

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.