



Two-Way Radio Communication Protocols

General Radio Communication Guidelines (“Golden Rules”)

1. Clarity: Your voice should be clear. Speak a little slower than normal. Speak in a normal tone, do not shout.
2. Simplicity: Keep your message simple enough for intended listeners to understand.
3. Brevity: Be concise and to the point.
4. Security: Do not transmit sensitive or confidential information on a radio. Remember, channels/frequencies are shared and anyone may be listening to your transmission!

Think Before Speaking

- ⇒ Determine in advance what you are going say and who it is meant for.
- ⇒ Avoid long and complicated sentences. If your message is long, divide it into separate, shorter messages. Note that long messages may be cut-off by the repeater timing-out. Pause between transmissions to give others a chance to speak.

Initiating a Call on the Radio

1. First, listen to ensure the channel is clear for you to transmit.
2. Press the PTT (Push-To-Talk) button and wait a couple seconds.*
3. Say recipient's call sign or tactical ID followed by "*this is*" and your call sign or tactical ID.
4. Once the recipient replies, convey your message.
5. When finished speaking, wait a couple seconds before releasing the PTT button.*

* Steps 2. and 5. are important for **every** transmission because if one starts speaking too quickly after pressing the PTT button, or one releases the PTT button too quickly at the end of the message, the message can be cut off and not understood and then may have to be repeated. This occurs due to the natural delay of the radio signal being sent and received.

Example Radio Conversation

You: "Whiskey Foxtrot Oscar Golf 1 2 3, *this is* Whiskey Oscar Alpha Kilo 9 8 7"
(WFOG123 is their call sign, WOAK987 is your call sign)

Recipient: "WOAK987, *this is* WFOG123, *go ahead*" (or you can abbreviate the call sign as in "987, *this is* 123, *go ahead*")

You: Say your message

Recipient: Respond to the message

You: "Whiskey Oscar Alpha Kilo 9 8 7, out (or clear)"

Recipient: "Whiskey Foxtrot Oscar Golf 1 2 3, out (or clear)"

Emergency Messages

If you have an emergency message and need to interrupt a conversation taking place:

- ⇒ Listen for a pause in the conversation.
- ⇒ Press the PTT button, wait a couple seconds and say "Break" or "Emergency traffic" followed by your call sign.
- ⇒ Wait to be acknowledged and then transmit your emergency message.

Radio Terminology

While it is advisable not to use abbreviations or codes (e.g. "10-4") when using the radio, there are some common radio terms that are generally used and understood, including:

Term	Meaning
Affirmative	Yes (avoid "Yup" or "Yeah" as they can be difficult to hear)
Negative	No (avoid "Nope" or "Nah" as they can be difficult to hear)
Come In	Please acknowledge that you hear me
Copy	I understand (avoid "Roger" or "10-4")
Traffic	Transmissions (information) sent over the radio, i.e. "I am hearing traffic"
Go Ahead/Come Now	I am ready to receive your message
Stand-by	Hold on, I acknowledge you but I am unable to respond immediately
Say Again/Come Again	Re-transmit your message
Over	My transmission is finished, over to you *
Monitoring/Listening	My conversation is finished but I will be monitoring the channel
Out/Clear	My conversation is finished and I am leaving the channel **
Break/Emergency	I am interrupting communications for an emergency message
Repeat	To repeat something, i.e. "I need 3, repeat 3, people to help me"
Radio Check	Can you hear me and what is my signal strength?
Loud and Clear	Response to "Radio Check", means the signal is good and strong

* many radios and repeaters provide an audible click or tone when the PTT button is released after a transmission, and therefore "Over" may not need to be said each time.

** While "Over and Out" is sometimes said, it is a bit nonsensical. That phrase means "Over to you" for more conversation, but at the same time "My conversation is finished and I am leaving." It's best to use "Over" (if necessary) and then "Out" or "Clear" separately when done.