

RADIO CONTACT PROCEDURES

Background

The four most common ways Amateur Radio operators talk with each other are:

- High frequency (HF) CW (Morse code): Used for long distance contacts. The Q signals and abbreviations on pages 45, 46 and 47 of the merit badge pamphlet are usually used. These contacts are usually entered into the operator's log book.
- High frequency voice: Used for long distance contacts. The Q signals on page 46 of the merit badge pamphlet are sometimes used. Callsigns, names and locations are usually spelled using phonetics (see page 44 of merit badge pamphlet) to be sure important information is not misunderstood. These contacts are usually entered into the operator's log book.
- Very high frequency (VHF) voice over repeater: Used for local contacts. Normal conversation similar to what you would do over a telephone. A couple of seconds after you let up button on the microphone, the repeater will send a beep. After the other station stops talking, wait until you hear the beep before you talk. These contacts are seldom logged.
- Very high frequency voice direct (simplex): Used for local contacts. Other than the beep, normal conversation is used like with a repeater. These contacts are seldom logged.

NOTE: The voice contact you make today may be on VHF, but we will go ahead and use the Q signals and phonetics as if we were making a HF voice contact. You will also need to log the contact on your log book sheet.

When You Make Your Contact

- Carry your half of the conversation by doing half the talking, giving more than one word answers and asking questions.
- Use Q signals to ask questions and in your answers.
- Use phonetics for the callsign at the first of the contact, for your name and your location.
- Identify your station by giving the callsign at the start of the contact, at least every ten minutes during the contact and at the end of the contact.
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- Relax and have fun!

Example Contact

See rear for an example of a contact.

Example Merit Badge Ham Radio Contact

CQ CQ CQ, KC5OUR, Kilo Charlie Five Oscar Uniform Romeo, KC5OUR standing by

KC5OUR, this is Whiskey Sierra Zero Juliet Mike

Whiskey Sierra Zero Juliet Mike, this is Kilo Charlie Five Oscar Uniform Romeo. Thank you for the contact. You are 57. My QTH is Belen, New Mexico. I spell Belen - Bravo Echo Lima Echo Lima.

KC5OUR, you are 55 in Grand Rapids, Michigan. My name is Chuck, that is Charlie Hotel Uniform Charlie Kilo.

Hi Chuck, my name is Bob, that is Bravo Oscar Bravo. I am a Boy Scout working on my radio merit badge. If you have the time, I would appreciate it if you would visit with me for a few minutes. One of the requirements for the badge is to make a 10 minute Ham radio contact.

Nice to make your acquaintance Bob. I'll be happy to visit with you. WS0JM back to KC5OUR.

Chuck, some of the things I'm supposed to do in this contact are to correctly use call signs, phonetics, Q signals and other Amateur Radio procedures. Any guidance you can give me would be appreciated.

At this point the conversation continues with asking questions and exchanging information. You might ask how he got interested in Ham Radio, what radio and antenna he has, how much power he is using, what interesting Ham Radio experiences he has had, what he does for a living, if he was a scout, what he remembers best about scouting.

When he asks questions, be sure to give more than one word answers and carry your part of the conversation. For example if you are asked if you have a pet:

Don't just say: Yes I have a dog.

Do say: Yes, I have a dog named Shep. It is a black Labrador. I have trained it to retrieve a ball and it loves to go to the lake where it can swim.

KC5OUR back to WS0JM. Chuck I want to thank you for helping me with my radio merit badge. It has been a pleasure talking with you. I will send you a QSL card with a SASE. Please wait until you get my card so your card will come direct to me rather than this club station. If your mailing address is not correct at QRZ, please give me the correct address before you sign off. 73 and back to you for final. This is KC5OUR.

My address is correct at QRZ. I will be looking for your card and will get a card back to you. Bob, it was my pleasure to help you with your merit badge. Amateur Radio is a great hobby. 73 to you and best of luck with your merit badge. This is WS0JM clear.