

Morse Code: Dits and Dahs

The Morse Code is a language that people use to communicate with each other through telegraph, radio, satellite, or with light. The language is a series of short and long bursts that are heard or seen. The short bursts of sound or light are called “dit”, and the long bursts are called “dah”. Visually, they are written as dots and dashes.

Communication is Key!

Say “Hey” in Morse Code by repeating:
Di-di-di-dit, Dit, Da-di-da-dah

1. Use your paper and pencil, with the key below, to create your own message for a friend to decode.
2. With a flashlight for each player, try signaling to each other from across a room, or through windows between you and a neighbor!
3. Want to try passing messages through touch? Try tying knots in string, or raised glue dots and dashes on paper !

Materials

Paper
Pencil
2 Flashlights
Morse Code Key

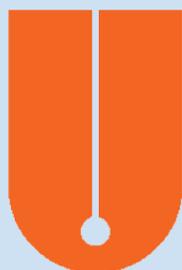


International Morse Code

- The length of a dot is 1 unit, and a dash is 3 units
- The space between letters is 3 units
- The space between words is 7 units

A ● ■	U ● ● ■
B ■ ■ ● ●	V ● ● ● ■
C ■ ■ ● ■ ●	W ● ■ ■
D ■ ■ ● ●	X ■ ■ ● ● ■
E ●	Y ■ ■ ● ■ ■
F ● ● ■ ●	Z ■ ■ ■ ● ●
G ■ ■ ■ ●	
H ● ● ● ●	
I ● ●	
J ● ■ ■ ■ ■	
K ■ ■ ● ■	1 ● ■ ■ ■ ■ ■
L ● ■ ■ ● ●	2 ● ● ■ ■ ■ ■
M ■ ■ ■	3 ● ● ● ■ ■ ■
N ■ ■ ●	4 ● ● ● ● ■
O ■ ■ ■ ■	5 ● ● ● ● ●
P ● ■ ■ ■ ●	6 ■ ■ ● ● ● ●
Q ■ ■ ■ ● ■	7 ■ ■ ■ ● ● ●
R ● ■ ■ ●	8 ■ ■ ■ ■ ● ●
S ● ● ●	9 ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ●
T ■ ■ ■	0 ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

Samuel F.B. Morse co-developed and patented an early telegraph system in 1837. This telegraph needed a way to communicate through bursts of electricity, so Morse developed a code we now know as the Morse Code.



Do You Know Morse Code?

The International Morse Code is used world-wide by aviation, naval, and geographical systems, amateur, military, and professional alike. This means that soldiers, sailors, fishermen, pilots, spies, detectives, and youth scouts have used International Morse Code!

Not All Alphabets are the same!

Some languages use alphabets to write, while others use syllable symbols or image characters.

The Morse system was first based on the English alphabet, but did not work for other languages. In 1848, Fredrich Clemens Gerke refined the Morse Code into the **Hamburg Alphabet**, and it's this alphabet that we now know as the **International Morse Code**.



Morse Code and the Navy Today

The United States is developing a flashlight Morse Code System, **Flashing Light to Text Converter (FLTC)** that interacts with smart phones and tablets for ship-to-ship and ship-to-shore communication.

Did you know that Morse Code has a rhythm, and can be thought of as music? Every **Dot** or **dit** •, and every **dash**, or **dah** -, has a musical pattern and beat.

Beethoven's 5th Symphony Theme

Ludwig van Beethoven



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In Germany, Morse Code has been set to the rhythm of Beethoven's "Fifth Symphony." There is even a British detective television series "Inspector Morse" set to Morse Code! In fact, the lead character, Chief Inspector Morse's last name is the theme spelled out to music in **DADAH DADADAH DIDAH DIT DIDIDIT DIT!**



