

# **QSL CARDS**

#### **Sending and Receiving Paper Gems**

## What is a QSL Card?

"QSL" is a telegrapher's shorthand for:

"I acknowledge receipt of your message or transmission."

A **QSL card** is a written confirmation or acknowledgment of a contact.

### Why Do I Want a QSL Card?

- Courtesy Sending a QSL card is the final handshake of a contact.
- Awards QSL cards serve as proof of a twoway contact needed for certain awards.
- Tradition Exchanging QSL cards has been a long tradition in ham radio and it is fun to get cards from other contacted hams.

### Information on a QSL Card

Confirming QSO with	Day	Month	Year
W1AW	21	Мау	2013
UTC	MHz	2x Mode	RST
14:30	21.395	SSB	59-

- Call signs
- Location

- Frequency
- Mode (2-way)

Time & Date

Signal Report

Be sure to include all of this basic information because QSL cards are often used to verify contacts for awards.

## **Essential Information**

- Your call sign should be printed or written on the report side of the card.
- Indicate if you were portable or mobile.
- Include your geographic location

   Street address, city, state, county, and grid square
- Include ITU and CQ zones

## **Additional Information**

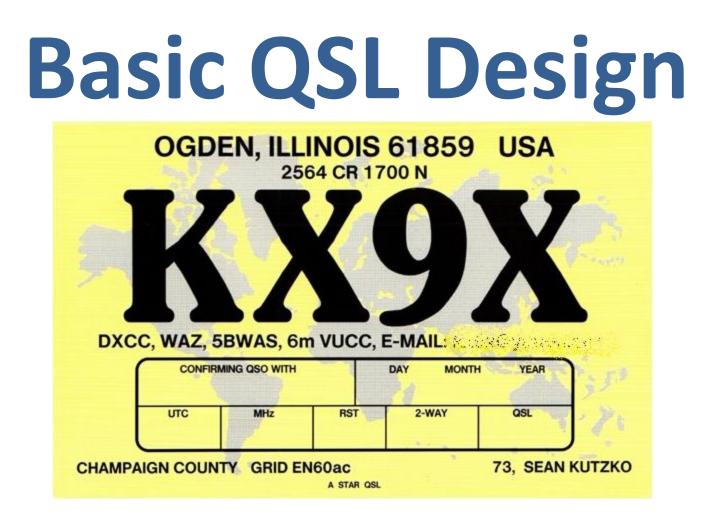
Other information may include:

- Membership in a club
- Organization affiliations
- Email address
- Awards earned
- Previous call signs held

## Information to Exclude

Because QSL cards are sent to people from a variety of cultures, you may want to refrain from putting certain things on your QSL card:

- Religious or political statements
- Risqué pictures, drawings, remarks or humor
- Anything that could generally be offensive



Standard QSL size: 3 ½ inches high x 5 ½ inches wide horizontal or vertical

## Filling out the QSL Card

- Call sign of the other station you worked
- **Time and date** (Use UTC for both and be sure to properly convert from local time and date, if that is how you keep your log. Spell out the month to avoid confusion.)
- **Frequency** (Approximate frequency in kHz , MHz, or band in meters)
- Mode (AM, SSB, CW, RTTY, PSK)
- FCC emission designators are not easily understood
- Signal Report Use standard RST system;
   Phone modes only use RS

## **Additional Information**

**If you make a mistake** when filling out a QSL card, throw it away and start over.

Crossed out or written over information will disqualify any card being submitted towards an award.

## **Additional Information**

If you are sending the QSL card to a QSL manager through the QSL bureau, please be sure to indicate this using "QSL via."

Example: QSL via: KB1DMX

## **PSE QSL TNX**

• Circle "QSL TNX" to indicate that you are answering a QSL: "Thanks for QSL"



 Circle "PSE QSL" to indicate that you are requesting a QSL: "Please QSL"



### **How to Send Your Cards**

- QSL Bureau
- QSL Manager
  - Direct Mail

### QSL Bureau "Via Buro"

#### **Advantages**

- Least expensive
- Good return rate
- Can send to foreign QSL managers (not stateside managers)

#### Disadvantages

- Not time sensitive
- Not all DX uses the Bureau

The QSL Bureau is for DX cards only (Includes KL7 & KH6) The QSL Bureau cannot forward IRCs or "green-stams" (cash)

### **QSL Mangers**

#### **Stateside**

- Some DX operators have stateside QSL managers
- Not very expensive
- You pay postage both .
   ways (SASE)
- Excellent return rates
- Fairly good turn around time

#### **Overseas**

- Excellent return rates
- Can get expensive
- Faster return than QSL Bureau
- You pay postage both ways
  - Foreign postage
  - Green stamps (cash)

## **QSL Direct**

- 99% return rates
- Most expensive way to QSL
- You pay postage both ways
  - Foreign postage
  - Green stamps (cash)

Use foreign postage on SASE for best return rate.

## Dos & Don'ts

#### Do:

- Write legibly or use QSL labels
- Use professionally printed cards
- Send SASE

#### Don't:

- Write call signs on envelopes
- Send cash

## Electronic QSL (LOTW)

#### **Advantages**

- Fast upload
- Secure
- Apply for awards online
- Upload feature built in on some logging programs

#### Disadvantages

- Only matches QSO with other LOTW users
- No QSL card to display

## **Displaying QSL Cards**

#### Albums

- Show by band, mode, award, etc
- Easy to carry to meetings or conventions

#### **Wall Hangers**

- Easy to hang & change cards
- Minimal attachment to walls

#### **Display Boards**

- Great for presentations or shows
- Use of photo corners prevent tape damage to cards

#### Frame

 Display special cards or events

## End

#### Be sure to check out the QSL gallery and more

#### arrl.org