

Field Day Orientation

What you need to know to get on the air.

Saratoga Amateur Radio Association

June 25, 2020

AE6PM, W6WS, NU6P

Field Day is an annual amateur radio communications event designed to exercise our emergency communication capability.

The objective is to contact as many stations as possible over a 24-hour period.

It can be an individual or group activity.

You can operate from your home or elsewhere.

Each contact with another station requires exchanging call signs and three other pieces of information:

- (1) the number of simultaneous transmitters,
- (2) the Class.
- (3) the ARRL Section where you are operating.

Field day this year is Sat-Sun June 27-28 from 1800 UTC Saturday (1100 PDT) to 2059 UTC Sunday (1400 PDT).

You are free to operate any frequency and any mode within the constraints of your class of license.

It's good to keep a log of who you talked to, so as not to repeat yourself.

Contact any station once per band per mode.

You do not need to report the results to the ARRL or anyone else, but many choose to do so.

If operating HF, tune around and listen for a few minutes and you will know what to do.

If you don't hear anything, you're on the wrong band/mode or your antenna fell down.

If on voice no one answers you, you are probably on the wrong SSB sideband. The convention is LSB on 160 thru 40 meters.

VHF/UHF is a little less intuitive. Mainly to the lack of intense activity and channelization.

Start by monitoring one of the National Calling Frequencies.

No repeaters allowed, it's all simplex.

Share the frequency.

VHF/UHF Operating

If you are on a VHF or UHF frequency using your HT, your contact might go like this:

[me] CQ Field Day, this is AE6PM.

[you] AE6PM this is KE6QDI.

[me] KE6QDI, please copy 1ESCV, one echo santa clara valley.

[you] Roger, one echo sierra charlie victor. Please copy 1DSF, one delta san francisco.

[me] Roger, one delta sierra foxtrot. QSL.

[me] This is AE6PM.

Rigid ITU phonetics are not required, but desired.

No prowords, just efficient communication.

You might be asked for your Maidenhead Grid Square. Look yourself up on QRZ.com to find yours, or see References slide for a link.

HF Operating

A contact on HF (or VHF/UHF SSB) proceeds in much the same way.

The CQ might become CQ, CQ, CQ Field Day in hopes someone will tune across your frequency.

Contacts tend to be terse and quick – listen for a while.

Contact any station once per band per mode (voice, CW and digital).

If someone says you are a “Dupe” – don’t be offended.

It simply means you’ve already worked him on that band/mode.

VHF/UHF National Simplex Calling Frequencies

52.525 MHz

146.52 MHz

223.500 Mhz

446.000 MHz

Also try 146.550, 146.655, 146.415, 146.460,
146.505 and 146.550 MHz.

HF Frequencies

160, 80, 40, 20,15 and 10 meters.

Also all bands 50 MHz and above.

Technician Class licensees can operate voice on
28.300 to 28.500 MHz and CW/digital on 28.000
to 28.300.

Class Definitions

Class A: Club/non-cub portable (group of 3 or more)

Class A – Battery*

Class B: One or two person portable

Class B – Battery*

Class C: Mobile

Class D: Home stations

Class E: Home stations – Emergency power

Class F: Emergency Operation Centers

•Output power of 5 watts or less and a power source other than commercial mains or motor-driven generator.

Just using your HT would be B-Battery.

Mobile rig in the car would be C.

Logging

Keep a log of your contacts for your personal use or so that you or your group has the necessary information to submit to the ARRL:

Call Used and Exchange Sent (one time entry)

Frequency

Mode

Date

Time (UTC)

Station Worked

Exchange Received

(See References for a link to a logging form)

Antenna Polarization

Antenna polarization for VHF/UHF SSB is usually horizontal.

Antenna polarization for VHF/UHF FM is usually vertical.

ARRL Sections

SCV – Santa Clara Valley (that's us)

SF – San Francisco

EB – East Bay

SV – Sacramento Valley

SJV – San Joaquin Valley

(There is a link on the Reference slide to all sections)

Language Lesson

CQ - Looking for a contact.

QSO (or Q) - A contact.

QSL - Acknowledges receipt.

QRZ – Please try again.

73 – Best regards

References

1. Field Day rules: <http://www.arrl.org/field-day>
2. ARRL Sections: <http://www.arrl.org/section-abbreviations>
3. Field Day Log Page:
<http://www.arrl.org/files/file/Field-Day/2019/2019%20FD%20Log%20Sheet.pdf>
4. Grid square locator:
http://www.levinecentral.com/ham/grid_square.php

Windows users try ctrl+click to follow the link.