

The international Q-code

The Q-code is an international set of abbreviations that was created at the beginning of the last century to simplify radiotelegraph communication. Each code is composed by three letters always starting with Q. Each code can be a question if followed by a question mark or an answer (or statement) if not. To avoid confusion, no station call-sign begins with Q. Even if initially designed for telegraphy, it's also used in voice communications.

Amateur radio international Q-code

Amateur radio operators use a subset of the [full international Q-code](#) and they use it extensively still today. In many countries, learning this code is necessary to obtain a ham radio license; the exact subset used may slightly vary from country to country. Hereunder the most common codes. Sometimes Q-codes are used [informally](#) with a slightly different meaning. [\[2\]](#)

Code	Question	Answer
QRA	What is the name (or call sign) of your station?	The name (or call sign) of my station is ...
QRB	How far are you from my station?	The distance between our stations is ... nautical miles (or km).
QRG	Will you tell me my exact frequency (or that of ...)?	Your exact frequency (or that of ...) is ... kHz (or MHz).
QRH	Does my frequency vary?	Your frequency varies.
QRI	How is the tone of my transmission?	The tone of your transmission is (1: good, 2: variable 3: bad)
QRK	What is the readability of my signals (or those of ...)?	The readability of your signals (or those of ...) is ... (1: bad .. 5: excellent).
QRL	Are you busy?	I am busy. (or I am busy with ...) Please do not interfere.
QRM	Do you have interference?	I have interference.
QRN	Are you troubled by static noise?	I am troubled by static noise.
QRO	Shall I increase transmit power?	Please increase transmit power.
QRP	Shall I decrease transmit power?	Please decrease transmit power.
QRQ	Shall I send faster?	Please send faster (... words per minute).
QRS	Shall I send more slowly?	Please send more slowly (... words per minute).
QRT	Shall I cease or suspend operation?	I am suspending operation.
QRU	Have you anything for me?	I have nothing for you.
QRV	Are you ready?	I am ready.

QRX	Shall I standby? / When will you call me again?	Please standby. / I will call you again at ... (hours) on ... kHz (or MHz).
QRZ	Who is calling me?	You are being called by ... (on ... kHz (or MHz)).
QSA	What is the strength of my signals (or those of ...)?	The strength of your signals (or those of ...) is ... (1: very weak .. 5: very strong).
QSB	Are my signals fading?	Your signals are fading.
QSD	Is my keying defective?	Your keying is defective.
QSK	Can you hear me between your signals (while transmitting), and if so can I break in on your transmission?	I can hear you between my signals (while transmitting); break in on my transmission.
QSL	Can you acknowledge receipt?	I am acknowledging receipt.
QSM	Shall I repeat the last telegram (message) which I sent you, or some previous telegram (message)?	Repeat the last telegram (message) which you sent me (or telegram(s) (message(s)) numbers(s) ...).
QSN	Did you hear me (or ...) on ... kHz (or MHz)?	I did hear you (or ...) on ... kHz (or MHz).
QSO	Can you communicate with ... direct or by relay?	I can communicate with ... direct (or by relay through ...).
QSP	Will you relay a message to ...?	I will relay a message to
QSS	What working frequency will you use?	I will use ... kHz (or MHz).
QSU	Shall I send or reply on this frequency (or on ... kHz (or MHz))?	Please send or reply on this frequency (or on ... kHz (or MHz)).
QSV	Shall I send a series of "V" on this frequency (or on ... kHz (or MHz))?	Please send a series of "V" on this frequency (or on ... kHz (or MHz)).
QSX	Will you listen to ... on ... kHz (or MHz)?	I am listening to ... on ... kHz (or MHz).
QSY	Shall I change transmission frequency (to ... kHz (or MHz))?	Please change transmission frequency (to ... kHz (or MHz)).
QSZ	Shall I send each word or group more than once?	Send each word or group twice (or ... times).
QTC	How many telegrams (messages) have you to send?	I have ... telegrams (messages) for you (or for ...).
QTH	What is your position in latitude and longitude (or according to any other indication)?	My position is ... latitude, ... longitude.
QTR	What is the correct time?	The correct time is ... hours.

Amateur radio informal Q-code

In informal ham language, some codes have slightly diverted from their [original meaning](#) and are used just as a replacement for a specific word. The table below summarizes the most common:

QRA	Name
QRB	Distance
QRG	Frequency
QRK	Intelligibility
QRL	Busy
QRM	Interference
QRN	Noise
QRO	High power
QRP	Low power
QRQ	High speed CW
QRS	Low speed CW
QRSS	Very low speed CW
QRT	Shut down the station
QRV	Ready
QRX	Stand by
QRZ?	Who is calling me?
QSB	Fading
QSD	Defective keying
QSK	Break in
QSL	Confirmation <i>or</i> card to confirm contact
QSO	Radio contact
QSY	Change frequency
QTC	Message
QTH	Location
QTR	Time

Full international Q-code

This is a more complete Q-code set that includes almost all codes from QRA to QUZ but the majority of them are for maritime/rescue use and are seldom [used by amateur radio operators](#). Then, there are many other Q-codes from QAA to QZZ in use in aviation and maritime traffic that are out of scope here. [\[1\]](#)

Here only the "question" part is shown, but it's easy to guess the answer from the question.

QRA	What is the name of your station?
QRB	How far approximately are you from my station?
QRC	By what enterprise are the accounts for charges for your station settled?
QRD	Where are you bound for and where are you from?
QRE	What is your estimated time of arrival at ... (over ...)?

QRF	Are you returning to ... ?
QRG	Will you tell me my exact frequency (or that of ...)?
QRH	Does my frequency vary?
QRI	How is the tone of my transmission?
QRJ	How many radiotelephone calls have you to book?
QRK	What is the intelligibility of my signals (or those of ...)?
QRL	Are you busy?
QRM	Are you being interfered with?
QRN	Are you troubled by static?
QRO	Shall I increase transmitter power?
QRP	Shall I decrease transmitter power?
QRQ	Shall I send faster?
QRR	Are you ready for automatic operation?
QRS	Shall I send more slowly?
QRT	Shall I stop sending?
QRU	Have you anything for me?
QRV	Are you ready?
QRW	Shall I inform ... that you are calling him on ... kHz (or MHz)?
QRX	When will you call me again?
QRY	What is my turn?
QRZ	Who is calling me?
QSA	What is the strength of my signals (or those of ...)?
QSB	Are my signals fading?
QSC	Are you a cargo vessel?
QSD	Is my keying defective?
QSE	What is the estimated drift of the survival craft?
QSF	Have you effected rescue?
QSG	Shall I send ... telegrams at a time?
QSH	Are you able to home on your direction-finding equipment?
QSI	I have been unable to break in on your transmission.
QSJ	What is the charge to be collected to ... including your internal charge?
QSK	Can you hear me between your signals and if so can I break in on your transmission?
QSL	Can you acknowledge receipt?
QSM	Shall I repeat the last telegram which I sent you (or some previous telegram)?
QSN	Did you hear me (or ...) on ... kHz (or MHz)?
QSO	Can you communicate with ... direct (or by relay)?
QSP	Will you relay to ... free of charge?
QSQ	Have you a doctor on board (or is ... on board)?

QSR	Shall I repeat the call on the calling frequency?
QSS	What working frequency will you use?
QSU	Shall I send or reply on this frequency (or on ... kHz (or MHz))
QSV	Shall I send a series of Vs on this frequency (or on ... kHz (or MHz))?
QSW	Will you send on this frequency (or on ... kHz (or MHz))
QSX	Will you listen to ... on ... kHz (or MHz)?
QSY	Shall I change to transmission on another frequency?
QSZ	Shall I send each word or group more than once?
QTA	Shall I cancel telegram (or message) number ... ?
QTB	Do you agree with my counting of words?
QTC	How many telegrams have you to send?
QTD	What has the rescue vessel or rescue aircraft recovered?
QTE	What is my true bearing from you?
QTF	Will you give me my position according to your bearings?
QTG	Will you send two dashes of ten seconds each followed by your call sign (repeated ... times) (on ... kHz (or MHz))?
QTH	What is your position in latitude and longitude?
QTI	What is your true track?
QTI	What is your true course?
QTJ	What is your speed?
QTK	What is the speed of your aircraft in relation to the surface of the Earth?
QTL	What is your true heading?
QTM	What is your magnetic heading?
QTN	At what time did you depart from ... (place)?
QTO	Have you left dock (or port)?
QTP	Are you going to enter dock (or port)?
QTQ	Can you communicate with my station by means of the International Code of Signals?
QTR	What is the correct time?
QTS	Will you send your call sign for tuning purposes or so that your frequency can be measured now (or at ... hours) on ... kHz (or MHz)?
QTT	The identification signal which follows is superimposed on another transmission.
QTU	What are the hours during which your station is open?
QTV	Shall I stand guard for you on the frequency of ... kHz (or MHz) (from ... to ... hours)?
QTW	What is the condition of survivors?
QTX	Will you keep your station open for further communication with me until further notice (or until ... hours)?
QTY	Are you proceeding to the position of incident and if so when do you expect to arrive?

QTZ	Are you continuing the search?
QUA	Have you news of ... ?
QUB	Can you give me in the following order information concerning: the direction in degrees and speed of the surface wind, visibility, present weather, and amount, type and height of base of cloud above surface elevation at ... ?
QUC	What is the number (or other indication) of the last message you received from me (or from ...)?
QUD	Have you received the urgency signal sent by ... (call sign of mobile station)?
QUE	Can you use telephony in ... (language), with interpreter if necessary; if so, on what frequencies?
QUF	Have you received the distress signal sent by ...?
QUG	Will you be forced to alight (or land)?
QUH	Will you give me the present barometric pressure at sea level?
QUI	Are your navigation lights working?
QUJ	Will you indicate the true track to reach you (or ...)?
QUK	Can you tell me the condition of the sea observed at ...?
QUL	Can you tell me the swell observed at ...?
QUM	May I resume normal working?
QUN	Will vessels in my immediate vicinity please indicate their position, cruise and speed?
QUO	Shall I search for ... (aircraft, ship, survival craft)?
QUP	Will you indicate your position by searchlight, black smoke trail, pyrotechnic lights?
QUQ	Shall I train my searchlight nearly vertical on a cloud, and if your aircraft is seen, deflect the beam up wind and on the water?
QUR	Have survivors ... (1. received survival equipment, 2. been picked up by rescue vessel, 3. been reached by ground rescue) party?
QUS	Have you sighted survivors or wreckage?
QUT	Is position of incident marked?
QUU	Shall I home ship or aircraft to my position?
QUW	Are you in the search area designated as ...?
QUX	Do you have any navigational warnings or gale warnings in force?
QUY	Is position of survival craft marked?
QUZ	May I resume restricted working?

Bibliography and further reading

- [1] Nerio Neri I4NE. *Radiotecnica per Radioamatori*. C&C - Edizioni Radioelettroniche, 1994, Appendice 14.
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