

Phonetic Alphabet



Version 1.0 10/6/21

You use the phonetic alphabet to spell things that need to be spelled rather than simply said. For example, you find a clue with a name on it, but the name has a difficult spelling (such as Polish or Ukrainian), and you don't think those on the other end of the radio will spell it right unless you use the phonetic alphabet.

You can also use the phonetic alphabet and phonetic numbers to communicate critical *figures* (numbers plus letters that *don't* constitute a word) that need to be gotten right and might be misunderstood, especially if the radio signal is poor. An example is your grid coordinates.

The phonetic alphabet has been researched and designed to allow you to clearly communicate letters and numbers over the radio, even when communication is poor. Each word has been chosen such that if the message is unclear, or part of the word is received, it can still be understood. To do this, some of the pronunciations are different than common usage (see next page). There are multiple variants of the phonetic alphabet, ASTM F1583-95 is recommended and is what you find here.

To use the phonetic alphabet to spell a word:

- Say the word that you need to spell.
- Say **"I Spell."**

- Say the phonetics that spell the word.
- Say the word that needs to be spelled again; this tells the person on the other end you're done using the phonetic alphabet.

For example: **"Base, this is team Bravo. The label in the parka says Gryglewicz, I spell, Golf, Romeo, Yankee, Golf, Lima, Echo, Whiskey, India, Charlie, Zulu, Gryglewicz. How copy, over?"**

To use phonetics to communicate numbers or *figures* (numbers plus letters that *don't* constitute a word):

- **Don't** say the figures that need to be spelled.
- Instead, preface what you say with **"Figures"** or **"I say figures"** and say the phonetics that spell the letters and numbers. Remember to say "tree" for 3 and two syllables for 4, 5 and 9: "FO-wer," "fi-YEV," "NIN-er."

For example, to give your location using the UTM Grid System, you might say **"Base, this is team Hotel. We are at USNG grid position, figures, 1, 7, Tango, 5, 7, 8, 0, [pause], 4, 4, 7, 0. How copy, over?"**

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Letter	Word	Pronunciation	Letter	Word	Pronunciation
A	Alpha	AL-fa	S	Sierra	see-AIR-rah
B	Bravo	BRA-voh	T	Tango	TANG-go
C	Charlie	CHAR-lee	U	Uniform	YOU-nee-form
D	Delta	DELL-tah	V	Victor	VIK-tah
E	Echo	ECK-oh	W	Whiskey	WISS-key
F	Foxtrot	FOKS-trot	X	X-ray	ECKS-ray
G	Golf	GOLF	Y	Yankee	YANG-key
H	Hotel	hoh-TELL	Z	Zulu	ZOO-loo
I	India	IN-dee-ah	1	One	WUN
J	Juliet	JEW-lee-ETT	2	Two	TOO
K	Kilo	KEY-loh	3	Three	TREE
L	Lima	LEE-mah	4	Four	FO-wer
M	Mike	MIKE	5	Five	fi-YEV
N	November	no-VEM-ber	6	Six	SIKS
O	Oscar	OSS-cah	7	Seven	SAY-ven
P	Papa	pah-PAH	8	Eight	AIT
Q	Quebec	keh-BECK	9	Nine	NIN-er
R	Romeo	ROW-me-oh	0	Zero	ZEE-roh