

Sample Radio Calls

The following sample communications will help you frame various types of radio calls.

When in doubt, remember the four Ws:

- **Who** you're calling
- **Who** you are
- **Where** you are
- **What** you want

Class D Airspace

Departing

When ready to taxi:

Pilot: Lancaster Ground, Cherokee 8121K, west ramp, VFR, 4,500 to Frederick with [information] Sierra.

Ground: Cherokee 8121K, Lancaster Ground, taxi to Runway 26.

Pilot: Taxi to Runway 26, Cherokee 8121K.

When ready for takeoff:

Pilot: Lancaster Tower, Cherokee 8121K, Runway 26, ready for takeoff.

Tower: Cherokee 8121K, Runway 26, cleared for takeoff.

Pilot: Cleared for takeoff Runway 26, Cherokee 8121K.

Arriving

Pilot: Lancaster Tower, Cherokee 8121K, 10 [miles] southwest at 2,500, inbound for landing with [information] Sierra.

Tower: Cherokee 8121K, Lancaster Tower, report entering left downwind Runway 31.

Pilot: Report entering left downwind, Cherokee 8121K.

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Pilot: Cherokee 8121K entering left downwind Runway 31.

Tower: Cherokee 21K, cleared to land Runway 31.

Pilot: Cleared to land Runway 31, Cherokee 21K.



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For use in chart or flight planning ring binders, cut along dashed lines and punch holes as needed in margins. To ensure accurate sizing, set printer Page Scaling option to "None" or "100%."

Class C or TRSA Airspace

Departing

When ready to taxi:

- Pilot: Greensboro Ground, Cherokee 8121K, general aviation ramp, VFR, 5,500 to Raleigh with [information] Sierra.
- Ground: Cherokee 8121K, Greensboro Ground, cleared to Raleigh, maintain VFR at or below 3,000, departure frequency 118.5, squawk 4234, advise when ready to taxi.
- Pilot: Cherokee 8121K is cleared to Raleigh, maintain VFR at or below 3,000, departure frequency 118.5, squawk 4234, we're ready to taxi.
- Ground: Cherokee 21K, taxi to Runway 23.
- Pilot: Taxi to Runway 23, Cherokee 21K.

When ready for takeoff:

- Pilot: Greensboro Tower, Cherokee 8121K, Runway 23, ready for takeoff.
- Tower: Cherokee 8121K, Runway 23, cleared for takeoff.
- Pilot: Cleared for takeoff, Runway 23, Cherokee 8121K.

Arriving

- Pilot: Greensboro Approach, Cherokee 8121K, 20 [miles] west at 5,500, landing with [information] Foxtrot.
- ATC: Cherokee 8121K, Greensboro Approach, squawk 2150 and ident.
- Pilot: Squawk 2150, Cherokee 8121K.
- ATC: Cherokee 21K, radar contact, fly heading 110, descend and maintain 4,500, maintain VFR.
- Pilot: Fly heading 110, descend and maintain 4,500, maintain VFR, Cherokee 21K.



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Class B Airspace

Departing

Class B departure calls follow the same format as Class C or TRSA airspace. However, you may need to contact Clearance Delivery prior to calling Ground and provide them the four Ws.

Arriving

Pilot: Charlotte Approach, Cherokee 8121K, 20 [miles] southwest at 7,500, landing Charlotte with [information] Charlie.

ATC: Cherokee 8121K, Charlotte Approach, squawk 4323 and ident.

Pilot: Squawk 4323, Cherokee 8121K.

ATC: Cherokee 21K, radar contact, cleared to enter Class Bravo airspace, fly heading 020, descend and maintain 3,000, maintain VFR.

Pilot: Cleared to enter Class Bravo airspace, fly heading 020, descend and maintain 3,000, maintain VFR, Cherokee 21K.

Transiting

Pilot: Seattle Approach, Cherokee 8121K, 20 [miles] southwest of Seattle VOR at 7,500, en route Arlington, request transit Class Bravo airspace.

ATC: Cherokee 8121K, Seattle Approach, squawk 3121 and ident.

Pilot: Squawk 3121, Cherokee 8121K.

ATC: Cherokee 21K, radar contact 18 miles southwest of SeaTac, Seattle altimeter 29.88, cleared through Class Bravo direct Arlington, descend and maintain 5,500, maintain VFR.

Pilot: Cleared through Class Bravo direct Arlington, descend and maintain 5,500, maintain VFR, Cherokee 21K.



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Opening a VFR Flight Plan

Pilot: Raleigh Radio, Cherokee 8121K on 122.2.
Flight Service: Cherokee 8121K, Raleigh Radio, go ahead.
Pilot: Raleigh Radio, open flight plan for Cherokee 8121K from Greensboro to Knoxville at 1835 Zulu.
Flight Service: Cherokee 21K, flight plan activated at 1835 Zulu, Greensboro altimeter 30.02. We'd appreciate any pilot reports on Flight Watch, 122.0.

Requesting/Canceling Flight Following

Requesting

Pilot: Manchester Approach, Cherokee 8121K.
ATC: Cherokee 8121K, Manchester Approach.
Pilot: Cherokee 8121K over Concord VOR at 6,500, en route Trenton Mercer, request flight following.
ATC: Cherokee 21K, squawk 3314.
Pilot: Squawk 3314, Cherokee 21K.

Canceling

Pilot: Manchester Approach, Cherokee 8121K would like to cancel flight following.
ATC: Cherokee 8121K, radar service terminated, squawk VFR, frequency change approved.
Pilot: Squawk VFR, Cherokee 8121K.



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Clearance Components

Most IFR clearances consist of five basic components (“CRAFT”):

- **Clearance limit:** Your destination airport or an intermediate fix.
- **Route of flight:** Hopefully the route you filed, unless traffic conditions dictate otherwise.
- **Altitude:** If not as requested, typically followed by when to expect climb or descent clearance.
- **Frequency:** The radio frequency for departure control.
- **Transponder:** Your four-digit squawk code.

Position Report Components

Include the following items when making a position report (“IPATTEN”):

- Identification
- Position
- Altitude
- Time
- Type of flight plan*
- ETA to next reporting point
- Name of next reporting point

** Not required in IFR position reports made directly to ATC centers or approach control.*

Lost Comm Route and Altitude

If two-way IFR communication is lost, select a route and altitude based on the acronyms below, or follow the simple flowchart on the reverse side of this reference.

Route (choose based on “AVEF” hierarchy):

1. **Assigned**—the route assigned in the last ATC clearance
2. **Vectored**—if being radar vectored, direct to the fix, route, or airway specified
3. **Expected**—the route ATC said to expect in a further clearance
4. **Filed**—the route filed in your flight plan

Altitude (fly the highest of “MEA”):

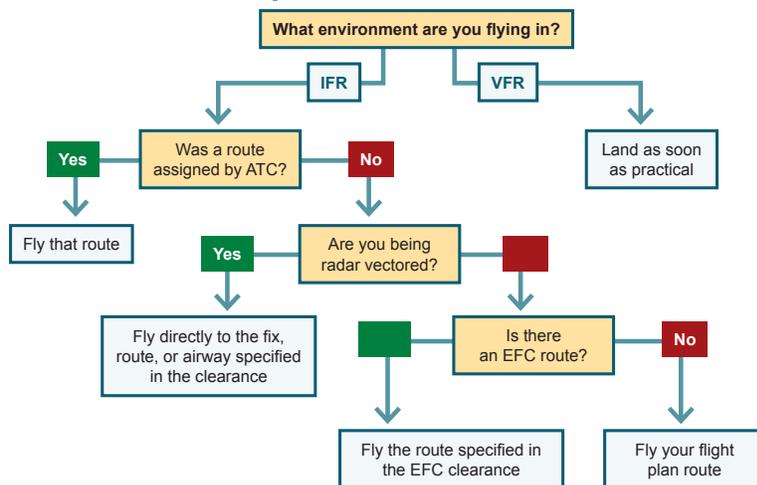
- **Minimum**—the minimum en route altitude
- **Expected**—the altitude ATC said to expect in a further clearance
- **Assigned**—the altitude ATC assigned in the last clearance



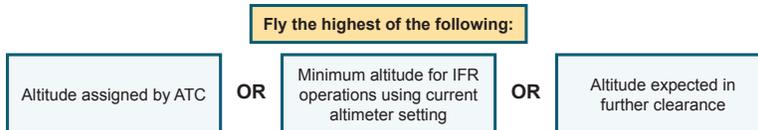
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IFR Two-Way Radio Communications Failure Procedures: FAR 91.185

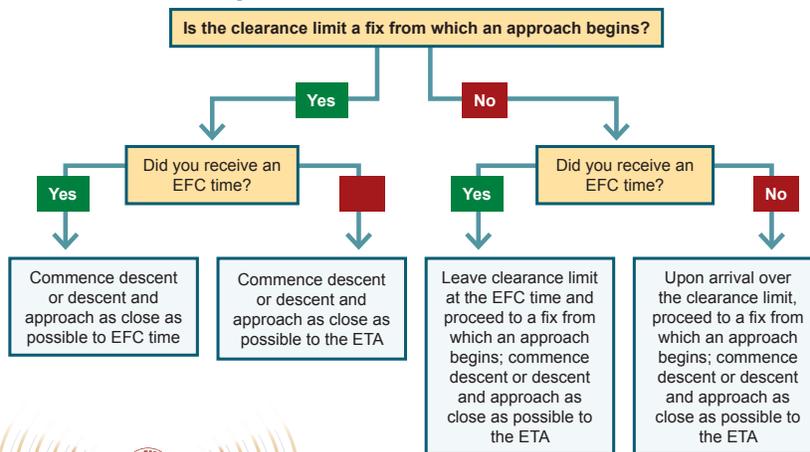
Step 1: Route Procedures



Step 2: Altitude Procedures



Step 3: Leave Clearance Limit



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ATC Light Gun Signals

Color and type of signal	MEANING		
	Aircraft on the ground	Aircraft in flight	Movement of vehicles equipment and personnel
 Steady green	Cleared for takeoff	Cleared to land	Cleared to cross; proceed; go
 Flashing green	Cleared to taxi	Return for landing <i>(to be followed by steady green at the proper time)</i>	Not applicable
 Steady red	Stop	Give way to other aircraft and continue circling	Stop
 Flashing red	Taxi clear of landing area or runway in use	Airport unsafe- Do not land	Clear the taxiway/runway
 Flashing white	Return to starting point on airport	Not applicable	Return to starting point on airport
 Alternating red and green	General warning signal – exercise extreme caution	General warning signal – exercise extreme caution	General warning signal – exercise extreme caution

Reply with one of the following acknowledgements:

Fixed-wing aircraft



Between sunrise and sunset:

- Move ailerons or rudder while on the ground.
- Rock wings while in flight.

Between sunset and sunrise:

- Flash landing light or navigation lights.

Helicopters



Between sunrise and sunset:

- While hovering, either turn the helicopter toward the controlling facility and flash the landing light or rock the tip path plane.
- While in flight, either flash the landing light or rock the tip path plane.

Between sunset and sunrise:

- Flash navigation lights or landing light.



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