



VHF Marine Radio Usage Tips

VHF Marine Radios come in many brands and styles. These tips are intended as general information. To find details about your device, please refer to the user's manual.

Locking/Unlocking the radio:

All radios have a mechanism for locking and unlocking the device. Keep your radio locked except when you want to change settings or channels.

Settings:

Country - Make sure that your radio is set to the appropriate country.

Volume - Set the volume on your radio depending on your situation. You will want it higher next to a loud outboard and lower on a starters platform.

Squelch - Squelch decreases extra noise by blocking weak signals. Adjust your squelch setting so to balance static with hearing those you need to.

H/L or Hi/Lo - This setting allows you to increase the transmission power of your radio when needed. Default should be L or Lo. Only turn up to H or Hi during an emergency. The L or Lo settings avoid overwhelming the channel further afield.

Channels:

16 - Emergencies and Hailing only

70 - Emergency only via DSC

21B - Weather

Non-commercial Ship to Ship and Ship to Shore - 67, 69, 72, 73

- These are the channels that are appropriate for use during rowing activities.

Communicating:

Listen first - Only one transmission can be heard at a time. Make sure anyone else is done with their communication before you start.

Hold the button to speak - It is a good idea to push the button down, take a breath, and then speak in order to make sure that your entire message is heard.

Hold the radio - Keeping the radio 1-2" from your mouth and speaking normally is usually the best way to make sure that your message is heard and understood.

Keep the message short and appropriate -

- Know what you will say before you start.
- Anyone with (or near) a radio could hear what you transmit. Make sure that you say only relevant and safe information.
- Any data dumps should be broken into pieces or done by phone.

Radio Checks - Each time you start using your radio, complete a radio check.

Initiating a conversation -

- The name/boat name/assignment title of the person being hailed repeated three times
- "This is" Your name/boat name/assignment title said once
- "Over" (all calls should end with this)

Phonetic alphabet and numbers:

A	Alpha	N	November	1	Wun
B	Bravo	O	Oscar	2	Too
C	Charlie	P	Papa	3	Tree
D	Delta	Q	Quebec	4	Fow-er
E	Echo	R	Romeo	5	Fife
F	Foxtrot	S	Sierra	6	Six
G	Golf	T	Tango	7	Sev-en
H	Hotel	U	Uniform	8	Ait
I	India	V	Victor	9	Niner
J	Juliet	W	Whiskey	0	Zee-ro
K	Kilo	X	X-Ray		
L	Lima	Y	Yankee		
M	Mike	Z	Zulu		

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