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*“10 Minute SSB Contesting Tutorial”*



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## **Purpose:**

**To make QSOs with a minimum of requests for repeats.**



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**TRANSMITTING –**

**Power – Run as much as you can.**

**Adjust the TX and amp for a clean  
signal without overdrive and  
splatter.**



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## **TRANSMIT AUDIO –**

**Start with a good headset or mic.**

**Doesn't have to be expensive. Even**

**R/S headsets with electret mic  
elements work fine.**



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## **AUDIO PROCESSING –**

**Low enough to avoid serious  
distortion.**

**High enough to add punch to  
your signal.**



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**Use equalization to reduce lows  
and enhance highs for a  
“brighter” signal.**

**Use rig or logging program EQ  
adjustments if available.**



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**When setting up audio processing  
or EQ, listen on another receiver  
to see how it will sound over the air.**



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**For PTT mode, consider a footswitch.  
This will keep your hands on the  
keyboard.**



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**PTT can also come from your  
logging computer when using  
preprogrammed messages**



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**VOX (Voice Operated Xmit) –  
Simplifies connecting computer to  
radio. Just an audio path needed.**



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**Keep the VOX sensitivity just high enough to trip reliably and no more.**

**Use ANTI-VOX if your rig provides it and you copy with a speaker.**



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**RECEIVING –**

**RF Gain – Back off when signals  
are strong. Turn up audio gain  
instead.**



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**AGC --**

**For contesting, FAST is better than SLOW.**

**Try AGC OFF when controlling gain with**

**RF GAIN knob.**



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## **FILTERING --**

**For S&P use a wide filter for searching. Narrow down as needed when you find a target.**



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## **CRYSTAL FILTERING –**

**Some rigs provide multiple filters for various bandwidths.**

**Others use a variable bandwidth scheme.**

**Experiment to see what settings work best for you.**



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**VARIABLE PASSBAND TUNING –  
Allows you to stay tuned to a signal  
while sliding your filter across the  
signal for the best copy.  
If you have it, learn to use it.**



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## **DSP FILTERING –**

**Helps reduce “garbage” from  
nearby signals. Allows narrow  
bandwidth filtering as needed.**



**RECORDED VOICE MESSAGES –**  
**Good for CQing and other**  
**frequently-repeated messages**  
**Usually saved under F-keys of your**  
**logging program.**  
**Great voice saver.**



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**Program several different  
CQs, short, medium and long.  
Don't sound like a CQ Beacon  
station.**



**Other messages, such as Section  
and Check are useful also.**



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## **RECORDING MESSAGES—**

**Do all at same sitting, so sound like  
same person talking.**



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## **Use Standard Phonetics**

**Too many letters sound alike –D E T**

**Phonetics help the other guy to copy  
your info in QRM or QRN.**



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## **Phonetic Alphabet (NATO)**

A Alpha	I India	Q Quebec
B Bravo	J Juliet	R Romeo
C Charlie	K Kilo	S Sierra
D Delta	L Lima	T Tango
E Echo	M Mike	U Uniform
F Foxtrot	N November	V Victor
G Golf	O Oscar	W Whiskey
H Hotel	P Papa	X X-ray
	Y Yankee	Z Zulu



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**Don't be afraid to try alternatives  
if the standard ones don't work  
for you.**

**Try Guatemala instead of Golf or  
George when working South  
American stations.**