THE MARINE ALPHABET

The Marine Alphabet – Phonetic, Flags, & Morse Code

A phonetic alphabet is a list of words used to identify letters in a message transmitted by radio or telephone. Spoken words from an approved list are substituted for letters. This practice helps to prevent confusion between similar sounding letters, such as "m" and "n", and to clarify communications that may be garbled during transmission.

An early version of the phonetic alphabet appeared in the U.S. Navy's 1913 edition of The Bluejackets' Manual. It was paired with the Alphabetical Code Flags defined in the International Code. Later Morse Code was added. During World War II, when it was necessary for the Navy to communicate with the Army or Allied forces, signalmen were directed to use standard words. These words changed again in 1957 when the current phonetic alphabet was introduced and adopted by international agreement. The current (1957) phonetic alphabet is:

Letter	Flag	Morse	Letter	Flag	Morse
Alpha		. —	**N**ovember		— .
Bravo		— . . .	**O**scar		— — —
Charlie		— . — .	**P**apa		. — — .
Delta		— . .	**Q**uebec		— — . —
Echo		.	**R**omeo		. — .
Foxtrot		. . — .	**S**ierra		. . .
Golf		— — .	**T**ango		—
Hotel		. . . .	**U**niform		. . —
India		. .	**V**ictor		. . . —
Juliette		. — — —	**W**hiskey		. — —
Kilo		— . —	**X**-Ray		— . . —
Lima		. — . .	**Y**ankee		— . — —
Mike		— —	**Z**ulu		— — . .

Digit Morse

Digit		Morse	Digit		Morse
0		— — — — —	5		. . . . .
1		. — — — —	6		— . . . .
2		. . — — —	7		— — . . .
3		. . . — —	8		— — — . .
4		. . . . —	9		— — — — .