

# Dave Howard's VFR Radio Cheat Sheet

This is an unofficial 'cheat sheet', not meant to replace proper training and the official documents. Communication with controllers is dynamic and will vary according to the situation. The descriptions here are examples of common phrasing.

Here is the official word on radio communications. If anything in this document conflicts with it, then this document is wrong:

[https://www.faa.gov/air\\_traffic/publications/atpubs/aim\\_html/chap4\\_section\\_2.html](https://www.faa.gov/air_traffic/publications/atpubs/aim_html/chap4_section_2.html)

## **CLEARANCE DELIVERY (class B or C airspace)**

### request

**CLEARANCE, CALLSIGN, LOCATION**, VFR to **DESTINATION**, with information **ATIS**

### response

**CALLSIGN, INSTRUCTIONS**, departure frequency **FREQ**,  
squawk **CODE**, contact ground **FREQ**

### readback

Roger, **INSTRUCTIONS**, departure frequency **FREQ**, squawk **CODE**, contact ground  
**FREQ, CALLSIGN**

Reno Clearance Delivery, Cessna 0099Q, east ramp, VFR to Stead with  
information Zulu

Cessna 99Q, Reno Clearance Delivery, maintain runway heading until reaching  
6000 feet, departure control frequency 123.45, squawk 1234. Contact ground  
on point 123.7

Roger, maintain runway heading until reaching 6000 feet, departure frequency  
123.45, squawk 1234, contact ground on 123.7, Cessna 99Q

## **GROUND**

### request

**GROUND, CALLSIGN, LOCATION, REQUEST, ATIS, [OTHER]**

### response

**CALLSIGN, GROUND, INSTRUCTIONS**

### readback

Roger, **INSTRUCTIONS, CALLSIGN**

- Reno Ground, Cessna 0099Q, east ramp, taxi for takeoff with information Zulu, north departure
- Cessna 99Q, taxi to runway 34 right, hold short, contact tower 123.45
- Taxi to runway 34 right, hold short, contact tower 123.45, Cessna 99Q

# TOWER

## request

**TOWER, CALLSIGN, LOCATION, REQUEST**

## response

**CALLSIGN, TOWER, INSTRUCTIONS**

## readback

Roger, **INSTRUCTIONS, CALLSIGN**

- Reno Tower, Cessna 0099Q, holding short of runway 34 right, ready for takeoff
- Cessna 99Q, cleared for takeoff runway 34 right, maintain runway heading
- Cleared for takeoff runway 34 right, maintain runway heading, Cessna 99Q

## DEPARTURE CONTROL

request

**DEPARTURE, CALLSIGN, LOCATION/DESCRIPTION**

response

**CALLSIGN, DEPARTURE, INSTRUCTIONS**

readback

Roger, **INSTRUCTIONS, CALLSIGN**

- Reno Departure, Cessna 0099Q, level 6000
- Cessna 99Q, Reno Departure, radar contact, squawk VFR 1200, frequency change approved
- Roger, squawk VFR 1200, leaving this frequency, Cessna 99Q

## APPROACH CONTROL

request

**APPROACH**, at **LOCATION/INTENTIONS**, with **ATIS**

response

**CALLSIGN**, **APPROACH**, squawk **CODE**, ident, [**INSTRUCTIONS**]

readback

Roger, squawk **CODE**, ident, [**INSTRUCTIONS**], **CALLSIGN**

- Reno Approach, Cessna 0099Q, 10 miles north, inbound for Reno/Tahoe with information Zulu
- Cessna 99Q, Reno Approach, squawk 1234, ident.
- Squawk 1234, ident, Cessna 99Q
- Cessna 99Q, Reno Approach, radar contact, 10 miles north, fly heading 123, descend to 6000
- Roger, fly heading 123, descend 6000, Cessna 99Q

## **CONTROLLER initiated**

### Instructions

**CALLSIGN, CONTROLLER, INSTRUCTIONS**

### readback

Roger, **INSTRUCTIONS, CALLSIGN**

- Cessna 99Q, Reno Approach, traffic 2 O'clock, 3 miles
- Roger, looking, Cessna 99Q
- Reno Approach, traffic in sight Cessna 99Q