

How To MAKE A VHF CALL

To make a routine call to another boat:

Listen on the calling channel (Channel 16 or 09) for at least 30 seconds to be sure you will not interfere with a conversation already in progress. Make sure that the squelch control on your radio is set just at the point where it cancels out static, but not so far up that it prevents your hearing other radio traffic.

If the channel is clear, push down the talk button on your microphone. Hold the microphone one inch from your mouth, and slowly call the name of the other boat in a normal tone of voice:

"ANNIE-THIS IS-QUEEN

Always start a broadcast with the name of the boat you are calling and the name of your boat. Repeat the name of the boat you are calling, 2 or 3 times if necessary. This first call should not exceed 30 seconds. If you do not make contact, wait at least 2 minutes before repeating the call. Repeat this procedure no more than three times. If you do not make contact during this period, wait 15 minutes before making your next try.

"QUEEN, THIS IS ANNIE. REPLY 68."

ANNIE has responded with instructions to switch to Channel 68 (a working channel). QUEEN responds: **"68"** or **"ROGER."**

"Roger" means "I received your last call OK." Both vessels then switch to Channel 68.

QUEEN on 68: **"ANNIE."**

ANNIE on 68: **"QUEEN."**

Continue with your message. Think before you speak and make your message simple. It must be about your boat's business and no longer than 3 minutes in length. Chit chat is not permitted.

Each boat then acknowledges completion of the call, and returns to the calling frequency:

"QUEEN-OUT."

"ANNIE-OUT."

There are three emergency signals that have priority on any VHF channel, especially Channel 16: distress, urgency, and safety.

The Urgency Signal PAN-PAN. (Pronounced pahn-pahn.) Use this signal when there is a threat to the safety of a person or boat, but the threat is not as serious as in a MAYDAY call. Examples of PAN-PAN calls are: loss of a person overboard, running out of fuel, losing your way in a fog, getting entangled in fishing gear, or being unable to control or operate your vessel.

Safety Signal SECURITY. (Pronounced say-cure-it-tay.) Use this signal for navigation safety messages. You will hear it used before weather alerts, warnings of navigational hazards, and operational signals (such as when a boat is backing out of a slip or approaching a blind bend). You may use this call to report a hazard such as a partially-sunken object in a busy channel.

To issue a MAYDAY call:

To issue a MAYDAY call on Channel 16 of your VHF radio, transmit:

1. **"MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY"**
2. **"This is** (name of boat three times, call letters once)."
3. Repeat once more, **"MAYDAY"** and your boat's name.
4. Report your location.
5. Report the nature of your emergency.
6. Report the kind of assistance needed.
7. Report the number of people onboard and condition of any injured.
8. Describe the boat and its seaworthiness. Then wait for a response. If there is none, repeat the message.