

# K2YWE Contesting Best Practices



Best Practice	Rationale
<b>General Operating</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assume a big dog attitude.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If you act like a big dog, most will believe you.</li> <li>If they bite back painfully, you can find other turf.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain an “friendly sense of urgency” in your QSOs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chattiness will slow your rate and lose you contacts.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Always work Dupes.</li> <li>Set your software accordingly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You may <i>not</i> be in <i>their</i> log</li> <li>It usually takes more time to rebuff than work.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enable and use the Bandmap feature of your logging software even if you are not Assisted.</li> <li>The Bandmap allows you to enter stations yourself on the fly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If you need to check back later, the Bandmap will have the call sign and frequency noted for you</li> <li>You'll waste less S&amp;P time on waiting for station ID or on calling Dupes.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In general, use K3ZO's "Rule of TWICE."</li> <li>Modify “TWICE” to suit your station capabilities and contest circumstances:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If you can't get a station after calling him TWICE, move on.</li> <li>If the station doesn't ID after transmitting TWICE, move on.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Your time can be better spent increasing your rate.</li> <li>A multiplier can quickly become worth less than the QSOs lost trying.</li> <li>You can put his frequency into the Bandmap to check back later.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do not waste time repeatedly calling DX stations that have moderate signals when the band is otherwise quiet from their part of the world.</li> <li>This is likely to happen when big guns are just “opening the band” or “keeping it open.”</li> <li>Try another time.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many stations running high power will be heard when propagation is poor, but will not hear you despite elaborate antennas.</li> <li>Remember that 1.5kW vs. 100W is roughly the difference between S-7 and S-3. These are the guys that are S9 or more under better conditions.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Try moving frequency a bit if you don't seem to be heard.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Often receiver bandwidths in a crowded band are set very narrow.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Send only the missing or wrong part when correcting your call or exchange (the FILL).</li> <li>For example, the response to K3? would be “ABC” (several times if necessary) not “K3ABC” since the K3 wasn't in question.</li> <li>Similarly in SS if the query is for your Check, don't send the entire exchange over.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The time you spend sending known information is wasted.</li> <li>You may squander a clear interval or QSB peak on resending known information.</li> <li>The time spent sending known information may be a missed opportunity for the Fill to be heard.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Call CQ when the band is active if you are able to find a frequency and hold it.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You will usually beat your S&amp;P rate.</li> <li>An exception is the start of the contest when everyone is “fresh meat” for you and your S&amp;P rate can be very high.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Call CQ when the bands are dead for the day or worked out near the end of the contest.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>That's when the stations that have been CQing will S&amp;P for “fresh meat.”</li> </ul>

<b>Running</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider <i>not</i> asking if the frequency is busy before CQing. You'll find out soon enough if it is.</li> <li><i>Do ask if you're uncomfortable not asking.</i></li> <li>Use the widest receiver bandwidth you can stand.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>QRL? is an announcement to others that it's clear at your end.</li> <li>Someone else may jump in and CQ</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If another station calls CQ on your freq and fails to respond to your QRL-QSY message, carry on for a while to see if he leaves. But, don't do this for very long.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Less chance to miss off-frequency callers, especially on CW.</li> <li>Even though he is not hearing you, if you are being heard by others he may not get many responses and might give up after a few minutes. No one likes to waste time.</li> </ul>

# K2YWE Contesting Best Practices



Best Practice	Rationale
<b>Running - continued</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don't engage in extended frequency fights.</li> <li>• Try "QRL" or "frequency in Use, QSY." If that fails, it almost always pays to move.</li> <li>• Sometimes you can move up or down a bit in order to lessen the QRM and still hang on to "your" frequency.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It costs you QSO time</li> <li>• You may be in QRM at the other end</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don't break a run to pull one station through.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your rate will suffer if you take too long</li> <li>• You will drive away impatient waiting stations</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you can't drag a station's call through after trying TWICE, ignore him and start calling CQ again.</li> <li>• This is part of K3ZO's "Rule of TWICE." Modify TWICE to suit your station capabilities and contest circumstances.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Running has to do with how fast you can accurately pull a call and get it into the log. You don't want your rate to slow down or waiting callers to lose interest.</li> <li>• Equally important, on a crowded band you must transmit often to keep "your" frequency clear.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use only a quick "Thanks" or "TU" without your call sign or QRZ if you heard multiple callers.</li> <li>• Throw in your call every few Q's for new listeners.</li> <li>• Keep it up until there are no more responses, then build back to your "full" QRZ message and CQ.</li> <li>• If you get no response after working the first station this way, try sending just your call and TEST" before resuming to a full CQ.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most waiting stations will know your call. Don't waste time on it.</li> <li>• Minimizing the time stations have to wait for you will help to keep the impatient ones hanging around and will increase your QSO rate.</li> <li>• Less experienced contesters may not realize you are waiting for them. "TEST" will alert them you are ready for another station to call.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When the call sign of a responder is questionable, send a complete exchange using the questionable call. Then correct it during his exchange transmission..</li> <li>• You can use SCP to help guess incomplete calls on the first round.</li> <li>• Make sure you have it right before you let him go.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nearly all contest stations will correct you on their transmission, good Ops without missing a beat.</li> <li>• It saves the time of an extra exchange devoted only to getting the call sign right.</li> <li>• You can revert to "normal" fill-in means if this practice fails.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enable call sign correction in your software. This will send the corrected call as part of your good-bye message.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stations want assurance that you have logged them correctly. This will keep them from asking QSL? and possibly save you from a mistake.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speed up if your run is being sustained. This is especially true in contests like SS where the exchange includes your call sign. Slow back down appropriately.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stations waiting will usually know your info.</li> <li>• More stations will be inclined to wait (shorter time)</li> <li>• Your rate will go up with speed (duhhh).</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hit the Send Exchange key as soon as the call is in your head and finish typing it into the log during the automated response or while you're talking.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If your fingers are like mine, they slightly lag my brain and I am still typing when the other station stops sending.</li> <li>• This practice reduces the lag between when the other station finishes calling and when you respond. The typing and Sending overlap increases rate.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move Multipliers if you have the time (slow run).</li> <li>• Pick frequencies in advance. Give up quickly if you don't connect very fast.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A quick way to gain band-Mults.</li> <li>• Many Ops will go with you.</li> <li>• You probably won't Q if you don't connect quickly.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When running, NEVER NEVER NEVER acknowledge a "jammer". NEVER. Just keep your pace, and don't change your tone of voice on phone or even synchronize your calls to his QRM.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With no response, he can't be sure he is even bothering you, and it isn't any "fun" for him if he doesn't get a reaction.</li> </ul>