

Repeater Etiquette

Editor's Note: The following originally appeared in *The Newette*, which is the Official monthly newsletter of the Nittany Amateur Radio Club. It was written by Woody Brem K3YV.

1. When announcing yourself as being available for talking on the repeater, keep it simple. There is no need for an elaborate call. Simply state your call sign and the repeater you are using. For example: "This is W3XYZ listening on 85." Announcing which repeater you are using is a courtesy to people listening on scanners. It lets them know which repeater you are using, so they can call you back. But remember - never call CQ.
2. To call a particular station, simply call that station and identify your station. For example, "W3XYZ this is K3XYZ on 85." There is no need for additional statements such as, "Would you be listening Billy-Bob?" It sounds silly; if he were listening, he would have called you.
3. If you do not get an answer when you call a particular station, don't come back on the air and say, "Negative contact." Everyone already knows no one answered you. Besides, there is no such thing as a negative contact, except on your car battery.
4. Identify at the end of your first transmission, every ten minutes thereafter, and after your last transmission. Do not say, "This is W3XYZ for I.D." Everyone knows you are identifying. Simply say, "This is W3XYZ." Think about it; have you ever given your call not for ID?
5. To join a conversation already in progress, simply state your call sign between transmissions of the talking stations. Never say "break" unless you have a very important reason for breaking in. Saying "break break" (two breaks) indicates that you have an emergency situation and require immediate repeater access.

6. During peak activity periods, keep each transmission short and leave space between transmissions, so people can join the conversation or make a quick call. Breakers are common during the daily rush hour.

7. When conditions are marginal, keep each transmission short. The other station may hear you well one moment but not copy you at all the next. It's easier to ask for repeats when your transmissions are short. If necessary, ask for "words twice." The other station will then repeat everything twice.

8. Read and follow the guidelines for autopatch operation. It is a great emergency communications asset. If you don't know how to use the autopatch, find out. Everyone had to learn, so don't be afraid to ask for assistance. Our control operator team will be glad to help. Most failed autopatch calls are due to operator error. Remember, 911 is the emergency assistance autopatch number.

9. Mind that a broad range of people monitor ham repeaters. Make sure that your conversations are suitable for general audiences. Don't say anything you wouldn't want your mother to hear.

10. Repeaters are expensive to own and operate. Support your club's repeater fund with a generous contribution every year. Also, remember to give the control operators an "atta-boy" now and then. They work hard to keep the repeater running well.