2026 ARRL November Sweepstakes

arrl.org/sweepstakes

CW: First full weekend in November (November 7-9, 2026).

Phone: Third full weekend in November (November 21-23, 2026).

Contest Period: Begins 2100 UTC Saturday and runs through 0259 UTC Monday.

The ARRL's annual November Sweepstakes is the oldest domestic contest, beginning in 1930. Sweepstakes paused during World War II but came back stronger than ever. It's a competition between North American stations – individuals, teams, and clubs. For many US and Canadian hams, it is their first contest operation and remains a regular event on their yearly schedule for a lifetime. The contest is somewhat unique in that each station may only be contacted once and the number of different recognized locations ("multipliers") is limited to the 85 ARRL and RAC sections.

Working all of the sections is called a "Clean Sweep" and allows the station to claim one of the coveted Clean Sweep coffee mugs – there are other awards (certificates and plaques) as well.

This package of information about Sweepstakes contains an overview of the contest and how to participate, including the complete rules for the contest.

Please submit your log by using the online web uploading service at contest-log-submission.arrl.org.

We hope you'll participate in the 2026 ARRL Sweepstakes – thanks for your interest!

73, Bart Jahnke, W9JJ
ARRL Radiosport and Regulatory Information Manager

Sweepstakes Overview and Introduction

When is the contest?

Sweepstakes consists of two separate contests – CW and Phone – each held on a separate weekend. CW Sweepstakes is the first full weekend in November. Phone Sweepstakes is the third full weekend in November. Each contest begins at 2100 UTC Saturday and runs through 0259 UTC Monday (Sunday evening local time in the US and Canada).

How can I participate and what information do I exchange?

The object of the contest is to contact stations in the United States and Canada (including territories and possessions). You can make contest contacts on 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, and 10 meters. Work as many ARRL and RAC sections as possible – **there are 85 sections in total**. See the "ARRL/RAC Section Abbreviation List" later in this document for a list. New Sweepstakes operators may want to print out the page and keep it handy as a reference during the contest.

Note: For the 2026 Sweepstakes there is no change in the Territory (TER) multiplier. The multiplier is formed from the three territories which are the Northwest, Yukon and Nunavut Territories.

Start by choosing one of the eight operating categories. The column labeled "Precedence" shows what you'll send as part of the contest exchange to indicate your category. Single Operator and Single Operator Unlimited entrants can choose to enter in the "Limited Antennas" overlay. See rules below for details.

CATEGORY	CATEGORY ABBREVIATION	PRECEDENCE	DESCRIPTION
Single Operator, QRP	SOQRP	Q	One Operator, 5 W output or less, no use of social media or spotting networks.
Single Operator, Low Power	SOLP	A	One operator, 100W output or less, no use of social media or spotting networks.
Single Operator, High Power	SOHP	B	One operator, greater than 100W output, no use of social media or spotting networks.
Single Operator Unlimited, QRP	SOUQRP	U	One Operator, 5 W output or less, use of social media & spotting networks permitted.
Single Operator Unlimited, Low Power	SOULP	U	One operator, up to 100W output, use of social media & spotting networks permitted.
Single Operator Unlimited, High Power	SOUHP	U	One operator, greater than 100W output, use of social media & spotting networks permitted.
Multioperator, Single Transmitter, Low Power	MSLP	M	More than one operator, only one transmitted signal allowed at any given time, up to 100W output, use of social media & spotting networks is permitted.
Multioperator, Single Transmitter, High Power	MSHP	M	More than one operator, only one transmitted signal allowed at any given time, greater than 100W output, use of social media & spotting networks is permitted.

CATEGORY	CATEGORY ABBREVIATION	PRECEDENCE	DESCRIPTION
School Club	S	S	Students and participating alumni in a college, university, technical, secondary or other school club station. More than one operator encouraged and use of Social Media & spotting networks is permitted.

The specific requirements for each category are described in the rules. For example, if you are operating by yourself without an amplifier, then you are probably a SOLP category station – the most popular – and SOHP if you use an amplifier. If you use information from a spotting network to locate stations to work, you are a Single Operator Unlimited category station and can enter as High Power, Low Power or QRP.

Your exchange format is based on an ARRL radiogram header and has five parts:

Serial number – the number of this contact in the contest (1st, 10th, 121st, etc.)
Precedence – your category designator as described above (Q, A, B, U, M, or S)
Your call sign
Check – the last two digits of the year in which you were licensed (e.g., '02' for 2002)
ARRL Section – the abbreviation for your ARRL and RAC sections

Exchange example: 123 B K5OT 65 STX

How do I contact a station in the contest?

Start by tuning around the HF bands (160, 80, 40, 20, 15, and 10 meters) for stations calling "CQ SS" on CW or "CQ Sweepstakes" on Phone. Listen for a contact or two to get an idea of the rhythm and style. When you are ready to call, just give your call sign one time, using phonetics on phone. If the station answers you, be ready to copy down their exchange. When it's time to send your exchange, send it in the same order given above. You can give their call sign first if you want and maybe "R" or "QSL" to let them know you received their information OK. There's no need to send anything else like "Please copy…" or "Your number is…" – they are ready and waiting as soon as they stop transmitting! Read the eham.net article "An Enticement for Contest Newbies" (www.eham.net/article/35581) for more information about effective operating in the Sweepstakes contest.

How long may I operate and what is "off time"?

You may operate for a maximum of 24 hours during each weekend (CW or Phone) and your off-time periods must be at least 30 minutes long. (Listening time counts as operating time.) To count as off time, the log must show a minimum of 30 consecutive minutes without operating (seconds are ignored) or that period will not be counted as off time. For example, the period in a log without contacts in minutes 0115 through 0144 (30 consecutive "empty" minutes) counts as off time. The period of 0115 to 0143 is 29 empty minutes and will not count as off time at all – off time must be at least 30 minutes long. Let's say it another way: If your last QSO before the break is at 0114, then the next QSO should not resume until 0145 or later.

The intent of this rule is to limit operating time (listening or transmitting) to 24 hours. Contacts logged after 24 hours of operation will not be counted toward your final score. However, there is

no penalty for including those contacts in a submitted log and the stations you contact beyond 24 hours are eligible to receive credit for the contact, even if those contacts don't count for you.

How do I calculate my score?

Your score is two points for each contact times the number of ARRL and RAC sections you contact. The score will be calculated from the contacts you logged during the first 24 hours of operation. (See the previous discussion of off time.)

How can I make sure my club gets credit for my score?

If you are a member of an ARRL or RAC affiliated club, your Sweepstakes score will help the total club effort. Please note that the rules for club competition have changed. First, see the "Affiliated Club Competition Rules". You must be a member in good standing of the club, and both reside and operate within the designated club territory for the contest. Next: Are you on the club's eligibility list? Contact your Club Secretary (or designated Club Scorekeeper) to make sure you are 'on the list' for the contest, as just being on the club roster is not enough! You'll need to know the 6-character grid locator for your residence and/or station from which you'll operate.

Your Cabrillo log will have a header line-item called CLUB: which is where you should enter the correct club name. Exact wording of your club name is critical, so do not abbreviate. For example, spell out 'Society of Midwest Contesters' and not 'SMC.' If you are not certain, check the official list of club names for ARRL affiliated clubs or RAC affiliated clubs.

Finally, submit your log to the ARRL, as discussed in the next section. Pay attention to the log submission deadline, too, which is SEVEN (7) days after the end of each Sweepstakes contest.

The full rules for the ARRL Affiliated Club Competition are available on the web at contests.arrl.org/ContestRules/ClubComp-Rules.pdf.

How do I submit my entry to the ARRL?

If you used a logging program, export your contacts to a Cabrillo-format file, creating an "electronic log." Your logging software user's manual will show you how to do that. Open your web browser and navigate to contest-log-submission.arrl.org. Enter the required information and browse to your log file. You can also copy-and-paste the entire log into the text window. Press the Submit button and your log's formatting will be checked, then sent to the ARRL. If there are any formatting problems, you'll be notified so you can edit and resubmit the log. Your contacts are not cross-checked, just reviewed so that they are correctly formatted in the log file.

Electronic Cabrillo logs are the only accepted method for log submission. If you logged on a paper log sheet, visit WA7BNM's site at b4h.net/cabforms for tools to convert your paper log to a Cabrillo formatted electronic log. Select the appropriate event from the menu, enter your data, and the system will generate a Cabrillo log file for submission. Beginning with the 2026 Sweepstakes, the ARRL no longer accepts paper logs – all entries must be submitted electronically via the web service. For more help with electronic log submission, visit the Sweepstakes web page as well.

Sweepstakes Results and Resources

ARRL November Sweepstakes web page

Previous Year's Results – CW

Previous Year's Results – Phone

November CW Sweepstakes All-Time Records

November Phone Sweepstakes All-Time Records

Articles about Sweepstakes and contest operating:

"How to Operate Sweepstakes (and Other Contests)", NØAX, Oct 2008 *QST* Radiosport section
"My First Solo Sweepstakes at Age 12" KØADX, Nov/Dec 2009 NCJ
"Gear Up for November Sweepstakes", Oct 2008 *QST*
"A Contest Primer" NØAX, Oct 2003 *QST*
"Ontario Times Four" NØAX, Oct 2012 *QST*

ARRL Contest Resources:

ARRL Contest Tutorial web page: www.arrl.org/contest-toolbox-tutorials
ARRL Contest Update newsletter: www.arrl.org/contests/update
ARRL Contest Branch: contests.arrl.org
ARRL Contest Glossary: www.arrl.org/contest-glossary

Magazines, Newsletters, Web sites, and E-Mail Reflectors:

National Contest Journal: www.ncjweb.com
Contesting.com: www.contesting.com
CQ-contest reflector: lists.contesting.com/mailman/listinfo/cq-contest
3830 Claimed Score and Soapbox reporting: 3830scores.com

Contest Calendars and Events:

ARRL Contest Corral: www.arrl.org/contests
WA7BNM Contest Calendar: contestcalendar.com

Sweepstakes Rules Summary

The rules are now presented as one complete document (see link below). Most participants will only need to refer to these basic rules which are summarized below:

Select the appropriate category for your operation:

- SOQRP – Single Operator, QRP*
- SOLP – Single Operator, Low Power*
- SOHP – Single Operator, High Power*
- SOUQRP – Single Operator Unlimited, QRP*
- SOULP – Single Operator Unlimited, Low Power*
- SOUHP – Single Operator Unlimited, High Power*
- MSLP – Multioperator, Single Transmitter, Low Power
- MSHP – Multioperator, Single Transmitter, High Power
- S – School Club
  Any Single Operator or Single Operator Unlimited entrant can enter using the Limited Antennas Overlay. Operation is limited to the use of single-element antennas such as a single vertical, end-fed wire, or a single dipole antenna no more than 50 feet above ground at its highest point. The antenna(s) may cover multiple bands, as in the case of multiband verticals and dipoles with fan or trap constructions.

- Verify the proper Precedence to be used for your selected category.
- Be sure to use the right abbreviation for logging or transmitting sections.
- Operate for a maximum of 24 hours during each weekend's contest.
- When taking some off-time, be sure it lasts for at least 30 continuous minutes.
- If you use information from any spotting networks, or participate in Social Media, you must enter in one of the Unlimited, Multioperator or School Club categories.
- Give your exchange in the recommended order to avoid confusion.

Full ARRL November Sweepstakes rules are available as a PDF file at contests.arrl.org/ContestRules/SS-Rules.pdf

For more information on ARRL Affiliated Club Competition, Click Here

Participation Pins:

The ARRL is again pleased to offer Participation Pins and Mugs for purchase. 2026 Sweepstakes pins and mugs will be available for purchase through the ARRL store at home.arrl.org/action/Shop/Store, and not through the Contest Program as has been done in the past.

Clean Sweep Mugs:

Commemorate working your "clean sweep" by purchasing your 2026 November Sweepstakes mug. To earn your mug, work all 85 ARRL/RAC sections during the CW or Phone November Sweepstakes. 2026 Sweepstakes Mugs will be available for purchase through the ARRL store at home.arrl.org/action/Shop/Store.

Submitting a Cabrillo-Formatted Log

If your logging software can export your contest log as a Cabrillo-formatted file, submit your contest QSO information using our log submission web page at contest-log-submission.arrl.org

If you are still using paper logs, or your logger does not support Cabrillo, you can use a web Cabrillo generator developed by Bruce Horn, WA7BNM, available at www.b4h.net/cabforms/. Select either ARRL Sweepstakes CW or SSB, and follow the guided instructions.

If you have questions that aren't answered in this package, please contact the ARRL Contest Program Manager at contests@arrl.org

You can also find more information about the Cabrillo log format at wwrof.org/cabrillo/ and at arrl.org/cabrillo-format-tutorial

ARRL / RAC Section Abbreviation List

Call Area 1			
Connecticut	CT	Rhode Island	RI
Eastern Massachusetts	EMA	Vermont	VT
Maine	ME	Western Massachusetts	WMA
New Hampshire	NH		
Call Area 2			
Eastern New York	ENY	Northern New York	NNY
NYC / Long Island	NLI	Southern New Jersey	SNJ
Northern New Jersey	NNJ	Western New York	WNY
Call Area 3			
Delaware	DE	Maryland – DC	MDC
Eastern Pennsylvania	EPA	Western Pennsylvania	WPA
Call Area 4			
Alabama	AL	Southern Florida	SFL
Georgia	GA	Tennessee	TN
Kentucky	KY	Virginia	VA
North Carolina	NC	West Central Florida	WCF
Northern Florida	NFL	Puerto Rico	PR
South Carolina	SC	US Virgin Islands	VI
Call Area 5			
Arkansas	AR	North Texas	NTX
Louisiana	LA	Oklahoma	OK
Mississippi	MS	South Texas	STX
New Mexico	NM	West Texas	WTX
Call Area 6			
East Bay	EB	San Diego	SDG
Los Angeles	LAX	San Francisco	SF
Orange	ORG	San Joaquin Valley	SJV
Santa Barbara	SB	Sacramento Valley	SV
Santa Clara Valley	SCV	Pacific	PAC
Call Area 7			
Alaska	AK	Nevada	NV
Arizona	AZ	Oregon	OR
Eastern Washington	EWA	Utah	UT
Idaho	ID	Western Washington	WWA
Montana	MT	Wyoming	WY
Call Area 8			
Michigan	MI	West Virginia	WV
Ohio	OH		
Call Area 9			
Illinois	IL	Wisconsin	WI
Indiana	IN		
Call Area Ø			
Colorado	CO	Missouri	MO
Iowa	IA	Nebraska	NE
Kansas	KS	North Dakota	ND
Minnesota	MN	South Dakota	SD
Canada			
Alberta	AB	Ontario East	ONE
British Columbia	BC	Ontario North	ONN
Golden Horseshoe	GH (formerly GTA)	Ontario South	ONS
Manitoba	MB	Prince Edward Island	PE
New Brunswick	NB	Quebec	QC
Newfoundland/Labrador	NL	Saskatchewan	SK
Nova Scotia	NS	Territories	TER

(Includes the Northwest, Yukon, and Nunavut Territories)

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