, just give your call between transmissions rather than using the term "Break Break".
You will be acknowledged and allowed into the conversation.
- If you want to talk to a certain person, call their using their call sign once or twice, then your call sign.
- In an emergency, give your call and say "emergency" rather than using "Break Break".
Saying "emergency" will make it clear why you are interrupting and it will also get more attention from those just listening.
- Make sure you ID (state your call sign) according to the rules, but avoid over ID'ing. If you are using a repeater system, the repeater has a timer so that it can ID every 10 minutes. Whenever you hear the repeater ID that is a good time to send yours.
There is no need to send your call sign, then say "For ID". Your call sign IS your ID.
- It is generally frowned upon to "Ker-chunk" a repeater. That means keying up your radio for just a moment so that the repeater transmits, usually you hear the "courtesy beep" afterwards. This is also annoying to the repeater owners and control operators. If you want to make sure you are transmitting okay, make sure you give your call sign.

Have fun. These are just a few pointers to help you sound like an old pro. You will make friends. Do not be afraid to ask questions. We were all beginners at one time.

*The above was copied and modified from the November 2003 Grounded Grid newsletter, Wichita, Ks
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