How to Participate in a Net like a Pro!

Participating in a net is similar to attending a formal seminar. You raise your hand (give your call sign) and wait to be recognized by the leader (the Net Control Station (NCS) or just Net Control).

- You **NEVER just start speaking without being recognized by net control**.

If you are at the check-in portion of the net and you have something to say, when you say your callsign add that you have traffic. ("KD0AOE with traffic.")

- If you do not have traffic for the net it is unnecessary to say "no traffic," just check in with your callsign.

Don't key up and say "this is" and then unkey to see if you have the repeater before keying up again to give your callsign. When repeaters are linked, they take time to synchronize, and that is a bad practice some people have left over from the "old days" when most nets operated off one repeater. If you double with someone, it's okay, and will be sorted out soon enough.

After taking the initial round of check-ins the NCS will go back through their list of check-ins and call on anyone with traffic. Be patient.

- If the check-in portion of the net is over and you have something to say, wait for a pause in the net and give your call sign (raise your hand to get the attention of the leader). **You never just start speaking after giving your call sign until you have been acknowledged by net control.**

When net control says "go ahead, KD0AOE," make your comment. If the nature of your comment is such that you expect that there may be a back-and-forth between you and net control, you can wait to give your call sign (per the rules, every 10 minutes or the last thing you say) until your exchange is finished. I usually end my comment with my callsign because more than once my comment turned out to be my last transmission for 10 minutes and I was caught without having given it out. I feel like it is better to err on the proper side of protocol than to be inadvertently caught not using proper operating procedures.

- It is considered **rude to go direct** with another net participant without the permission of net control ("may I go direct with K9ATK?"). (An informal net may be the exception to this rule, but don't ASSume! If you are not a long-time participant and know for sure, ask first! The net control will appreciate your courtesy!)

It usually isn't necessary to go direct, most people will say something like "I'd like to address something that Brian said …"

The main reason someone might want to go direct with another net participant is to make arrangements to call them or get their e-mail address or whatever. In that case,

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AFTER you have permission to go direct with that person, simply say that you wish to get with them after the net for their e-mail address or phone number, could they please stick around, rather than spend net time asking for their phone number or e-mail address at that moment.

What is the difference between a formal and informal net?

Not much, really. ALL traffic still goes through net control.

On an informal net:

Once all the participants have checked in, and when they have something to say, rather than give their entire call sign, they may just give the last 2 or 3 letters of their call sign (all letters after the digit). Sometimes they will just key up and say "comment," expecting that Net Control will recognize their voice. Most net control stations appreciate the last 3 (or 2) letters of the call sign as they may not always recognize the voice in that brief moment.

On an informal net, the person who wishes to be acknowledged will be recognized by their name instead of their call sign. "Go ahead, Matt." Instead of a more formal "Net acknowledges KE0JPY" or "Go ahead, KE0JPY."

Both net control and participants of an informal net try to be more laid back and casual, so as to encourage more net participation. That does not, however, mean that any part of the structure of a net or that standard operating procedures are suspended.

Listen, Listen, Listen!

- The key to being a great net participant is to listen to a variety of nets.

A list of Denver Area Nets can be found here: http://rmrl.org/rl/denver-area-net-list-nets-held-on-ddenver-area-repeaters/

Want to try your hand at Net Control?

It can be a fun and exciting experience to host a net. *The Learning Net* was created (in part) so people could get their feet wet as net control. Listen in to see what your experience would be like and contact them to schedule a date. They will send you a script before your debut.

See also **How to sound like a pro when operating on a repeater**