

Directed Net Operating Practice

Prowords and the errors that cost airtime • Listen • Be recognized • Be brief • Be accurate

SAY THIS, NOT THAT

Instead of	Say
"Over and out"	OVER or OUT — never both
"Repeat"	SAY AGAIN
"Roger" meaning "I'll do it"	WILCO
"Roger wilco"	WILCO
"10-4" / "copy that"	ROGER
"Break" used to check in	Your callsign, when NCS calls
"Break break"	EMERGENCY / PRIORITY
"Say that again"	SAY ALL AFTER / WORD BEFORE

Instead of	Say
"That's a yes"	AFFIRMATIVE
"What's your 20"	Plain language
"Come back"	OVER
"We're clear"	OUT, or "monitoring"
Spelling with no warning	I SPELL, then ITU phonetics
Numbers run together	FIGURES, then digit by digit
"Nancy Ocean Kilowatt"	ITU standard phonetics

OVER = go ahead. OUT = contact finished. ROGER = I received you. WILCO = received and will comply. BREAK separates parts of a message — it is not a check-in.

ERRORS IN GETTING ON THE AIR

- Transmitting before NCS recognizes you
- Not listening long enough before keying
- Quick-keying — leaves no gap for emergency traffic
- Clipping the first syllable — key, pause, then talk
- Talking over the repeater tail or courtesy tone
- Leaving the net without checking out

BAD PHONETICS AND SPELLING

- Cute phonetics instead of ITU standard
- Switching phonetics partway through a callsign
- No I SPELL or FIGURES prefix before characters
- Over-phoneticizing words nobody would miss

INCORRECT IDENTIFICATION

- Missing the 10-minute and end-of-contact ID
- Tactical calls used with no FCC callsign
- Tactical call drifting mid-net (Net Control / Base / Command)

PROWORD MISUSE

- "Over and out" — contradictory
- ROGER used to mean "yes" or "I'll do it"
- "Repeat" instead of SAY AGAIN
- BREAK used as a check-in
- CB jargon: 10-4, breaker breaker, what's your 20
- Q-signals stacked onto voice traffic
- Homegrown local prowords that fail under mutual aid
- "Standby" with no follow-up

INCORRECT TRAFFIC HANDLING

- Editorializing inside formal traffic
- Freelancing the ICS-213 or radiogram format
- Requesting a full resend instead of a fill
- Passing rumor or speculation as fact
- Names, addresses, or patient details in the clear
- Passing traffic station-to-station, bypassing NCS

BAD DISCIPLINE

- Ragchewing with NCS — answer the question asked
- Long transmissions with no pause for breaking stations
- Correcting other operators on the air — do it after the net
- Signal reports and troubleshooting during the net
- Nervous over-explanation — most errors are anxiety, not ignorance

NET CONTROL'S OWN ERRORS

- Losing control and letting the net drift into conversation
- Not repeating the preamble and instructions for late arrivals
- Verbose acknowledgments — NCS sets the pace for everyone
- Not pacing the net to the weakest station

ANATOMY OF A CLEAN EXCHANGE

Checking in

NCS: “Any additional stations, call now.”

You: “Kilo Six Alpha Bravo Charlie.”

NCS: “K6ABC, go ahead.”

You: “K6ABC, Chris in Belmont, no traffic, over.”

NCS: “K6ABC, roger. Next station.”

BEFORE YOU KEY

- Know your callsign, location, and whether you have traffic
- Write the message down before you transmit it
- Wait for NCS to call for your category of station
- Key, pause one beat, then speak

Requesting a fill

You: "Net control, K6ABC, say all after 'staging area,' over."

Urgent interrupt

You: "PRIORITY, K6ABC."

NCS: "All stations standby. K6ABC, go ahead your priority traffic."

Full callsign at check-in and at least every 10 minutes thereafter. Nothing else moves until NCS hands you the floor.

ITU PHONETIC ALPHABET

A	Alfa	H	Hotel
B	Bravo	I	India
C	Charlie	J	Juliect
D	Delta	K	Kilo
E	Echo	L	Lima
F	Foxtrot	M	Mike
G	Golf		

N	November	U	Uniform
O	Oscar	V	Victor
P	Papa	W	Whiskey
Q	Quebec	X	X-ray
R	Romeo	Y	Yankee
S	Sierra	Z	Zulu
T	Tango		

NOTES

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