

FT Challenge 7-8 December 2024

1. Objective: Amateurs worldwide contact and exchange QSO information with other amateurs using FT4 or FT8 on 80-, 40-, 20-, 15- and 10-meter bands. Any station may work any other station. Stations may be worked once per band regardless of mode (FT4 or FT8).

A. FT4 recommended sub-bands:

3.580-3.589

7.080-7.089

14.080-14.089***

21.080-21.089

28.080-28.089

Set the radio dial at the bottom of the sub-band and work stations on audio frequencies within the radio passband, typically 2.5-4 kHz wide. If a sub-band becomes crowded, move the radio dial frequency up in 3 kHz increments, as needed. (For example: 7.080, 7.083, and 7.086)

*** Please note that 14.080 Mhz is the standard "everyday" FT4 20-meter frequency. In order to avoid QRM with non-contest stations, it may be better to use 14.083 Mhz.

B. FT8 recommended sub-bands:

3.590-3.599

7.090-7.099

14.090-14.099

21.090-21.099

28.090-28.099

Set the radio dial at the bottom of the sub-band and work stations on audio frequencies within the radio passband typically 2.5-4 kHz wide. If a sub-band becomes crowded, move the radio dial frequency up in 3 kHz increments, as needed. (For example: 7,090, 7.093, and 7.096)

C. JA sub-bands on 80 meters:

FT4: 3.570 MHz

FT8: 3.573 MHz

D. Please avoid International Beacon Project frequencies (14.100, 21.150, 28.500 MHz).

2. Date and Contest Period: First full weekend of December. Begins 1800 UTC Saturday, ends 2359 UTC Sunday (**December 7-8, 2024**).

2.1 Entrants may operate the entire 30-hour contest period **but only the first 24 hours of operation are scored**. These 24 hours are called "scoring time".

2.2 After the first QSO, any number of off-time periods may be taken and they will not count in the 24-hour scoring period.

2.3 Each off-time must be at least 30 minutes long in which no QSOs are made.

3. Entry Categories

3.1 Single Operator Low Unlimited: 100 watts transmitter output or less. Designated as CATEGORY-POWER: LOW in the Cabrillo log file.

3.2 Single Operator QRP Unlimited: 5 watts transmitter output or less. Designated as CATEGORY-POWER: QRP in the Cabrillo log file.

3.3 Classic Operator (Classic) Overlay: Any Single Operator entrant that uses only one radio may ALSO enter the Classic Overlay category by adding the CATEGORY-OVERLAY: CLASSIC line in the Cabrillo log file header. Classic Overlay will be listed separately in the results, grouped by Low Power and QRP.

3.4 Multi Operator Low Power: Includes those that receive assistance with logging or relief operators, etc. 100 watts transmitter output or less. Designated as CATEGORY-POWER: LOW in the Cabrillo log file.

4. Exchange: 4-character Grid Square and SNR. Missing Grid Square defaults to ZZ00.

5. Scoring

5.1 QSO Points: QSOs are scored only once per band, either FT4 or FT8. QSOs are one (1) point plus one (1) point for each full 3000 km between Grid Square centers of the QSO partners. (e.g., 5541 km = 2 points). Short-path distances are used, regardless of actual signal path. ZZ00 (missing Grid Square) counts as one (1) point only.

5.2 Multipliers: A multiplier of one (1) for each different 2-character Grid Field contacted on each band. ZZ does not count as a multiplier.

6. Reporting

6.1 Seven (7)-Day Deadline: All entries must be uploaded by 2359 UTC December 15, 2024. Electronic log submissions only.

6.2 Logs in Cabrillo format must be submitted via the FT Challenge Log Submission page at <https://ft-challenge.contesting.com/ftcsubmitlog.php>. A logs received page can be found at <https://ft-challenge.contesting.com/ftclogsrvcd.php>.

6.3 The Cabrillo entries include the header and the complete QSO list.

7. Miscellaneous

7.1 Entrants must operate within the limits of their chosen category when performing any activity that could impact their submitted score.

7.2 A different call sign must be used for each entry. Call signs are different according to the base call sign, e.g., AA5AU and AA5AU/4 are the same base call sign and therefore do not qualify as different call signs. Only the entrant's call sign may be used to aid the entrant's score.

7.3 Do not exceed the total output power limitation of the chosen entry category on any band. Total output power on any band at any time is measured at the output of the active amplifier(s).

7.4 Self-spotting or asking to be spotted is not permitted.

7.5 Remote operation is permitted if the physical location of all transmitters, receivers, and antennas are at the station location. A remotely operated station must obey all station license, operator license, and category limitations. The call sign used must be one issued or permitted by the Regulatory Authority of the station location.

7.6 Remote receivers outside the station location are not permitted.

7.7 Alternating CQs on two or more frequencies on a band is not permitted.

7.8 All requests for contacts, responses to calls, and copying of call signs and contest exchanges must be accomplished during the contest period using the mode and frequencies of the contest.

7.9 Correction of logged call signs and exchanges after the contest, by use of any database, recordings, email or other methods is not allowed.

7.10 Call signs logged must be the same as those exchanged over the air by the entrants during the QSO.

7.11 Only FT4 and FT8 modes are permitted.

7.12 QSO finding assistance and multi-channel decoders are permitted in all entry categories.

7.13 Robotic operation is not allowed. That is, the operator must take some action for each QSO. However, transmissions within a single QSO may be automatically generated.

7.14 Multiple, parallel QSOs are permitted if the technique does not cause excessive IMD QRM to other stations. (Current WSJT-X DXpedition mode, DigiRite Streams and MSHV Multi Answering implementations are prohibited because they do produce excessive IMD in current amateur radios.) Note that the total power transmitted on all frequencies is limited to the power specified in these rules.

7.15 HIGH power, over 100 watts, classifies log as CHECKLOG.

7.16 All entrants are allowed only one transmitted signal at any given time. Anyone found to be transmitting two signals at the same time will be reclassified as Checklog.

7.17 SO2R and Multi Operator 2-radio are allowed but the radios must be on:

- the same mode, either FT4 or FT8
- opposite odd/even cycles.

7.18 The QSO is complete and should be logged after both stations have exchanged:

- callsigns
- exchange (Grid Square and SNR)
- QSL (e.g., R or RRR or RR73)

A third QSL (e.g., 73) is not necessary.

8. Awards: Certificates will be awarded to all participants and can be downloaded online when available. In addition, Top Ten Single Operators will be awarded a bottle of premium wine from Muns Vineyard mailed to a U.S. address.

9. Log Checking: All logs are checked using custom software and human judgment.

9.1 Duplicate contacts are removed with no additional penalty.

9.2 Contacts with an incorrect received exchange are removed with no additional penalty.

9.3 Call sign errors (bust) or call signs not in the other log (NIL) are removed and receive a penalty of the QSO point value for that contact.

10. Declaration

By submitting a FT Challenge contest log, and in consideration of the efforts of the Contest Committee to review and evaluate that log, an entrant unconditionally and irrevocably agrees that he/she has: 1) read and understood the rules of the contest and agrees to be bound by them, 2) operated according to all rules and regulations that pertain to amateur radio for the station location, 3) agreed the log entry may be made open to the public, and 4) accepted that the issuing of disqualifications and other decisions of the Committee are official and final. If an entrant is unwilling or unable to agree to all of the foregoing, the entrant should not submit the entry or submit the entry as a Checklog only.

11. Questions: ftc-questions@rttycontesting.com