

Formatting an NTS Message

NUMBER: This number, given in digits, is assigned by the Operator and stays with the message. It does not change as the message is relayed from operator to operator to its final destination. Operators usually just number their messages consecutively. Some restart each January 1. It should not be more than four digits.

PRECEDENCE: Written on form as R, P, W or EMERGENCY. It is voiced as Routine, Priority, Welfare, or Emergency I spell Echo mike... See [Precedence and Handling Instructions](#) handout for more details.

HX: Stands for Handling Instructions. It is voiced as Hotel X-ray and the phonetic letter of the preferred instruction. See [Precedence and Handling Instructions](#) handout for more details.

STATION OF ORIGIN: The callsign of the first radio operator to put the message on the air.

CHECK: This is the word count of the text of the message. It does not include the signature. If an ARRL numbered message is used, the check is preceded by "ARL." When voiced, ARL should not be spelled phonetically. Each punctuation mark counts as a word.

PLACE OF ORIGIN: City and state of the author of the text of the message. The STATION OF ORIGIN and the PLACE OF ORIGIN may not always refer to the same person.

TIME FILED: Only used for time-sensitive messages. Use 24 hour clock and state whether local or zulu, notes as L or Z.

DATE: Just give month and date; ex: "March two seven"

TO: Should include Name, callsign if recipient has one, City, State, Zip Code and phone number. It may include an email address also, especially if a phone number is not included. When the recipient is well known on a traffic net just the first name, callsign, city and state are given. When in doubt use the full info. Street address is only necessary if message needs to be delivered to the door as may be the case with Welfare messages.

TEXT: Limited to 25 words. Use punctuation only when absolutely necessary for clarity. Each one counts as a word. X-ray = period, Query = question mark. Romeo = decimal point. All other punctuation is spelled out. Phone numbers count as three words each preceded by the proword "figures." Email addresses are at least 5 words; mine would be : "Eliza dot Pride atsign gmail dot com" Ending words such as Love, or Yours Truly are included in the text and are not part of the signature. For ARL Numbered messages, see handout.

SIGNATURE: (Oddly there is no space for a signature on the official ARRL Radiogram form! Put it in the SENT space) If the author wants a reply, the signature should include Zip code and phone number. The city and state are in the Place or Origin in the header. If no info is given and a reply is needed, it will go to the originating operator. Any other delivery or reply info can be added after the signature as an "Operator's note."

Sending an NTS Message

GO SLOW!!! If you feel ridiculous going that slow, you are probably about right. Remember that the receiver can not anticipate what you are going to say next and he has to write it down. It is more efficient to go too slow and only do it once than to have to provide fills, or worse yet, repeat the whole message.

Start with "**Please Copy.**" Do not name the boxes in the header, except the HX box (See above).

Do not use prowords in the header. Except:

Only use "**I spell**" for unusual city or person names.

Use "**Phone figures**" once and give all 10 digits.

Use "**zip figures**" for the zip code.

Say "**Break**" before and after the text. Think of this as quotation marks around the text.

End with "**End of message.**"

Northwest Traffic and Training Net

Provides daily practice in handling formal written traffic. Every evening of the year the NTTN meets on the linked repeaters of the Western Oregon Radio Club at 6:05 P.M. The frequencies are 145.27, 145.43, 145.47, 146.80, and 443.150 MHz all with a PL tone of 107.2. All ARES members are strongly encouraged to participate in this net as often as possible.