Sample Radio Calls

The following sample communications will help you frame various types of radio calls.

When in doubt, remember the four Ws:
• Who you’re calling
• Who you are
• Where you are
• What you want

Class D Airspace

Departing

When ready to taxi:
   Pilot: Lancaster Ground, Cherokee 8121K, west ramp, VFR, 4,500 to Frederick with [information] Sierra.
   Pilot: Taxi to Runway 26, Cherokee 8121K.

When ready for takeoff:
   Pilot: Lancaster Tower, Cherokee 8121K, Runway 26, ready for takeoff.
   Tower: Cherokee 8121K, Runway 26, cleared for takeoff.
   Pilot: Cleared for takeoff Runway 26, Cherokee 8121K.

Arriving

   Pilot: Lancaster Tower, Cherokee 8121K, 10 [miles] southwest at 2,500, inbound for landing with [information] Sierra.
   Pilot: Report entering left downwind, Cherokee 8121K.
   . . . . .
   Pilot: Cherokee 8121K entering left downwind Runway 31.
   Tower: Cherokee 21K, cleared to land Runway 31.
   Pilot: Cleared to land Runway 31, Cherokee 21K.

WWW.ASF.ORG/RADIOCOMM
Class C or TRSA Airspace

Departing

When ready to taxi:

Pilot: Greensboro Ground, Cherokee 8121K, general aviation ramp, VFR, 5,500 to Raleigh with [information] Sierra.

Ground: Cherokee 8121K, Greensboro Ground, cleared to Raleigh, maintain VFR at or below 3,000, departure frequency 118.5, squawk 4234, advise when ready to taxi.

Pilot: Cherokee 8121K is cleared to Raleigh, maintain VFR at or below 3,000, departure frequency 118.5, squawk 4234, we’re ready to taxi.

Ground: Cherokee 21K, taxi to Runway 23.

Pilot: Taxi to Runway 23, Cherokee 21K.

When ready for takeoff:


Tower: Cherokee 8121K, Runway 23, cleared for takeoff.

Pilot: Cleared for takeoff, Runway 23, Cherokee 8121K.

Arriving


ATC: Cherokee 8121K, Greensboro Approach, squawk 2150 and ident.

Pilot: Squawk 2150, Cherokee 8121K.

ATC: Cherokee 21K, radar contact, fly heading 110, descend and maintain 4,500, maintain VFR.

Pilot: Fly heading 110, descend and maintain 4,500, maintain VFR, Cherokee 21K.
Class B Airspace

Departing

Class B departure calls follow the same format as Class C or TRSA airspace. However, you may need to contact Clearance Delivery prior to calling Ground and provide them the four Ws.

Arriving


ATC: Cherokee 8121K, Charlotte Approach, squawk 4323 and ident.

Pilot: Squawk 4323, Cherokee 8121K.

ATC: Cherokee 21K, radar contact, cleared to enter Class Bravo airspace, fly heading 020, descend and maintain 3,000, maintain VFR.

Pilot: Cleared to enter Class Bravo airspace, fly heading 020, descend and maintain 3,000, maintain VFR, Cherokee 21K.

Transiting


ATC: Cherokee 8121K, Seattle Approach, squawk 3121 and ident.

Pilot: Squawk 3121, Cherokee 8121K.

ATC: Cherokee 21K, radar contact 18 miles southwest of SeaTac, Seattle altimeter 29.88, cleared through Class Bravo direct Arlington, descend and maintain 5,500, maintain VFR.

Pilot: Cleared through Class Bravo direct Arlington, descend and maintain 5,500, maintain VFR, Cherokee 21K.

Review full course online anytime at asf.org/radiocomm
Opening a VFR Flight Plan

Pilot: Raleigh Radio, Cherokee 8121K on 122.2.
Pilot: Raleigh Radio, open flight plan for Cherokee 8121K from Greensboro to Knoxville at 1835 Zulu.
Flight Service: Cherokee 21K, flight plan activated at 1835 Zulu, Greensboro altimeter 30.02. We’d appreciate any pilot reports on Flight Watch, 122.0.

Requesting/Canceling Flight Following

Requesting

Pilot: Manchester Approach, Cherokee 8121K.
ATC: Cherokee 8121K, Manchester Approach.
Pilot: Cherokee 8121K over Concord VOR at 6,500, en route Trenton Mercer, request flight following.
ATC: Cherokee 21K, squawk 3314.
Pilot: Squawk 3314, Cherokee 21K.

Canceling

Pilot: Manchester Approach, Cherokee 8121K would like to cancel flight following.
ATC: Cherokee 8121K, radar service terminated, squawk VFR, frequency change approved.
Pilot: Squawk VFR, Cherokee 8121K.
Clearance Components

Most IFR clearances consist of five basic components ("CRAFT"):
- **Clearance limit**: Your destination airport or an intermediate fix.
- **Route of flight**: Hopefully the route you filed, unless traffic conditions dictate otherwise.
- **Altitude**: If not as requested, typically followed by when to expect climb or descent clearance.
- **Frequency**: The radio frequency for departure control.
- **Transponder**: Your four-digit squawk code.

Position Report Components

Include the following items when making a position report ("IPATTEN"):
- Identification
- Position
- Altitude
- Time
- Type of flight plan*
- ETA to next reporting point
- Name of next reporting point

* Not required in IFR position reports made directly to ATC centers or approach control.

Lost Comm Route and Altitude

If two-way IFR communication is lost, select a route and altitude based on the acronyms below, or follow the simple flowchart on the reverse side of this reference.

**Route (choose based on “AVEF” hierarchy):**
1. **Assigned**—the route assigned in the last ATC clearance
2. **Vectored**—if being radar vectored, direct to the fix, route, or airway specified
3. **Expected**—the route ATC said to expect in a further clearance
4. **Filed**—the route filed in your flight plan

**Altitude (fly the highest of “MEA”):**
- **Minimum**—the minimum en route altitude
- **Expected**—the altitude ATC said to expect in a further clearance
- **Assigned**—the altitude ATC assigned in the last clearance

Review full course online anytime at asf.org/radiocomm

WWW.ASF.ORG/RADIOCOMM
IFR Two-Way Radio Communications
Failure Procedures: FAR 91.185

Step 1: Route Procedures

What environment are you flying in?

IFR
- Yes
  - Was a route assigned by ATC?
    - Yes
      - Fly that route
    - No
      - Are you being radar vectored?
        - Yes
          - Fly directly to the fix, route, or airway specified in the clearance
        - No
          - Is there an EFC route?
            - Yes
              - Fly the route specified in the EFC clearance
            - No
              - Leave clearance limit at the EFC time and proceed to a fix from which an approach begins; commence descent or descent and approach as close as possible to the ETA

VFR
- Yes
  - Land as soon as practical
- No
  - Fly the highest of the following:
    - Altitude assigned by ATC
    - Minimum altitude for IFR operations using current altimeter setting
    - Altitude expected in further clearance

Step 2: Altitude Procedures

Fly the highest of the following:

Altitude assigned by ATC OR Minimum altitude for IFR operations using current altimeter setting OR Altitude expected in further clearance

Step 3: Leave Clearance Limit

Is the clearance limit a fix from which an approach begins?

Yes
- Did you receive an EFC time?
  - Yes
    - Commence descent or descent and approach as close as possible to EFC time
  - No
    - Commence descent or descent and approach as close as possible to the ETA

No
- Did you receive an EFC time?
  - Yes
    - Leave clearance limit at the EFC time and proceed to a fix from which an approach begins; commence descent or descent and approach as close as possible to the ETA
  - No
    - Upon arrival over the clearance limit, proceed to a fix from which an approach begins; commence descent or descent and approach as close as possible to the ETA

Review full course online anytime at asf.org/radiocomm

Mastering Radio Communication

WWW.ASF.ORG/RADIOCOMM
# ATC Light Gun Signals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color and type of signal</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Movement of vehicles, equipment, and personnel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Steady green</strong></td>
<td>Cleared for takeoff</td>
<td>Cleared to cross; proceed; go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Flashing green</strong></td>
<td>Cleared to taxi</td>
<td>Return for landing (to be followed by steady green at the proper time)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Steady red</strong></td>
<td>Stop</td>
<td>Give way to other aircraft and continue circling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Flashing red</strong></td>
<td>Taxi clear of landing area or runway in use</td>
<td>Airport unsafe—Do not land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Flashing white</strong></td>
<td>Return to starting point on airport</td>
<td>Return to starting point on airport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alternating red and green</strong></td>
<td>General warning signal—exercise extreme caution</td>
<td>General warning signal—exercise extreme caution</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Fixed-wing aircraft**

- **Between sunrise and sunset:**
  - (a) Move ailerons or rudder while on the ground.
  - (b) Rock wings while in flight.

- **Between sunset and sunrise:**
  - (a) Flash landing light or navigation lights.

**Helicopters**

- **Between sunrise and sunset:**
  - (a) While hovering, either turn the helicopter toward the controlling facility and flash the landing light or rock the tip path plane.
  - (b) While in flight, either flash the landing light or rock the tip path plane.

- **Between sunset and sunrise:**
  - (a) Flash navigation lights or landing light.

**Reply with one of the following acknowledgements:**

**Color and type of signal**

- Aircraft on the ground
- Aircraft in flight
- Movement of vehicles, equipment, and personnel

**SAY IT RIGHT**

Mastering Radio Communication

**WWW.ASF.ORG/RADIOCOMM**

Review full course online anytime at asf.org/radiocomm