

Frequently Asked Questions about the VHF/UHF Contest

Thoroughly read the documents provided. If still have questions they may be answered here.

Q1 Why can't I use an electronic log such as Excel?

In Emergency Communication we generally use paper logs on voice nets for a number of reasons. This contest is to help maintain and practice the skills we would use during a real emergency. Only paper logs can be used. Make them legible just like you would during a real activation. Unreadable entries will not count.

Q2 How can I submit my log forms?

Scan your paper logs (all pages) and email them to contest@scc-ares-races.org by Tuesday April 7th. If you do not have the ability to scan your logs you can send them via postal mail to: c/o Tim Howard, 382 S Abbott Ave., Milpitas, CA 95035. Mailed logs must be postmarked no later than Tuesday, April 7th.

Q3 During Field Day and other contests, I hear people using "CQ", "QSL" and similar "Q" codes; can we do that during this contest?

No. We are practicing for Emergency Communications in which we use plain English. We will do the same for this contest, no codes.

Q4 Do I have to take part for the entire 2-hour period?

You can participate for all or any part of the contest period you desire. Of course, the longer you participate, the more you'll get out of the exercise.

Q5 Do I have to use only the repeater listed for my city?

Participants can use any repeater listed in Appendix A of the Contest Rules (but only those repeaters). Cities/agencies have given permission for these repeaters to be used for this contest. This gives everyone the ability to reach repeaters that cover a wide cross section of the county. Try and make contact on as many of those repeaters as you can reach.

Q6 I am not clear on how points are counted; can you provide more details?

Points are earned based on the city/agency Identifier (Appendix B of Contest Rules) of the person (station) you make contact with. If they are using the same city Identifier as you are, you get 1 point; if they are using another city/agency identifier, you get 3 points; if they are using the XSC Identifier (ADEC Staff), you get 5 points.

If you are using an HT with 5 watts or less output power your points will be doubled only if the HT is using an antenna connected directly to the HT (original or aftermarket) and is not connect to an external antenna. The log form provided will help with the calculation.

Q7 Do I have to submit my logs?

Submitting your logs is optional. If you only want to get on the air and practice, but not take part in the contest aspect, that is your choice. But why not send in your logs to see how you do. You never know, you could be the top scorer in your city.

Q8 Since this is a contest are there any awards?

The primary objective of the contest is to keep our skills current. The contest aspect just adds to the fun factor. We will publish a list of all scores by city/agency and for the entire county after the contest, so you will have bragging rights. Certificates will be awarded for 1st, 2nd and 3rd overall and for the top scorer in each city/agency and on each repeater.

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Q9 Can you provide more details about the three contacts rule for each repeater?

Start by reading the primer [Intro to Contesting](#) to understand the terms “running” and “S&P”. Once you have control of the repeater you are considered to be running; I.E., you are calling out for others to contact you. You can make up to three contacts, but at the end of the third contact you must vacate the frequency and turn it over to the person you made the last successful exchange with. You then need to find a vacant frequency to try running on, or S&P someone running on a different repeater. If you are not their 3rd contact you need to keep looking for another contact until you find a vacant frequency, or you are the third contact of the person running a frequency.

If you find a vacant frequency you control that frequency until you make 3 contacts or decide to leave prior to the third contact. When you do leave, please let the most recent contact know you are leaving, and that the frequency is now theirs to use.

If you are S&Pping you can only make contact with the person who is running. You can not cut into the frequency to contact others unless you are the third contact and the person running turns over the frequency to you.

Q10 After I work the third station on a repeater can I announce the next repeater I’m going to use so people can follow me?

No, just announce you are leaving the repeater but not where you are going to.

Q11 Can I use the scanning function on my radio, a standalone scanner, or spectrum analyzer/SDR to find an empty repeater, or can I have a spotter identify the next repeater that I should use?

These are things that those experienced with contesting might do to maximize points, but for this activity we are all about practicing our EmComm skills. So those activities would not be appropriate.

Q12 What if the third station doesn’t take control of the repeater or does take control and doesn’t make three contacts, can I take over the repeater?

You need to make at least one contact on another repeater. After making that contact you can come back to the previous repeater, and if it is not in use, can begin running on it again for three more contacts.

Q13 Can I use a scribe for my logging?

No, in order to get the most from the activity you should maintain your own log. We all can use more practice with copying call signs and legibly logging.

Q14 What is the proper exchange format between stations?

Please read the [Intro To Contesting](#) document for an example exchange.