

# Communicating with Other Hams

## Contact Basics: Good Amateur Practices

### Q-Signals

Q-signals are a system of radio shorthand as old as wireless and developed from even older telegraphy codes. Q-signals are a set of abbreviations for common information that save time and allow communication between operators who don't speak a common language. Modern ham radio uses them extensively. The table below lists the most common Q-signals used by hams. While Q-signals were developed for use by Morse operators, their use is common on phone, as well. You will often hear, "QRZed?" as someone asks "Who is calling me?" or "I'm getting a little QRM" from an operator receiving some interference or "Let's QSY to 146.55" as two operators change from a repeater frequency to a nearby simplex communications frequency.

#### Q-Signals

**QRG** Your exact frequency (or that of \_\_\_\_\_) is \_\_\_\_\_ kHz.  
Will you tell me my exact frequency (or that of \_\_\_\_\_)?

**QRL** I am busy (or I am busy with \_\_\_\_\_). Are you busy?  
Usually used to see if a frequency is busy.

**QRM** Your transmission is being interfered with \_\_\_\_\_  
(1. Nil; 2. Slightly; 3. Moderately; 4. Severely; 5. Extremely.)  
Is my transmission being interfered with?

**QRN** I am troubled by static \_\_\_\_\_. (1 to 5 as under QRM.)  
Are you troubled by static?

**QRO** Increase power. Shall I increase power?

**QRP** Decrease power. Shall I decrease power?

**QRQ** Send faster (\_\_\_\_\_ wpm). Shall I send faster?

**QRS** Send more slowly (\_\_\_\_\_ wpm). Shall I send more slowly? **QRT**  
Stop sending. Shall I stop sending?

**QRU** I have nothing for you. Have you anything for me?

**QRV** I am ready. Are you ready?

**QRX** I will call you again at \_\_\_\_\_ hours (on \_\_\_\_\_ kHz).  
When will you call me again? Minutes are usually implied rather than hours.

**QRZ** You are being called by \_\_\_\_\_ (on \_\_\_\_\_ kHz).  
Who is calling me?

**QSB** Your signals are fading. Are my signals fading?

**QSK** I can hear you between signals; break in on my transmission.  
Can you hear me between your signals and if so can I break in on your transmission?

**QSL** I am acknowledging receipt.  
Can you acknowledge receipt (of a message or transmission)?

**QSO** I can communicate with \_\_\_\_\_ direct (or relay through \_\_\_\_\_).  
Can you communicate with \_\_\_\_\_ direct or by relay?

**QSP** I will relay to \_\_\_\_\_. Will you relay to \_\_\_\_\_?

**QST** General call preceding a message addressed to all amateurs and ARRL members. This is in effect "CQ ARRL."

**QSX** I am listening to \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ kHz. Will you listen to \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ kHz?

**QSY** Change to transmission on another frequency (or on \_\_\_\_\_ kHz).  
Shall I change to transmission on another frequency (or on \_\_\_\_\_ kHz)?

**QTC** I have \_\_\_\_\_ messages for you (or for \_\_\_\_\_).  
How many messages have you to send?

These Q signals are the ones used most often on the air. (Q abbreviations

ITU Phonetic Alphabet

Alfa
Bravo
Charlie
Delta
Echo
Foxtrot
Golf
Hotel
India
Juliet
Kilo
Lima
Mike
November
Oscar
Papa
Quebec
Romeo
Sierra
Tango
Uniform
Victor
Whiskey
X-Ray
Yankee
Zebra

AAL FAH  
BBRAH VOH  
CCHAR LEE  
DDELL TAH  
EECK OH  
FFOKS TROT  
G GOLF  
H HOH TELL  
IIN DEE AH  
JJEW LEE ETT  
KKEY LOH  
LLEE MAH  
M MIKE  
N NO **VEM** BER  
OOSS CAH  
P PAH **PAH**  
Q KEH **BECK**  
RROW ME OH  
S SEE **AIR** RAH  
T TANG GO  
UYOU NEE FORM **VVIK** TAH  
WWISS KEY  
XECKS RAY  
YYANG KEY  
Z Zulu **ZOO** LOO

**Note:** The **boldfaced** syllables are emphasized. The pronunciations shown in this table were designed for those who speak any of the international languages. The pronunciations given for "Oscar" and "Victor" may seem awkward to English-speaking people in the US.