Ham radio voice frequencies

U.S. amateur radio / VHF and UHF handhelds / Colorado operating examples

Starting frequencies for an FM voice contact

Amateur band	Frequency	Use
6 meters	52.525 MHz	Primary FM simplex
2 meters	146.520 MHz	National FM simplex calling
70 centimeters	446.000 MHz	National FM simplex calling

Simplex means both stations use the same transmit and receive frequency. Set analog FM and zero offset. Turn receive tone decoding off so you can hear other users on the frequency. Listen before calling. After making contact, agree on a clear local simplex frequency for a longer conversation.

Colorado simplex examples

Band	Examples from the CCARC frequency use plan (MHz)
2 meters	146.460 • 146.490 • 146.550 • 146.580
70 centimeters	445.925 • 445.950 • 446.025

These are shared frequencies. Listen and choose a clear one. Other regions have different plans. Calling frequencies have no guaranteed listener or rescue service.

Making your first call

As a licensed operator, try “This is [your call sign], monitoring.” For a planned check-in, call the other station by call sign, then give yours. On amateur voice, identify at least every 10 minutes during a communication and again at the end.

Moving from simplex to a local repeater

Copy the repeater’s output into the receive field. Enter its input in the transmit field, or enter the signed offset listed by its operator. Add the published access tone and save a separate memory. Local pairs vary. Use the operator’s listing rather than an offset guessed from the band.

Trip check-in _____ MHz Backup _____ MHz
Time / time zone _____ Repeater call sign _____

Sources: ARRL Band Plan (arrl.org/band-plan); Colorado Council of Amateur Radio Clubs, 2 m and 70 cm Frequency Use Plans (coordination.ccarc.net); 47 CFR §§ 97.119, 97.205, 97.301 and 97.305.