

# Two-Way Radio Etiquette

## General Guide Lines:

- Treat your radio with respect. They are very expensive and in many cases will come out of your pay if you break or lose one.
- Stay on your channel and do not mess with other departments. Occasionally you will have to speak to someone outside your department, If you need to have a longer conversations, we suggest you choose a “chat” channel. Be sure to go to that channel with them as to not clog up their channel.
- When speaking into your radio, wait a beat after keying before you begin to speak. Many people have a habit of hitting the button and speaking at the same time, this usually causes your first few words to be cut off.
- Be aware of your radio and it’s buttons. Sometimes you might be carrying something or even standing around and accidentally key it. This is something you really want to avoid. A queued radio is very annoying. It will make communicating on that channel extremely difficult.
- This is another one on radio awareness. You need to also be very aware of your dials. Most radios have an on/volume dial and a channel dial. Often times depending on how you wear your radio you can accidentally switch channels or turn your volume down. It’s good to get into the habit of checking your dials from time to time.

If , in a situation where you think you’ve bumped your channel dial and are unsure/unable to check, you could just do a quick radio check and listen for the right voices. Another step would be to ask directly about being on the right channel or very quickly switch all the way down to channel 1 and count up from there back to your channel.

## Two-Way Radio Language

Radio language on a film set is very similar to military or trucker language, however there are some distinct differences. Reviewing the following nomenclature will help keep your communication efficient and effective.

- **10-1 (10-100):**  
Standard washroom break. Although this falls under more than just radio etiquette and is more a common set etiquette. '10-1' or '10-100' simply means your going to the bathroom.
- **10-2 (10-200):**  
Longer break...Not as common as 10-1, but still used from time to time. Some people are a little embarrassed about using, but we're all human. Don't be embarrassed.
- **Upgrade:**  
This one isn't standard, but I find it works well. Often times you ask for a 10-1 and sneak off for a quick pee to then realize you have to do more than just pee...a lot of the guys I work for just ask for an upgrade. "Mind if I upgrade that 10-1, sir?" This tell your boss you wont be as quick as a 10-1.
- **Copy or Copy that:**  
Acknowledging that you have received the information, understand and are doing it.
- **Radio Check:**  
Is said when you first turn on your radio. Someone will reply to you with 'Good Check' this means your microphone is working properly and are being heard clearly.
- **Going off Radio:**  
This is what you say when you are talking off you walkie or will not being able to communicate. It's very important to let everyone know that you wont be available.
- **Standby:**  
Used when someone tries to communicate with you but you are too busy to reply, you simple say Standby
- **Standing by:**  
This is great to use when you've completely a quick task, like panning a light and are standing by it for any further instructions.

- Iggy for John:  
‘Iggy’ being your name, ‘John’ the name of the person you are wanting to communicate with. See responding to that call below.
- Go for John:  
When someone calls for you over the walkie you respond with “Go for \*your name here\*”. This tell them that you have heard them asking for you and are awaiting instructions.
- What’s your 20:  
This means ‘where are you?’. Often times asked before given a task.
- Eyes on John:  
‘Eyes on’ is used when you’re looking for someone or something. Sometimes you will hear something like “Does anyone have eyes on my wrench” or “Does anyone have eyes on the boss?”
- Flying in:  
This tells other that you are flying in to set or bringing something in.

Many Production Managers on smaller, independent projects are getting their own two-way radios. Now keep in mind that these will be nowhere near the quality of the ones available from two-way radio rental companies. Companies that specialize in film, television, video and music production, such as EventTone Wireless, and others, can not only provide radios, but headsets, fist mics and much more. They also fully service the equipment, so if there is a problem, or something is damaged, service and repair/replacement is a phone call away.

Reliable and instant communications on any production set is vital for an efficient operation. Knowing where everyone is, and being able to speak with them when needed will keep your production running properly, on time and on budget. Cell phones and texting have their place, but nothing beats being able to speak with your crew, when needed, quickly and effectively.