### Phonetic alphabet

The NATO alphabet became effective in 1956 and, a few years later, turned into the established universal phonetic alphabet for all military, civilian and amateur radio communications.

### International Morse Code

Morse code transmits text through on-off tones, light flashes or clicks. It was widely used in the 1890s for early radio communication, before it was possible to transmit voice.

### Flaghoist communication

Ships use flags as signals to send out messages to each other. The use of flags, known as flaghoist communication, is a fast and accurate way to send information in daylight.

### Semaphore

Semaphore is a system in which a person sends information at a distance using hand-held flags – depending on the position of the flags, the message will vary. The signaller holds the flag in different positions that represent letters or numbers.

### Panel signalling

Panels are visual signals for sending simple messages to an aircraft. Using a limited code, ground forces can send messages to pilots, for example to request medical supplies.

### Numbers

- **1** One
- **2** Two
- **3** Three
- **4** Four
- **5** Five
- **6** Six
- **7** Seven
- **8** Eight
- **9** Nine
- **0** Zero

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More information on NATO’s codes, signals and standards can be found on the NATO Standardization Office (NSO) website: [http://nso.nato.int/nso/](http://nso.nato.int/nso/) – More on the history of the NATO phonetic alphabet: [http://www.nato.int/declassified/](http://www.nato.int/declassified/)

This poster can be downloaded at [http://www.nato.int/alphabet](http://www.nato.int/alphabet)

Phonetic transcription is based on English pronunciation.