

Radio Etiquette





Hindrances to Good Message Transmission

- Background Noise
- Interruptions
- Nerves
- Verbal Diarrhea
- Not Speaking Clearly
- Speaking too Quietly
- Talking too Fast
- Releasing the PTT Button too Quickly

Letter	Phonetic Pronunciation		Letter	Phonetic Pronunciation
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	Gulf		T	Tango
H	Hotel		U	Uniform
I	India		V	Victor
J	Juliet		W	Whisky
K	Kilo		X	X-Ray
L	Lima		Y	Yankee
M	Mike		Z	Zulu

Numeric	Pronounced As
1	Wun
2	Too
3	Tree
4	Fow-er
5	Fife
6	Six
7	Sev-en
8	Ait
9	Nin-er
0	Zee-ro

Emergency Calls

Mayday, Pan-Pan, and Sécurité are internationally recognized maritime radio signals that indicate distress, urgency, and safety, respectively, each with a specific priority and usage protocol.

Always Use Channel 16

Mayday

Definition: Mayday is a distress call used when a vessel or person is in grave and imminent danger, requiring immediate assistance

Priority: Highest — all other communications must cease immediately

Examples: Vessel sinking, fire onboard, man overboard, collision with severe damage

Pan-Pan

Definition: Pan-Pan signals an urgent situation that requires assistance but is not immediately life-threatening

Priority: Second-highest — takes precedence over all transmissions except Mayday calls

Examples: Engine failure near hazards, minor medical emergencies, lost navigation equipment in busy areas

Sécurité

Definition: Sécurité is a safety broadcast used to warn other vessels about navigational hazards or weather conditions

Priority: Lowest of the three, but still important for general safety communication

Examples: Hazardous navigation areas, severe weather warnings, large ships entering narrow channels

When making a Mayday call over VHF or other radio systems, the message should include the following elements

Call Sign and Identification	State your vessel's name, your callsign or MMSI number if available <i>Mayday, Mayday, Mayday. This is vessel Sea Breeze, callsign ABC123, MMSI 123456789.</i>
Position	Provide latitude and longitude, or a clear reference point (bearing and distance from a known landmark). <i>Position 49°27.68N 000°03.59W</i>
Nature of Distress	Briefly describe the emergency (e.g., sinking, fire, man overboard, engine failure). <i>We have a fire in the engine room.</i>
Assistance Required	Specify what help is needed (e.g., evacuation, tow, firefighting) and urgency. <i>Require immediate evacuation.</i>
Number of People Onboard	Include all crew and passengers to assist rescue planning. <i>Four people onboard.</i>
Additional Information	Any other details that may aid rescue, such as life raft deployment, injuries, or hazards. <i>Lifejackets deployed.</i>
End with "OVER"	This signals that you are ready to receive a response. <i>OVER</i>

Over & Out

- **Over** means you have finished speaking and you are going to release the PTT button to allow someone else to talk
- **Out** means the conversation is over and you are hanging up the mic and moving away from the radio

Over & Out means you have finished speaking and you are going to release the PTT button to allow someone else to talk, but you aren't going to be listening.

How insulting!!