

# GENERAL CW TRAINING GUIDANCE

I know another long drawn out VA7XFA guidance document... suck it up buttercup.... Please read the whole thing before starting your home study on CW, thanks.

For those interested in starting or continuing their CW training I have pulled together a few resources. There are many "apps", computer programs, YouTube videos, "over the air" resources, hardware morse trainers etc; and I probably have tried just about everything available. Below, I will list, in no particular order, some of the ones that I found the most useful and will give you a few of my thoughts on the subject.

So some were wondering how to learn Morse Code if you don't read it off a page, well I would suggest that you only learn morse code by listening to audio learning resources and so use those resources that play the code and then either speaks the letter or group of letters or flashes them up on the screen or in the apt.

Morse code is a language, listen, learn – <https://youtu.be/1Oqe0oouN2s>

## Some thoughts:

- Learn the code using the audio resources and don't memorize the dots and dashes from a "cheat sheet".... I say this from experience and can tell you that doing so introduces too much "translation" into your thinking. I could go on and on... oh you know I can.... so perhaps just watch this YouTube video: <https://youtu.be/7QcvtbuLpbA>
- Find the resources that work best for you and set aside 15 a day dedicated to CW learning. Use the phone / tablet apps for when you are just sitting around at the Doctors office or at the airport.
- It is just another language, you learned the one you speak just by listening long before you could read.
- When using the apps, programs and watching the video's then focus on a character speed of 17 to 20 and keep adjusting the "Farnsworth" spacing - starting very slow. You may have to mess around with the settings in the apps and programs until you get it the way you like. Lately I have been listening a lot to YouTube videos featuring the top 300 words with fast characters but longer spacing between characters and I am working with this one right now: <https://youtu.be/tupxX6eTl90>.
- Turn on your HF receiver, tune down to the bottom of the band, tune in the slowest CW you hear and just listen, you will start to pick up the occasional letters or letter groups like "CQ CQ CQ DE", listen for them.
- Spend 15 minutes of your contest time just listening to the CW guys as they will be sending the same stuff over and over so you can practice copying.
- You can also get practice listening for, and tracking down the "Beacons", especially on 10 meters.

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**Sending Code** – All the character dot and dash lengths and spacing is very important with straight key but paddles and a keyer can handle the spacing. Both require that you use a proper hand position so go online and look for sending CW videos (old military ones are good). I think, that if you listen a lot, you will pick up the rhythm..... which is the key... the rhythm of the code..... [https://youtu.be/2\\_qQZ92onhU](https://youtu.be/2_qQZ92onhU) ---- (just close your eyes and don't try to read the dits and dahs). Once you learn the code well by ear, then you may be safe to peek. I practice sending code by listening to the audio stuff... mp3 or video and trying to copy them.... like learning to sing along. Using paddles and a keyer handles a lot of that... just saying. Get (Ham-fest) or build, a practice oscillator with a key or paddles. Most radios have a built in keyer and you will be able to set it for straight key or paddles, and set it not to transmit so you can hear your CW signal – PRACTISE, PRACTISE, PRACTISE

**The Exam – Equipment** – I will use a program to send the text at the proper speed for you to copy, and for your sending test you can use either a key or paddles with an oscillator to send the given exam text. It is best if you have your own sending kit that you have setup and practised with but I will provide something if required.

**The Exam – Receiving** – The test consists of copying three minutes of text being sent at 5 wpm (Farnsworth spacing 12 wpm) and you must get 100% ---- fortunately up to 5 errors still gets you 100%.

**The Exam – Sending** – In this test you have three minutes to send all of the text given to you (on a sheet) - perfectly... again fortunately you can make a mistake as long as you send the error code and then the correction, but you must complete sending all of the message text in the three minutes.

## Tablet / Phone Apps:

I have a shortcut to this internet site on my android tablet and it works well (see notes on speed selection) and on "audio" learning.

<https://morsecode.world/international/trainer/trainer.html>

IZ2UUF Morse Koch CW

[https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=net.iz2uuf.cwkoch&hl=en\\_CA&gl=US&pli=1](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=net.iz2uuf.cwkoch&hl=en_CA&gl=US&pli=1)

Claus' Morse Trainer

[https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.niesens.morsetrainer&hl=en\\_CA&gl=US](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.niesens.morsetrainer&hl=en_CA&gl=US)

Morse Mentor

[https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.smokyink.morsecodementor&hl=en\\_CA&gl=US](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.smokyink.morsecodementor&hl=en_CA&gl=US)

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## Computer Programs

Just Learn Morse Code

<http://www.justlearnmorsecode.com/>

G4FON Trainer(s)

<http://www.g4fon.net/>

CW Player

<http://f6dqm.free.fr/soft/cwplayer/en/cwplayer.htm>

## YouTube CW Related Videos:

**Start here:** <https://youtu.be/OB1RUBwAvbE>

<https://www.youtube.com/@KurtZoglmann/featured>

<https://www.youtube.com/@LockdownMorse>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jiHymi2RSbo&t=1279s>

Once you have learned morse code then for practice code copying you can download or even run W1AW files directly from the ARRL at the link below, or even better, you can tune in W1AW on your HF radio and copy the files under realistic conditions. The second link has good audio files but I would hesitate to go to the root site "<http://www.learnmorsecode.com>" because it links to a way of "visually learning" morse code and I do not recommend learning morse code by reading the "dots and dashes" then translating them into the letters.

<http://www.arrl.org/code-practice-files>

<http://www.learnmorsecode.com/index2.html>

OK, good luck, we are all counting on you.

73

John

VE7XFA