

Rules

2026 CQ World-Wide WPX Contest

SSB: March 28-29, 2026 CW: May 30-31, 2026

Starts: 0000 UTC Saturday Ends: 2359 UTC Sunday

I. Objective:

For amateurs worldwide to contact as many amateurs and prefixes as possible during the contest period.

II. Period of Operation:

48 hours. Single Operator stations may operate 36 of the 48 hours – **off times must be a minimum of 60 minutes during which no QSO is logged.** Multi-operator stations may operate the full 48 hours.

III. Bands:

Only the 1.8, 3.5, 7, 14, 21, and 28 MHz bands may be used. **Observance of established band plans is strongly encouraged.**

IV. EXCHANGE:

RS(T) report plus a progressive contact serial number starting with 001 for the first contact. Note: Multi-Two, Multi-Unlimited and Multi-Distributed entrants use separate serial number sequences on each band.

V. SCORING:

A. Score: The final score is the result of the total QSO points multiplied by the number of different prefixes worked.

B. QSO Points: A station may be worked once on each band for QSO point credit:

1. Contacts between stations on different continents are worth three (3) points on 28, 21, and 14 MHz and six (6) points on 7, 3.5, and 1.8 MHz.

2. Contacts between stations on the same continent, but different countries, are worth one (1) point on 28, 21, and 14 MHz and two (2) points on 7, 3.5, and 1.8 MHz. Exception: For North American stations only—contacts between stations within the North American boundaries (both stations must be located in North America) are worth two (2) points on 28, 21, and 14 MHz and four (4) points on 7, 3.5, and 1.8 MHz.

3. Contacts between stations in the same country are worth 1 point regardless of band.

C. Prefix Multipliers: The prefix multiplier is the number of valid prefixes worked. Each PREFIX is counted only once regardless of the band or number of times the same prefix is worked.

1. A PREFIX is the letter/numeral combination which forms the first part of the amateur call. Examples: N8, W8, WD8, HG1, HG19, KC2, OE2, OE25, LY1000, etc. Any difference in the numbering, lettering, or order of same shall count as a separate prefix. In cases of portable operation, the portable designator will then become the prefix. The portable prefix must be an authorized prefix of the country/call area of operation. Portable designators without numbers will be assigned a zero (Ø) after the second letter of the portable designator to form the prefix. Example: PA/N8BJQ would become PAØ. All calls without numbers will be assigned a zero (Ø) after the first two letters to form the prefix. Example: XEFTJW would count as XEØ. Maritime mobile, mobile, /A, /E, /J, /P, or other license class identifiers do not count as prefixes.

2. Special event, commemorative, and other unique prefix stations are encouraged to participate. Prefixes must be issued or permitted by the licensing authority of the country of operation.

VI. ENTRY CATEGORIES:

Use of QSO alerting assistance is permitted in all categories with the exception of the Single Operator Classic Overlay.

A. Single Operator Categories: One person (the operator) performs all operating and logging functions. There is no limit on band changes. Only one transmitted signal is permitted at any time.

1. Single Operator High Power (All Band or Single Band): Total output power must not exceed **1500 watts**.

2. Single Operator Low Power (All Band or Single Band): Total output power must not exceed **100 watts**.

3. Single Operator QRP (All Band or Single Band): Total output power must not exceed **5 watts**.

B. Single Operator Overlay Categories: Any Single Operator entrant who meets the requirements may ALSO enter one of the categories shown below by adding the appropriate CATEGORY-OVERLAY line in the Cabrillo log file header. Overlay category entries will be listed separately in the results, scored as All Bands, and grouped by High Power and Low Power (includes QRP).

1. Tribander/Single Element (TB-WIRES): During the contest an entrant shall use only one (1) tribander (any type, with a single feed line from the transmitter to the antenna) for 10, 15, and 20 meters and single-element antennas on 40, 80, and 160 meters. Separate receiving antennas are not permitted in this category.

2. Rookie (ROOKIE): To enter this category the operator must have been licensed as a radio amateur three (3) years or less on the date of the contest. The date the operator was first licensed **must** be indicated in the SOAPBOX field. Previous Rookie winners are not eligible for plaques in this category.

3. Classic Operator (CLASSIC): The entrant will use only one radio and may operate up to 24 of the 48 hours – **off times are a minimum of 60 minutes during which no QSO is logged**. If the log shows more than 24 hours of operation, only the first 24 hours will be counted for the overlay score. Use of QSO alerting assistance of any kind is prohibited (see rule IX.B) for the duration of contest. Receiving while transmitting is also prohibited.

4. Youth (YOUTH): The operator was 25 years old or younger at the start of the contest. Indicate the birth date in the SOAPBOX field.

C. Multi-Operator Categories (All Band only): More than one person can contribute to the final score during the official contest period. Select category based on number of transmitted signals or number of locations.

1. Single-Transmitter (MULTI-ONE): Only one transmitted signal is permitted at any time. A maximum of ten (10) band changes may be made in any clock hour (00 through 59 minutes). For example, a change from 20 meters to 40 meters and then back to 20 meters counts as two band changes. Use a single serial number sequence for the entire log.

a. High Power. Total output power of each transmitted signal must not exceed **1500 watts**.

b. Low Power. Total output power of each transmitted signal must not exceed **100 watts**.

2. Two-Transmitter (MULTI-TWO): A maximum of two transmitted signals is permitted at any time on two different bands. Both transmitters may work any station. A station may only be worked once per band regardless of which transmitter is used. **The log must indicate which transmitter made each QSO** (column 81 of CABRILLO QSO template for CQ contests). Each transmitter may make a maximum of eight (8) band changes in any clock hour (00 through 59 minutes). Use a separate serial number sequence for each band. Total output power of each transmitted signal must not exceed **1500 watts**.

3. Multi-Transmitter (MULTI-UNLIMITED): A maximum of six transmitted signals, one per band, at any one time. Six bands may be activated simultaneously. Use a separate serial number sequence for each band. Total output power of each transmitted signal must not exceed **1500 watts**.

4. Multi-Transmitter Distributed (MULTI-DISTRIBUTED): A maximum of six transmitted signals, one per band at any one time, from stations in different locations. All equipment (transmitters, receivers, amplifiers, antennas, etc.) must be located in same DXCC entity and CQ Zone, including remotely controlled equipment. Six bands may be activated simultaneously. Use a separate serial number sequence for each band. Total output power of each transmitted signal must not exceed **1500 watts**. The Cabrillo log header must include the following lines: CATEGORY-OPERATOR: MULTI-OP, CATEGORY-STATION: DISTRIBUTED. Rules X.E, and X.F do not apply to this category.

D. Checklog: Entry submitted to assist with the log checking. The entry will not have a score in the results and the log will not be made public.

VII. AWARDS:

A single-band log will be eligible for a single-band award only.

A. Plaques are awarded to recognize top performance in a number of categories. View the current list of plaques and sponsors at www.cqwp.com/plaques.htm.

Only one plaque will be awarded per entry. A station winning a plaque will not be considered for a sub-area award. That award will be given to the runner-up for that area if the number of entries justifies the award.

B. Certificates: Electronic certificates will be made available for download for everyone that submits an on-time entry.

VIII. CLUB COMPETITION:

The club score is the total aggregate score from logs submitted by members. There are two separate club competition categories.

A. USA Clubs: Participation is limited to club members residing within a 250 mile radius circle from the center of club area.

B. DX Clubs: Participation is limited to club members residing within EITHER the DXCC country where the club is located OR within a 400 km radius circle from the center of club.

C. General Club Rules:

1. National organizations (e.g., JARL, REF or DARC) are not eligible for the club competition.
2. Single-operator entries may only contribute to one club. Multi-operator scores may be allocated to multiple clubs as a percentage of the number of club members participating in the operation. The log entry must spell out the full club name (and club allocations if multi-op).
3. A minimum of four logs must be received for a club to be listed in the results. Checklog entries are not counted for the club score.
4. The word "reside" shall be defined as: To dwell permanently or continuously or to occupy a place as a person's fixed, permanent, and principal home for legal purposes.
5. Eligible club members may contribute their DXpedition scores to their organization's club entry.

IX. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS:

A. Station location: The area in which all the transmitters, receivers, amplifiers and antennas are located. All transmitters, receivers and amplifiers must be within a single 500-meter diameter circle. Antennas must be physically connected by RF transmission lines to the transmitters, receivers and amplifiers.

B. QSO alerting assistance: The use of any technology or other source that provides call sign or multiplier identification of a signal to the operator. This includes, but is not limited to, use of a CW decoder, DX cluster, DX spotting web sites (e.g., DX Summit), local or remote call sign and frequency decoding technology (e.g., CW Skimmer or Reverse Beacon Network), or operating arrangements involving other individuals.

X. GENERAL RULES FOR ALL ENTRANTS:

- A.** Entrants must operate within the limits of their chosen category when performing any activity that could affect their submitted score.
- B.** A different callsign must be used for each entry. Only the entrant's callsign may be used to aid the entrant's score.
- C.** Do not exceed the total output power limitation of the chosen category on any band. Total output power on any band at any time is measured at the final output of the active amplifier(s).
- D.** Self-spotting or asking to be spotted is not permitted.
- E.** All operation must take place from one station location. Remote operation is permitted if the physical location of all transmitters, receivers, and antennas are at one 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.
- F.** Remote receivers outside the station location are not permitted.
- G.** Only one signal on a band is allowed at any time.
- H.** Alternating CQs on two or more frequencies on a band is not permitted.
- I.** 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.
- J.** Correction of logged call signs and exchanges after the contest by using any database, recordings, email or other methods of confirming QSOs is not allowed.
- K.** Call signs logged must be the same as those exchanged over the air by the entrants during the QSO.
- L.** For ITU Region 1 stations: transmitting on the 40m band, above 7200 kHz during the SSB (phone) contest weekend is not permitted.
- M.** For ITU Region 1 stations: transmitting below 1810 kHz during the contest weekends is not permitted.

N. A human operator must initiate the following actions at all times: 1) changing receive or transmit frequencies, 2) calling a QSO partner, 3) logging a QSO. Autonomous systems or robots that emulate these actions are prohibited.

XI. LOG INSTRUCTIONS:

Electronic submission of logs is **required** for all entrants.

A. The log MUST show the following for each contact: correct date and time in UTC, frequency (or band), call sign of the station worked, exchange sent, and exchange received. A log without all required information may be reclassified to Checklog. Contacts should be logged immediately as they are completed. Stations competing for World, Continent, and USA awards must provide accurate frequencies for all contacts in the log.

B. Single band entrants are required to include all contacts made during the contest period, even if on other bands. Only contacts made on the band specified in the Cabrillo header will be considered for scoring purposes. Logs with contacts only on one band will be classified as single band entries.

C. The CABRILLO file format is the standard for logs. See <www.cqwp.com/cabrillo.htm> for detailed instructions on filling out the CABRILLO file header. Failure to fill out the header correctly may result in the entry being placed in the wrong category or reclassified as a Checklog. Note: U.S. stations must indicate the station location in the CABRILLO header (e.g., LOCATION: OH). See rule VI.C.4 for instructions on the CABRILLO header for the Multi-Transmitter Distributed category.

D. Web upload is the only method of log submission. Web upload of logs is available at <www.cqwp.com/logcheck>.

E. Instructions for NON-CABRILLO electronic logs: If you are not able to submit a CABRILLO format log, please contact the Contest Director for assistance with submitting another format.

F. Entry Confirmation: All logs received will be confirmed via e-mail. A listing of logs received can be found at <www.cqwp.com>.

XII. LOG DEADLINE:

A. All entries must be submitted WITHIN 48 HOURS after the end of the contest: SSB logs no later than 2359 UTC 31 March 2026, CW logs no later than 2359 UTC 2 June 2026. Resubmitting an entry after the deadline will result in it being considered as a late log.

B. An extension may be requested by e-mail to <director@cqwpx.com>. The request must state a legitimate reason and must be received before the log deadline. Extensions are granted only upon confirmation by the Contest Director.

C. Logs submitted after the deadline may be listed in the results but are not eligible for awards.

XIII. JUDGING:

The CQ WPX Contest Committee is responsible for checking and adjudicating the contest entries. Entrants are expected to follow the rules and best amateur radio practices. Violation of the rules of the contest or unsportsmanlike conduct may lead to disciplinary action by the Committee.

A. Unsportsmanlike Conduct: Examples of unsportsmanlike conduct include, but are not limited to:

1. ARRANGING or CONFIRMING any contacts during the contest by use of ANY non-amateur radio means such as telephones, Internet, instant messaging, chat rooms, VoIP, social media or web sites.
2. Transmissions by the entrant on frequencies outside of license limitations.
3. Changing times in the log to meet band change or off time rules.
4. Taking credit for excessive unverifiable QSOs or unverifiable multipliers.
5. Signals with excessive bandwidth (e.g., splatter, clicks) or harmonics on other bands.
6. Running stations making more than 3 contacts without sending their callsign.

B. Disciplinary Actions: In the event of a violation, the entrant is subject to disqualification at the discretion of the Committee.

1. DISQUALIFICATION: Entry will be listed at the end of the published results and is not eligible for an award.
2. Notification of Committee actions will be sent by email to the address provided with the log submission. The entrant has five days to appeal the decision to the Contest Director. After that time the decision is final.
3. An entrant may withdraw the submitted log for any reason within 30 days of the log deadline. Contact the Contest Director for instructions.
4. The Committee reserves the right to change the category of any entry based on its examination of the log or other information.

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

1. Duplicate contacts are removed with no additional penalty.

2. Contacts with an incorrectly received exchange are removed with no additional penalty.
3. Call sign errors or call signs not found in the other log are removed and receive a penalty of two times the QSO point value for that contact.
4. Contacts that do not meet the band change rules for multi-operator entries are removed with no additional penalty.

D. Station Information: Entrants must agree to supply the following information upon request of the Contest Committee:

1. Details and photographs of their station equipment, antennas, amplifiers, switching systems, etc.

XIV. DECLARATION:

By submitting a CQ WPX Contest log, and in consideration of the efforts of the CQ WPX 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.

Questions pertaining to the CQ WPX Contest may be emailed to the CQ WPX Contest Director <director@cqwpx.com>.