



Repeater Etiquette

Much of what is stated here is commonly used procedures. Many of them are based on the FCC rules that govern amateur radio, while others are based on long used procedures. Nevertheless, they all have one thing in common, a basis in courtesy. So, if it seems there are a lot of things to remember, relax. If you do your best to be courteous to those with whom you share the repeater, most of these practices will naturally fall into place.

First Things First

- When it comes to repeater etiquette, the best starting point, and probably most important to remember, is simply to listen. If you are relatively new to the hobby, or to our repeaters, you will learn a lot by just listening to the folks who have been around for a while.
- Always identify yourself according to the regulations. This means every ten (10) minutes and at the end of your transmission. It is especially important to ID at the end of your transmission while in a directed net. The 10 minutes may pass before you are given the opportunity to speak again. It never hurts to give your station's call sign more than less.
- You don't have to say, "W5JCR for ID", We all know you're identifying yourself.

Signal Reports

- When you are looking for a signal report, NEVER "ker chunk" the repeater to view the signal strength of the squelch tail. This is a nuisance, and it is illegal according to FCC Part 97 rules. The same applies if you want to just know if you can make the repeater, Say "W5JCR test" if you're not looking for a report or response back.
- The right way to get a signal report is to say something like "W5JCR looking for a signal report". Often, there will be others "lurking" who might be willing to jump onto the radio to give out a signal report, but won't answer generally when a call sign is announced because they might not want to get involved in an extended conversation.
- Unless you have actually made some changes to your station, you may find that folks will tire of responding to you if you ask for a report day after day (or more often).
- If you are responding to a signal report request, make sure you are giving accurate information. If you cannot hear the repeater itself very well, it will be difficult to report accurate information to the other station. Remember the useful information is how the other station sounds coming into the repeater, not how the repeater itself sounds. Since the repeater itself should be more or less constant to you, you are just helping the other station figure out how well they are making it to the repeater.

Use of Jargon & Q-signals

- One very easy habit to fall into is the use of jargon. Instead of saying, "I've arrived at my destination", you will hear folks say things like "We're destined". It seems to be a very common practice to use "we" when what you really mean is "I". This seems to be one of the hardest habits to break. A good practice is to say, in plain English, what you mean. If someone does not understand, they will ask you.
- Refrain from using Q signals on FM voice. Save those for HF when poor band conditions may require abbreviations to get more said in a short time.

Common Courtesy

- Avoid lengthy conversations, and pause between transmissions. This in no way means keep the repeater quiet. On the contrary, the repeaters are on the air to be used and we are very happy when they are busy. It does mean that we all should remember to leave pauses for those to have their say. There is also a 2-minute time out timer and if you transmit before the squelch tail drops, then you are continuing on the previous transmissions time and risk timing out the repeater.
- If you want to engage in a lengthy "Rag Chew" over a morning cup of coffee, consider moving your conversation to a Simplex frequency if possible.

The Don'ts and absolutely Don'ts

- Do not engage in political soapbox or views on religious matters. These subjects are very personal to others listening and should be avoided.
- Do not engage in any personal antagonisms. Keep in mind that some conversations are best held in private.
- Hate speech or derogatory remarks directed at any person or group (political, ethnic, racial, religious, sexual orientation, etc.) are never allowed on JCARC repeaters. Please keep those opinions to yourself; no one wants to hear personal rants over the airwaves. The JCARC is firm on this policy. Repeater administrators will warn you and if you continue, you may be asked to leave the repeater.
- Do not use CB lingo/language or phonetics excessively. This is FM, not like HF, so we all can hear you loud and clear.
- Selling items OTHER than ham related equipment is not allowed, nor is conducting any business other than amateur radio related events. This is not only our policy but is also a prohibition against our license. As Amateur Radio operators, we are prohibited from gaining any pecuniary benefit from operation of our amateur radio stations. When in doubt take it off the air.
- Watch your language; the repeater is "G Rated" 24 hours a day. Sometimes slips happen. That being said, there is a complete difference between an inadvertent slip and an intentional act.

- Do not provide the specific location of our repeaters on the air or Social Media. Keeping our communications equipment secure is paramount for an amateur radio service.

The Don'ts and absolutely Don'ts (continued)

- If you hear stations jamming or interfering do not make any comment, ignore them. Do not antagonize those interfering! This is not going to make them stop; it also puts your license at risk as well.

Incidental Music

- Do not forget that the FCC prohibits the transmission or retransmission of music (and almost anything else that is received over the airwaves: for specifics, see FCC Part 97.113). If you have a radio turned on (this is especially common for many mobile stations), or a television in your shack, make sure to lower the volume before you transmit.

How to call another station

- If you wish to call another specific station (instead of just dropping your call), you should always give the callsign of the station that you are calling first, followed by your call. For example, if Tim (W5WK) wanted to call William (KG5JIV), the correct way to do that would be to say, "KG5JIV, this is W5WK".
- If the repeater is active and you wish to call another station, wait for a break between stations, and say your callsign. The next station speaking should recognize you. At that point, Ask if they mind if you make a quick call, then you would make your call (as above). If after one or two calls, the other party is not available, simply say, "Nothing heard, thanks" and give your callsign. On the other hand, if your party is available, unless the folks who are already using the repeater are willing to turn it over to you, it is common courtesy to keep your conversation short and possibly move off to another frequency (or join in with the group).
- It is also worth pointing out that the Amateur Radio Service is entirely different from the Citizens Band Service. As a result, we typically do not use Citizen Band methods like "How 'bout it W5WK? You out there?" when calling someone. Amateur Radio operators have all worked hard to learn their material and pass their tests. We are proud to have our call signs and conduct ourselves in a different fashion.
- Remember that the repeater is a shared resource; if you do **need** to contact someone and the repeater is already in use, please be considerate, wait your turn, and keep your conversation brief.