



DMR Etiquette and Tips

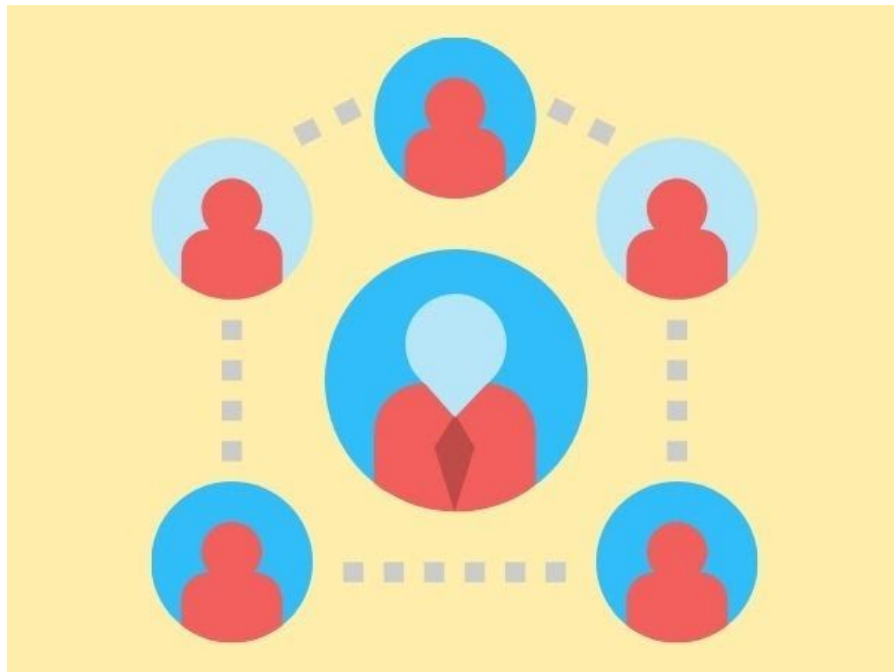
By Sebastian Franitza KBØTTL

We all know how challenging and confusing it can be to get started in Amateur Radio. That's why I have created this easy 4 lesson guide to help ease your first experiences in DMR.

Lesson 1: Keying In

IDing every 10 minutes during a conversation is essential. However, unlike most repeaters' operation, where you can hear the entire conversation going on before connecting, you must first connect to a DMR talkgroup. Before you can listen to a conversation's progress to connect to a talkgroup, you must first "Kerchunk" the mic by giving it a quick press, unlike a regular repeater or conversation. After tuning your desired talkgroup and once you've Kerchunked, you're going to want to listen first because you'll almost immediately hear activity on a busy talkgroup. So, once you kerchunk, you're going to want to listen first before you ID. Now pay attention here; this is **very** important when there is a break in the conversation. You'll want to go ahead and key up and give your call sign at that time as soon as possible. And every 10 minutes that you're still engaging in that conversation.

Many of you may be thinking, why would I ID every 10 minutes or even at all? Do I not have a DMR ID that gives everybody my call sign and the answer is simple. The fact that you're using a DMR ID in no way negates the need to provide your call sign every 10 minutes verbally. It's still an FCC rule and regulation. Even though you have a DMR ID, which digitally identifies your transmission, you still need to ID every 10 minutes. Here is a scenario, some long-winded guy just got done talking, and you finally get a chance to key up. **Wait, wait, wait!** No, you want to wait at least **two seconds** after hearing the end of the conversation or the end of the last transmission before you key up and start talking; otherwise, you could have the first few seconds of your conversation cut off as the machine resets.



Lesson 2: Talkgroups

Furthermore, you should always treat talkgroups like a guest in your home. It's somebody else's server. It's somebody else's talkgroup. Remember that even if you're accessing through a home hotspot, it is somebody else's talkgroup that you are talking on, and courtesy is of the utmost importance on the ham band.

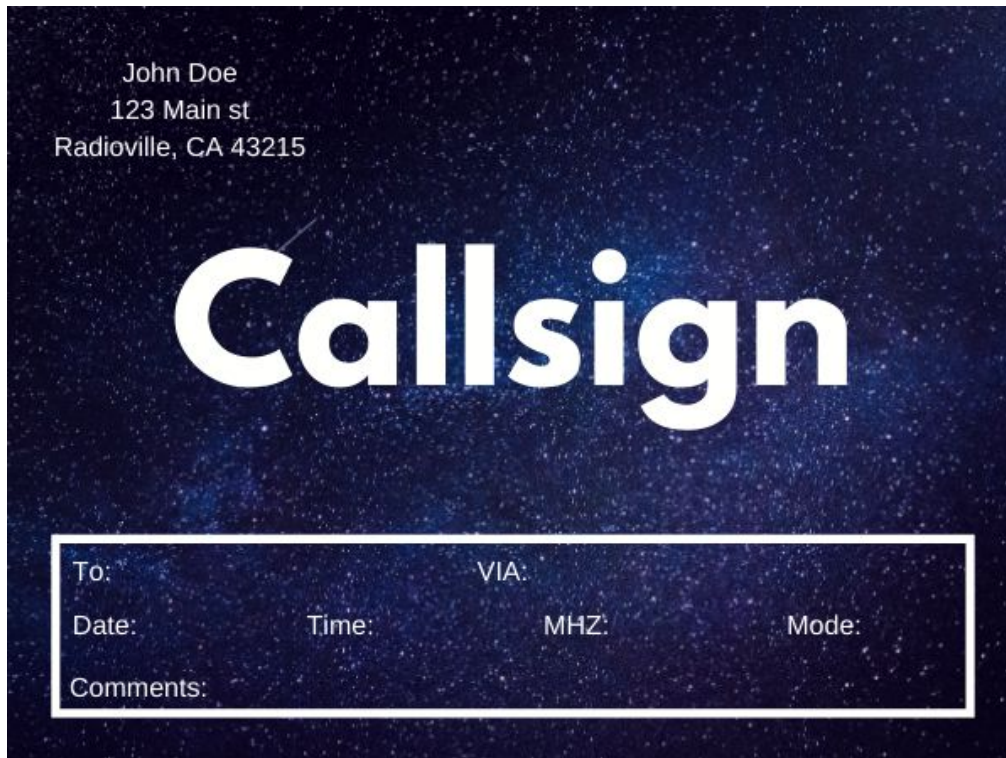
We want to avoid using wide area talkgroups to carry out lengthy conversations. Suppose you're in North America, the USA worldwide, or even on a busy statewide talkgroup. You'll want to take the lengthy discussion somewhere else.

P H O N E T I C			
A	ALPHA	N	NOVEMBER
B	BRAVO	O	OSCAR
C	CHARLIE	P	PAPA
D	DELTA	Q	QUEBEC
E	ECHO	R	ROMEO
F	FOXTROT	S	SIERRA
G	GOLF	T	TANGO
H	HOTEL	U	UNIFORM
I	INDIA	V	VICTOR
J	JULIET	W	WISKEY
K	KILO	X	X-RAY
L	LIMA	Y	YANKEE
M	MIKE	Z	ZULU

Lesson 3: Vocabulary

To say that you are leaving the frequency instead of giving your call sign and saying “clear,” DMR etiquette just simply says, give your call sign and use the word *out* when ending a conversation, leaving a frequency or talkgroup. When identifying yourself, especially in international talkgroups, make sure to use the proper phonetic alphabet. The phonetic alphabet is just about on every ham radio site, including ARRL. For example, I'm KBØTTL. I would start by saying hello, this is kilo, bravo, zero, tango, tango, lima. Saying this leaves no question about my callsign.

If somebody asks for a signal report, don't immediately shun them for asking for a signal report. Although it may seem strange that somebody is asking for a signal report, signal reports are still legitimate in DMR. They're honest because they're asking about distortion. They're asking about digital audio quality, and if they have a higher bit error rate, they're asking if their transmission sounds at all grainy. No, they're not asking for an S report. S reports are mainly for HF. They are asking for a signal quality report for digital signals.



Lesson 4: Logbooks

Logbooks are the best friend of the DX operators, the HF operators, as well as you. If you're using talkgroups, especially the international talkgroups, you'll want to keep a detailed log. In your logbooks, you'll see who you've talked to before and see if they are repeats. Plus, it's always lovely and nostalgic to have that history to look back on. Now, are you required to keep a logbook? No, the law no longer requires you to keep a logbook. That was something that was done away with back in the novice days of HF, if I'm not mistaken. As stated above, it's always a nice touch to have a logbook and keep logs of the people you've contacted, especially from international countries. I would even say, what's the purpose of even doing this if you're not logging it. If you are logging these contexts, then there comes one of my favorite subjects in ham radio, the issue of QSL. We're all familiar with these little paper cards that you can mail out. If you're contacting multiple people on DMR, chances are, you're not going to mail out a QSL card. But what you can do is get a free account on a website like EQSL.cc, where you can design a free QSL card, log all of your contacts, and each connection you log gets your QSL card. There's also an ARRL service called LOTW or *LogBook of the World*. These websites are great for sending out QSL cards for your contacts.

There you have it, four lessons on DMR etiquette. I hope these lessons will make your first experiences in DMR easy and fun! Because, in the end, that's what Amateur Radio is all about. Having fun and making new contacts from all around the world! As always, I'm Sebastian KBØTTL, 73s. Out.

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