

K9EQ's Ham Radio Rules

Sometimes you need rules. Sometimes you don't. Well here are some more. The list will grow as life's experiences dictate. The value of each rule will vary, of course. And rule n+y may conflict with rule n. That's just how life is.

Let me know if you have a rule suggestion which I can add to the list. Credit will be given.

1. **Economics of RF transmission and reception:** You can never have too many radios.
2. **Conservation of energy:** More power is better than less power unless more power is too much power.
3. **Lifecycle planning:** Always have a pair and a spare. (Credit to K8PE, Doug Myers, SK, who knew things broke and the frequency and degree to which they broke increased with lack of replacement part availability.)
4. **Theory of adapter availability:** Where $A_0...A_n$ is the collection of RF adapters available to you, your project will require adapter A_x where the likelihood of A_x not being in the set $A_0..A_n$ increases with inconvenience and urgency.
5. **Basis of learning:** If it ain't broke we haven't learned anything yet.
6. **W6PC's corollary to the basis of learning:** If it ain't broke, you're not running enough power.
7. **Improbability of simultaneous events:** The likelihood that two stations will transmit at exactly the same time increases with the number of stations on the channel, the length of silence since the last transmission, and the interest level of the conversation.
8. **N2PSR's corollary to the improbability of simultaneous events:** The likelihood that two stations will transmit at exactly the same time increases with the duration of a heated discussion regarding politics, religion, sports, or digital operation on V/UHF bands.
9. **Return on investment:** 90% of the money should be spent on the radio and 10% on the antenna because you use the radio.
10. **Return on investment as applied to antennas:** A 50% increase in performance requires a 200% increase in investment.
11. **Corollary to return on investment as applied to antennas:** Evidence shows it's possible to increase the antenna investment and get less performance.
12. **Reliability:** The more stuff you have, the more stuff you'll have that doesn't work.
13. **Functionality:** The more buttons and knobs your radio has, the less likely the buttons and knobs will be in the correct position for the desired functionality.
14. **Corollary to functionality:** As the importance of a contact increases, the probability that all the radio's buttons and knobs will be set correctly decreases.
15. **Functionality as applied to mobile operation:** The need to change a radio's settings increases with the average traffic congestion multiplied by the percentage of crazy drivers on the road.
16. **Communication reliability:** The probability that a weak, uncopyable station will be clearly readable when they sign off is one.
17. **Artificial intelligence:** Amateur Radio equipment has a sense of humor.
18. **Corollary to artificial intelligence:** The equipment's view of humor is the inverse of your view of humor.
19. **ROI of artificial intelligence:** The greater the equipment's humor, the more it will cost you.
20. **Environmental factors affecting artificial intelligence:** If the radio is uncomfortable in any way (i.e., hot, wet, improperly supplied with power), probability increases that it be even funnier.
21. **Cultural factors affecting artificial intelligence:** Make sure your radio is friends with its antenna.
22. **Comparative intelligence:** Never buy a radio that is smarter than you are.
23. **Financial relativity:** Given an actual investment in a radio of N dollars, your spouse will value the investment at 2N.

24. **Corollary to financial relativity as applied to free and used equipment:** N is the minimum of the radio's actual value or your weekly income.
25. **Mindfulness:** You can have too many radios.
26. **Information theory:** The ability to locate needed information in the manual decreases with radio complexity and the urgency of the information need.
27. **Corollary to information theory:** The probability of finding required information in the manual increases if you already know what you need to know.
28. **Theory of information access:** If you search for the required information in the manual it's available using Google. If you search for the required information using Google, it's in the manual. If you ask for the required information, the answer will be wrong. If you just push the button anyway, there's a 50% chance you'll be right.
29. **Corollary of information access:** Correct answers become less correct when translated into your language.
30. **Conservation of user interfaces:** No matter how similar two radios are, the function of their user interfaces will differ in some critical but subtle way.
31. **Accuracy of information:** A repeater directory's accuracy decreases with your distance from home.
32. **Theory of antenna design:** Does not apply to actual antennas.
33. **Theory of environmental impact on antenna construction:** The performance of an antenna increases with decreasing temperatures multiplied by increasing wind speed during its installation. (Credit to every Ham in the upper midwest.)
34. **Theory of astronomical and meteorological attitude distribution:** For half the people the earth is sunlit, for half the people it is dark, and the other half have a cloud over their head.
35. **Relativistic time dilation effect on net scheduling:** You'll remember the net's is on in time to hear "... we now return the repeater to normal operation."
36. **On the relative performance of conductors with regards to non-symmetric antennas:** A wire is always more efficient than dirt.
37. **On the psychology of those who prefer to use dirt as a major antenna component:** Ease of installation is an attractive demon.
38. **K5KOY's observations on relationships and radio inventory:** Your and your partner's opinion may not be the same.
39. **N4XUX's investment recommendations with regards to K5KOY's observations:** The cost of a radio is twice the cost of the radio where $\frac{1}{2}$ the investment is spent by your partner.
40. **Definition of an antenna:** Something that radiates and receives RF signals.
41. **Antennas and religion:** The radiation efficiency of religious symbols increases with the restrictions on antenna deployment.
42. **Notes on digital communication technology:** You'll need more radios.
43. **Conservation of real estate:** You can never have too many repeater sites.
44. **Corollary to conservation of real estate:** Never abandon a repeater site.
45. **Economics of the corollary to conservation of real estate:** No repeater site is worth more than your house payment.
46. **Relativity of real estate:** The desirability of a house is inversely proportional to antenna restrictions placed on the property by CC&R's, local government, homeowner associations, and grumpy neighbors.
47. **Relativity of neighbors:** The more your neighbor dislikes antennas and high-power radio transmitters, the more likely you neighbor is a unemployed lawyer.
48. **Electrical attraction of tools:** The more likely your radio will be severely damaged by short across two pins, the more likely a metallic tool you're using will discover those two pins.
49. **Human influence on the electrical attraction of tools:** The electrical attraction of tools is increased as the square of the number of people watching you do the repair.

50. **Signal to noise ratio of information:** The S/N of information relating to radio theory, operation, and problem solving deteriorates with the number of relays from the originating station and the quality of that station.
51. **Corollary to Signal to noise ratio of information:** The signal to noise never gets better.

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