

Ham Radio Operating Guidelines

- Ham Radio is a hobby – an enjoyable one – but one that depends on how we use the airwaves. PLEASE read these guidelines and review your operating habits.
- Use the word “BREAK” only for emergency and time critical communications only. If you hear the word “break”, please immediately let the other station use the frequency. Establish the practice of a pause between transmissions to permit a “Breaking” station.
- When entering a conversation, wait for a natural pause, then simply announce your call sign between the transmissions. Try not to enter a QSO when a question is about to be answered.
- Always try to hit the machine (repeater) solid. If your signal is weak due to poor location or antenna, try not to have a lengthy QSO, unless it is important. It does become irritating to listen to a scratchy in-and-out signal from too great of a distance.
- Several brief contacts are better than one that goes on and on. Asking “Does anyone want to use the repeater”, does not help. Most will not interrupt a long-winded QSO to call someone.
- Keep your radios in good shape, using an antenna that does the job. Frequency deviation should not be more than +/- 5 kHz, and mic gain should be set for minimum distortion.
- Avoid tying up long-haul repeaters (like ours) for very long when simplex operation could easily be achieved. Do not work simplex on a repeaters input or output!
- Avoid testing on repeater frequencies. If you must, be sure to IDENTIFY your transmission. Remember, you will often be hitting a repeater even if you do not hear it coming back to you.
- DO NOT KERCHUNK REPEATERS, It irritates the hell out of others and is illegal. Besides, it wouldn't break your jaw to simply identify. Recall, we're bound to Part 97 of the FCC rules.
- If someone is making a call, give their party time to answer. It takes some people time to get to the mic. If you butt in early, chances are the station being called will not even get on the radio. Be considerate, and recognize this as a “rude” practice. It's called interrupting.
- Don't be a freeloader. Repeaters are expensive to install and maintain. Hams have formed associations in order to pay operating costs. If you do not use a repeater, fine, however contributions are appreciated by the operators of repeaters, and you can help pull your own weight on the repeater. An occasional “Thank you” to the repeaters owners is nice too.
- MOST IMPORTANTLY, Be friendly, cooperative, helpful and encouraging. We have a terrific hobby and want to always conduct ourselves in a way that promotes our hobby. Remember, many future hams are already listening to our bands, and we want them to be encouraged, not put off by our on-air conduct.