

How to make a Morse Code contact

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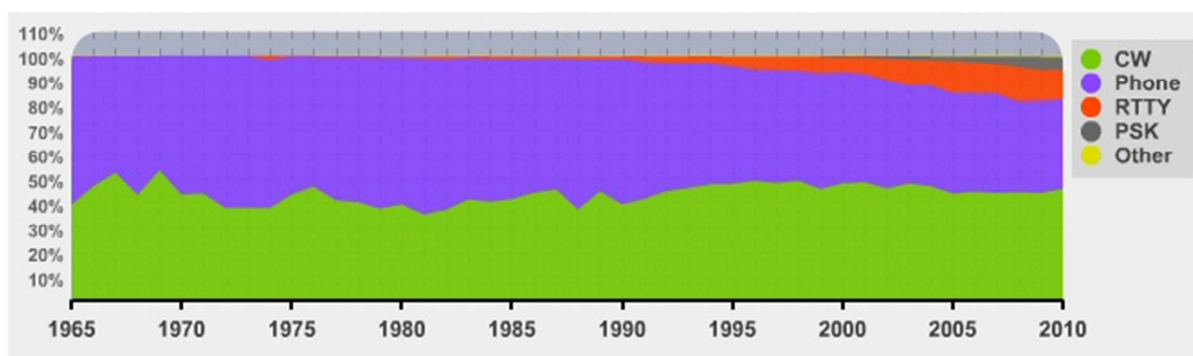
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This tutorial has been on the Web since 1994. It has been widely quoted and used. It has even been shamelessly plagiarised in French! I've decided to turn it into a PDF with some graphics to make it even more useful. Feedback is always greatly appreciated.

Why Morse?

Many radio amateurs feel that Morse code is obsolete. Its use has been discontinued in commercial service, and most nations no longer test aspiring radio hams for Morse proficiency. Nevertheless, Morse code's popularity has not waned.

Although recent statistics have not been published, a 2010 graph from ClubLog¹ shows the composition of contacts uploaded to this database.



The trend is clear. Since the 1960s, Morse code has made up just under 50% of the total contacts made. Around 1990, RTTY started becoming more popular with the advent of personal computing. However, it seems to have eroded the share that Phone held, while telegraphy has held its own at just under 50%.

In the 2014 CQ World Wide DX Contest, more than 7500 stations submitted logs. Around 10 000 stations in 212 countries were worked.

Although Morse proficiency is no longer compulsory, it does provide access to a world of simple, reliable communications. Morse contacts require relatively little signal strength and very little bandwidth. If your antennas are modest and you are not running much power, you can still work the world with the simplicity of Morse code.

¹ <http://clublog.org>