**Complete Ten-codes**

**Ten-codes**, properly known as **ten signals**, are code words used to represent common phrases in voice communication, particularly by law enforcement and in Citizen's Band (CB) radio transmissions. The codes, developed in 1937 and expanded in 1974 by the Association of Public Safety Communication Officials (APCO), allow for brevity and standardization of message traffic. They have historically been widely used by law enforcement officers in North America, although some departments have controversially attempted to prohibit their use.

While "ten codes" were intended to be a terse, concise, and standardized system, the proliferation of different meanings has rendered it useless for situations where people from different agencies and jurisdictions need to communicate. For this reason, its use is expressly forbidden in the Incident Command System. In fact, some linguists and sociologists find the diversity of ten codes very interesting.

Some organizations and municipalities also use other codes in addition to the ten-codes. An example is the California Highway Patrol's use of eleven-codes, and the Port Authority Police use of eight codes as part of their communication.

It is also worth noting that amateur radio 'hams' do not use ten-codes, but have their own Q codes, derived from Morse code brevity. Ten codes are therefore highly discouraged in amateur radio use, though they are sometimes used by freebanders and novice operators.

**Historic overview**

Ten-codes were developed in the 1940s at a time when police radio channels were limited, to reduce use of speech on the radio. Credit to the originator goes to Charles "Charlie" Hopper. He was the Communications Director at the Illinois State Police, District 10, located in Urbana, Illinois. Hopper was involved in radio for many years and saw a need to abbreviate radio transmissions on State Police bands.[2] Ten-codes were later adapted for use by CB radio enthusiasts before its pop culture explosion in the late 1970s. The tremendous popularity of the 1975 *Convoy* song by C.W. McCall depicting droll conversation among CB-communicating truckers put several phrases, such as *10-4* for "understood" and *what's your twenty?* for "where are you?" into common and enduring use in American English. The song was followed by a 1978 movie *Convoy* which further entrenched the use of ten-codes in casual conversation.

In the fall of 2005, responding to inter-organizational communication problems during the rescue operations after Hurricane Katrina, the United States Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) discouraged the use of ten-codes and other codes due to their high variability in meaning (see the November 2005 articles in External links, below). The Department of Homeland Security reportedly has plans to do away with 10-codes as well, in favor of "Plain English"[2] while the nationally-standardized Incident Command System specifically prohibits ten-codes.

**List of ten-codes**

The following list, given in ascending order and grouped by decade, illustrates the current usage of various ten-codes. Only a handful of them are standardized. Some are fairly consistent, while others (such as 10-40) can have completely different meanings, many of which are not listed here.

Presentation:

* Multiple meanings for the same code are in a bulleted list
* The first **bold** definition is the current APCO specification.
* Popular alternate meanings follow in **bold**.
* Less common meanings are in regular typeface
* Meanings specific to CB radio are set in *italics*.

**10-0s**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **This section does not cite any references or sources.** Please improve this section by adding citations to reliable sources. Unverifiable material may be challenged and removed. (*August 2007*) |

|  |
| --- |
| **10-0s** | 10-10s | 10-20s | 10-30s | 10-40s | 10-50s | 10-60s | 10-70s | 10-80s | 10-90s | 10-100s and up |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Code** | **Meaning(s)** |
| 10-00 | * **Officer Down, All Patrols Respond**   '(*Ten-Double Zero*)' |
| 10-0 | * **Caution** * Death/Dead * Pursuit |
| 10-1 | * **Poor Reception** * **Officer Needs Help** * Unable to Copy * Call your command (New York City) |
| 10-2 | * **Good Reception** * OK For Now, Continue With Status Checks * Return to your command (New York City) |
| 10-3 | * **Stop Transmitting** * Ok, No Further Status Checks Needed * Call your dispatcher {aka 'Central} (New York City) |
| 10-4 | * **Message Received** * Affirmative * Ok * Understood |
| 10-5 | * **Relay** * Pick up an item * Repeat message (New York City) |
| 10-6 | * **Busy** * Out At Call * Stand by (New York City) |
| 10-7 | * **Out of Service** * Ending tour of Duty * Deceased * Not functional (as a vehicle) * (Ambulance) On Scene * Request Break * Proceeding to \_\_\_ |
| 10-8 | * **Back In Service** * On Duty * Available for next Call * (Ambulance) In Service / En Route * Off Meal (Glen Cove, NY) |
| 10-9 | * **Repeat last message** * Misdemeanor warrant (Michigan) |

**10-10s**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **This section does not cite any references or sources.** Please improve this section by adding citations to reliable sources. Unverifiable material may be challenged and removed. (*August 2007*) |

|  |
| --- |
| 10-0s | **10-10s** | 10-20s | 10-30s | 10-40s | 10-50s | 10-60s | 10-70s | 10-80s | 10-90s | 10-100s and up |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Code** | **Meaning(s)** |
| 10-10 | * **Fight In Progress** * out of service, off duty * Permission to go on common channel (car to car transmission, rather than through dispatch) * negative * transmission completed * welfare check * Other non-Criminal Event * On Break, Subject To Calls * Possible Crime {Shots fired, suspicious person etc.} (New York City) * Person with felony warrant (Michigan) |
| 10-11 | * **Animal Problem** * road-side check * talking too fast * alarm call * en route * Alarm, specify type (New York City) * Come to H.Q., or go to another area, code-1 (Glen Cove, NY) |
| 10-12 | * **Standby** * visitors present * disregard * call in reports * at scene * check revocation * Security Holding, usually inside a store (New York City) |
| 10-13 | * **Advise Weather/Road Conditions** * Officer in need of assistance * Mental health patient transport * Officer needs immediate assistance (New York City) |
| 10-14 | * **Suspicious Person/Report of Prowler** * convoy or escort * Check Plate, Vehicle is occupied and suspicious, check if stolen (New York City) |
| 10-15 | * **Civil Disturbance** * prisoner/suspect in custody * Check if Vehicle Stolen - People in or out rolling/stationary vehicle. * domestic disturbance * Check Plate, whether occupied or otherwise, check if stolen (New York City) |
| 10-16 | * **Domestic Disturbance** * make pickup at \_\_\_ * *non-urgent business* (lights and siren not necessary) * Vehicle Stolen * License Check reports stolen (New York City) |
| 10-17 | * **Meet Complainant** * **pick up papers at \_\_\_** * *urgent business* (lights and siren) * Conduct Investigation * Vehicle Not Stolen * En Route * Medical Emergency * License Check reports not stolen (New York City) |
| 10-18 | * **Urgent** * **complete assignment ASAP** * *anything for us?* * intoxicated (as a noun or an adjective) * Warrant Check shows active warrants (New York City) |
| 10-19 | * **Return to \_\_\_\_\_\_** * Returning from Scene * Return/Enroute To Station * Warrant Check shows no active warrants (New York City) |

**10-20s**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **This section does not cite any references or sources.** Please improve this section by adding citations to reliable sources. Unverifiable material may be challenged and removed. (*August 2007*) |

|  |
| --- |
| 10-0s | 10-10s | **10-20s** | 10-30s | 10-40s | 10-50s | 10-60s | 10-70s | 10-80s | 10-90s | 10-100s and up |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Code** | **Meaning(s)** |
| 10-20 | * **Specify Location/My Location is \_\_\_/Location** * Report of past robbery (New York City) |
| 10-21 | * **Please Call \_\_\_** * Phone Call * Report of past burglary (New York City) |
| 10-22 | * **Disregard** * *report to \_\_\_* * send blood technician * Report of past larceny, specify type (New York City) |
| 10-23 | * **Arrived at Location/On Scene** * stand by on this frequency * status check * En Route to call * sex offense * meet with officer |
| 10-24 | * **EMERGENCY BACK UP** * clear call/stop * trouble at station * unit not available * direct traffic * Report of past assault (New York City) |
| 10-25 | * **Report to \_\_\_** * Please Contact \_\_\_ * Officer Needs Help * Report of past child abuse (New York City) |
| 10-26 | * **Detaining Suspect** (implying "Please expedite") * check auto registration * ETA \_\_\_ * *disregard last info* * phone residence * call canceled * Message Received |
| 10-27 | * **Request Drivers License Check** * Vehicle Registration Request * *I am moving to channel \_\_\_* * Motor Vehicle Accident * Traffic stop * felony crimes as follows (the "10" portion being commonly unstated):   27-1 Homicide  27-2 Rape or sexual assault  27-3 Armed robbery  27-4 Aggravated battery  27-5 Burglary (commercial or residential)  27-6 Theft  27-7 Auto theft  27-8 Shooting  27-9 Stabbing |
| 10-28 | * **Request Vehicle Registration Check** * driver's license request * *identify your station* * missing person |
| 10-29 | * **Request Arrests/Warrants Check** * *time is up for contact* * Stolen Vehicle * Other past crime, specify (New York City) |

**10-30s**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **This section does not cite any references or sources.** Please improve this section by adding citations to reliable sources. Unverifiable material may be challenged and removed. (*August 2007*) |

|  |
| --- |
| 10-0s | 10-10s | 10-20s | **10-30s** | 10-40s | 10-50s | 10-60s | 10-70s | 10-80s | 10-90s | 10-100s and up |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Code** | **Meaning(s)** |
| 10-30 | * **unauthorized use of radio** * danger/caution * special check at \_\_\_ * juvenile * Robbery in progress (New York City) |
| 10-31 | * **crime in progress** * In pursuit * domestic disturbance * check for local warrants * suspicious person or situation * Burglary in progress (New York City) |
| 10-32 | * **person with gun** * fight in progress * *radio check* * check NCIC * DWI test * medic down * Breathalyzer * Larceny in progress, specify type (New York City) |
| 10-33 | * **emergency, all units stand by** * officer needs help * disturbance at \_\_\_ * Emergency Traffic * fire * Threat or confirmed sighting of a bomb/explosive device (New York City) |
| 10-34 | * **riot** * frequency open (cancels 10-33) * *help needed* * trouble at jail * correct time * meet officer * Assault in progress (New York City) |
| 10-35 | * **major crime alert** * **confidential information** * suspicious person * Child abuse in progress (New York City) |
| 10-36 | * **correct time of day?** * *Confidential information* |
| 10-37 | * **suspicious vehicle** * **identify yourself** * wrecker needed at \_\_\_ * shoplifter * time of day? * Operator on Duty |
| 10-38 | * **stopping suspicious vehicle** * **Traffic Stop** * *ambulance needed* * station report satisfactory * Road Block * phone communications * vandalism |
| 10-39 | * **investigate suspicious vehicle** * **run with lights & siren** * **your message was delivered** * **Backing Up\_\_\_\_** * false alarm, premises were occupied * contact officer * disturbance * resume previous assignment * revert to prior status |

**10-40s**

|  |
| --- |
| 10-0s | 10-10s | 10-20s | 10-30s | **10-40s** | 10-50s | 10-60s | 10-70s | 10-80s | 10-90s | 10-100s and up |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Code** | **Meaning(s)** |
| 10-40 | * **run silent (no lights & siren)** * false alarm, no activity, premises appears secure * *please tune to channel \_\_\_* * expedite * advise if available * suspicious person * dead animal * mental patient * fight * Meal Break * shots fired * Out at station/office |
| 10-41 | * **begin duty** * radio test * intoxicated person * debris in street * neighbor trouble * officer is out on a meal break |
| 10-42 | * **end duty** * "Flush and Clean" * *traffic accident at \_\_\_* * malicious mischief * request dispatch times * Home * fatality |
| 10-43 | * **information** * *traffic jam at \_\_\_* * request criminal history * pick up passenger * armed robbery * rescue call * request officer |
| 10-44 | * **permission to leave patrol** * *I have a message for you* * transmission received * possible mental subject * traffic accident (no injury) * stolen (mostly vehicles) * fatality * suicide or attempt * Haz-Mat condition (New York City) |
| 10-45 | * **animal carcass** * **pick up officer** * **fatality** * **Drivers License/Warrant Check** * fire alarm * fueling vehicle * *all units in range please report* * traffic accident (injury) * property damage/car accident (non-injury) |
| 10-46 | * **motorist assist** * motor vehicle accident (MVA) * wrecker * car accident (injury) |
| 10-47 | * **emergency road repair** * disorders and family trouble * missing person * drunk driver * blood run * Paper Work * request ambulance |
| 10-48 | * **traffic control** * request criminal history * Did you copy? * runaway juvenile * use caution * request wrecker * ready to copy information |
| 10-49 | * **traffic light out** * EMERGENCY, clear air * en route to assignment * any traffic * Warrant * serving warrant * intoxicated/reckless driver |

**10-50s**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **This section does not cite any references or sources.** Please improve this section by adding citations to reliable sources. Unverifiable material may be challenged and removed. (*August 2007*) |

|  |
| --- |
| 10-0s | 10-10s | 10-20s | 10-30s | 10-40s | **10-50s** | 10-60s | 10-70s | 10-80s | 10-90s | 10-100s and up |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Code** | **Meaning(s)** |
| 10-50 | * **Traffic Stop** * **accident** Often referred to as a 10-50 PD (Property Damage), a 10-50 PI (Personal Injury), or (rarely) 10-50 F (Fire or Fatality) * **no messages** * **no/negative** * *break channel* * auto accident with property damage * Disorderly person/group (New York City) |
| 10-51 | * **wrecker needed** * auto accident with injuries * phone message * in route * Wandering gang, specify # of persons and direction |
| 10-52 | * **ambulance needed** * **Accident with Injuries** * fatal auto accident * message for assignment * Estimated Time of Arrival * audible alarm * Dispute, specify if weapons, injuries (New York City) |
| 10-53 | * **road blocked** * silent alarm * enroute office * intoxicated/disorderly person * Vehicle accident, specify if property involved or if injuries (New York City) |
| 10-54 | * **Negative** * **animals on highway** * **Fatal Accident** * silent pursuit * car stop * Aided case {Injury, illness} |
| 10-55 | * **intoxicated driver or DWI** * security check * ambulance call |
| 10-56 | * **intoxicated pedestrian** * **Intoxicated Driver** * warrant indicated * arrived at scene |
| 10-57 | * **hit & run accident** * **Intoxicated Person** * narcotics * officer at pistol range |
| 10-58 | * **direct traffic** * wrecker * DOA * teleprinter message |
| 10-59 | * **escort or convoy** * out of car checking violation * ambulance * bomb threat |

**10-60s**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **This section does not cite any references or sources.** Please improve this section by adding citations to reliable sources. Unverifiable material may be challenged and removed. (*August 2007*) |

|  |
| --- |
| 10-0s | 10-10s | 10-20s | 10-30s | 10-40s | 10-50s | **10-60s** | 10-70s | 10-80s | 10-90s | 10-100s and up |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Code** | **Meaning(s)** |
| 10-60 | * **squad in vicinity** * **traffic stop** * **subject negative** * what is next message number? * assist motorist * major emergency * canceled * coffee break |
| 10-61 | * **personnel in vicinity** (Is the subject within earshot of your radio?) * **subject has record - not wanted** * stand by for CW traffic * clear of traffic stop * weather conditions? * lunch break |
| 10-62 | * **reply to message** * **subject possibly wanted** * *unable to copy, use phone* * check for rising water * logged on/off |
| 10-63 | * **prepare to copy** * **subject positive** * make written copy * net directed to \_\_\_ * need barricades |
| 10-64 | * **local message** * **subject wanted** * message for delivery * net clear, resume normal traffic * field investigator * stopping motorist for moving violation |
| 10-65 | * **Prepare to Copy** * **net message assignment** * **assist officer re: 10-64** * kidnapping |
| 10-66 | * **Officer wellbeing check (make sure everything is still ok)** * net message cancellation * subject in observation category |
| 10-67 | * **clear for next message** * **subject is parolee** * prepare to copy * person calling for help * *all units comply* |
| 10-68 | * **dispatch message** * **subject in charged category** * repeat dispatch * switch channels |
| 10-69 | * **message received** * **clear to copy transmission?** * any calls holding for me? * sniper |

**10-70s**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **This section does not cite any references or sources.** Please improve this section by adding citations to reliable sources. Unverifiable material may be challenged and removed. (*August 2007*) |

|  |
| --- |
| 10-0s | 10-10s | 10-20s | 10-30s | 10-40s | 10-50s | 10-60s | **10-70s** | 10-80s | 10-90s | 10-100s and up |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Code** | **Meaning(s)** |
| 10-70 | * **fire alarm** * fire * Wrecker * fire follow-up * prowler * net message * chemical spill |
| 10-71 | * **Advise nature of fire** * **Lewd or Sexual Act** * Ambulance) |
| 10-72 | * **Report progress on fire** * **Subject is in PROHIBITED category (i.e.-drive, possess firearms, etc.)** \* * **D.O.A.** * Prisoner in custody * Suicide or Attempted Suicide * Fire Truck |
| 10-73 | * **Smoke report** * Mental patient |
| 10-74 | * **negative** |
| 10-75 | * **In contact with...** |
| 10-76 | * **enroute to location** |
| 10-77 | * **ETA** |
| 10-78 | * **need assistance** * major accident with injury * request wrecker |
| 10-79 | * **notify coroner** * bomb threat * hit & run |

**10-80s**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **This section does not cite any references or sources.** Please improve this section by adding citations to reliable sources. Unverifiable material may be challenged and removed. (*August 2007*) |

|  |
| --- |
| 10-0s | 10-10s | 10-20s | 10-30s | 10-40s | 10-50s | 10-60s | 10-70s | **10-80s** | 10-90s | 10-100s and up |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Code** | **Meaning(s)** |
| 10-80 | * **pursuit in progress** * subject has been arrested * bomb has exploded * tower lights out * on assignment * demonstration |
| 10-81 | * **traffic stop initiated** * **breathalyzer request** * **Burglar Alarm** * stop for interrogation * officer \_\_\_ will be at your station * at vehicle maintenance * civil disturbance/riot |
| 10-82 | * **reserve lodging** * stop for interrogation/arrest * traffic signals out * cover assistance * advise location and status |
| 10-83 | * **work/school crossing detail** * call station * units stop transmitting * at radio shop * officer in trouble |
| 10-84 | * **advise ETA** * checking officer status * *my telephone number is \_\_\_* * follow-up * broken utility main * special detail |
| 10-85 | * **arrival delay due to \_\_\_** * prepare to copy info * *my address is \_\_\_* * loose livestock |
| 10-86 | * **officer on-duty** * utility line down |
| 10-87 | * **pickup or prisoner transfer** * pickup payroll check * dead body * Respond with caution (Glen Cove, NY) |
| 10-88 | * **advise telephone** * station call * special assignment * true alarm * officer needs assistance |
| 10-89 | * **bomb threat** * send radio repair * officer at academy |

**10-90s**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **This section does not cite any references or sources.** Please improve this section by adding citations to reliable sources. Unverifiable material may be challenged and removed. (*August 2007*) |

|  |
| --- |
| 10-0s | 10-10s | 10-20s | 10-30s | 10-40s | 10-50s | 10-60s | 10-70s | 10-80s | **10-90s** | 10-100s and up |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Code** | **Meaning(s)** |
| 10-90 | * **Alarm Going Off** * **Bank Alarm** * radio repair to be at station * officer at headquarters * false alarm * officer in chief's office * missing person * lunch break |
| 10-91 | * **pick up prisoner/suspect** * *talk closer to the mike* * prepare your inspection * vehicle fuel * bank holdup alarm |
| 10-92 | * **Subject in custody**\* * **parking violation** * *your signal is weak* * officer at court |
| 10-93 | * **blockage** * *please check my frequency* |
| 10-94 | * **street racing** * **change to channel** |
| 10-95 | * **prisoner/suspect in custody** * *transmit dead carrier for 5 seconds* |
| 10-96 | * **mental patient** * **detain prisoner/suspect** * request case number |
| 10-97 | * **arrived at scene** * **test signal** * possibly wanted person in vehicle * welfare check * known offender * officer at court |
| 10-98 | * **assignment complete** * **prison/jail break** * **criminal history indicated** * officer at juvenile court * Alarm (Glen Cove, NY) |
| 10-99 | * **cardiac arrest/death** * **warrants/stolen indicated** * **officer needs assistance/held hostage** * **Message Received** (1-Person Unit) * *mission complete* * unable to receive your signal * Traffic stop / violator |

**10-100s and up**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **This section does not cite any references or sources.** Please improve this section by adding citations to reliable sources. Unverifiable material may be challenged and removed. (*August 2007*) |

|  |
| --- |
| 10-0s | 10-10s | 10-20s | 10-30s | 10-40s | 10-50s | 10-60s | 10-70s | 10-80s | 10-90s | **10-100s and up** |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Code** | **Meaning(s)** |
| 10-100 | * **Misdemeanor Warrant** * dead body * hot pursuit * using restroom (numbers 1 or 2) * controlled substance |
| 10-105 | * **Dead on Arrival (DOA)** |
| 10-108 | * **officer down** * **officer in danger** |
| 10-109 | * **suicide** |
| 10-110 | * **Juvenile Disturbance** |
| 10-200 | * *police needed* * *narcotics, drugs involved* |
| 10-1000 | * **Felony Warrant** |
| 10-2000 | * **police required immediately** |

**Other Police Codes**

Some other police codes are as follows:

**3500** marijuana

**2301** Public Intoxication

**148/149** DUI/DWI

**9560** Mentally Ill

**5150** Involuntary Psychiatric Hold