



The 2026 Mil-YOTA Competition

Every Saturday in November, 2026 starts at 12:00 local time and ends at 18:00 local time, Challenges can be completed over the course of the year, starting on December 1st and ending on November 30th.

I. OBJECTIVE:

To introduce members of youth military groups to the amateur radio service and different aspects of radio communications. Encouraging the next generation of amateur radio hobbyists, experimenters, and military communicators by introducing them to modern modes and activities through friendly competition.

II. OVERVIEW:

Each military youth group will be operating as a club for competition scoring purposes. Each military youth group can score points by completing QSOs during the competition window and completing radio related challenges at any time during the competition year.

III. OPERATING:

All amateur radio bands where contesting is allowed to occur are allowed. Observance of established band plans is strongly encouraged. Multiple transceivers on the same band/mode is allowed, but individual cadets may only use one station on each band/mode. Ex: if a cadet operates station 1 on 20m SSB, they can not operate station 2 on 20m SSB. However they can operate station 2 on 20m using a different mode (data or CW).

IV. CONTEST EXCHANGE:

For the contest portion the RS report and callsigns are the required information to exchange. Any location information given such as Maidenhead gridsquare, Parks on the Air number, Summits on the Air or World Wide Flora & Fauna number should also be documented. Any information that qualifies for additional points (veteran status, cadet2cadet, AD) must be asked by the cadet during the QSO and can not be included in the initial exchange.

V. SCORING:

Score: The final score is the sum of the QSO points plus any additional points from completing challenges. Example: 500 QSO points + 700 challenge points = 1,200 (final score).

A. QSO Points: Stations may be contacted once on each band per call sign used. QSO points are based on the mode used to conduct the QSO. QSO score is the same for all scoring categories.

1. Contacts utilizing CW score ten (10) points. (CW must be manually transmitted, use of coding machines or software does not count.)
2. Contacts utilizing phone score three (3) points.
3. Contacts utilizing digital mode score one (1) point.

B. QSO Bonus: There are two (2) types of bonuses (cadet operators only).

1. C2C: A bonus of two (2) points for each cadet-to-cadet contact. QSO bonus can be counted per band, C2C noted in logs.

2. AD/Veteran: A bonus of one (1) point for each QSO conducted with an active duty military member or a veteran. QSO bonuses can be counted per band, to claim note branch in logs. (IE: USMC, USA, USN, RAF)

C: Challenge Points: Challenge points can be earned December 1st through November 30th. The table of Challenge points will be on the score sheet, attached to the email when submitting QSO logs and any supporting documents. Challenge points can be scored once for each unit, unless specified.

1. Get licensed: Each cadet newly licensed or upgraded since the previous year's competition is worth points based on the license level. Points are stackable if a cadet upgrades multiple levels. (IE: unlicensed to general scores the points for technician and general level license.) License level points are twenty-five (25) points for technician, fifty (50) points for general, one hundred (100) points for extra.

2. Unit picture: Submit a unit picture taken during the contest by email with your score sheet and log. Twenty (20) points.

3. Winlink: Send and receive a Winlink email (no telnet). This can be amongst cadets at the same military youth group as this isn't scored as a QSO. Five (5) points per cadet.

- 4. SSTV:** Decode a SSTV image, five (5) points per cadet. Transmit a SSTV image, ten (10) points per cadet.
- 5. Meshtastic:** Send and receive at least one message using a Meshtastic node the cadets built. To qualify as being built the cadets should assemble the hardware or construct an enclosure to put Meshtastic hardware in. Meshcore and other mesh variants qualify. Twenty (20) points per cadet.
- 6. Balloon/Rocket:** Launch a high altitude balloon, pico balloon, or model rocket and use amateur radio to report telemetry. Two hundred (200) points.
- 7. Join a club:** Join a club or association; local, school, state, or national level. (Many have discounted or free dues for students.) Twenty (20) points per cadet.
- 8. License test prep:** Sign up for online test study material or order printed study material. Ten (10) points per cadet.
- 9. Design a unit e-qsl card:** QSL cards are a ham radio tradition used to confirm successful QSOs. Design an electronic card and send it if anyone requests one. Twenty (20) points.
- 10. Access a BBS:** Use a BBS to send and/or receive messages, and check out any other features it may have available. Telnet connections are not allowed. Ten (10) points per cadet.
- 11. Build a kit:** Build and test a kit. Kits can be for transceivers or accessories like an amp or TNC. One hundred (100) points per kit.
- 12. Build an antenna:** Build and complete a test contact with the antenna. Twenty (20) points per antenna.
- 13. Fox hunt:** Conduct a fox hunt, using transceivers and radio direction finding techniques to locate a transmitter. Fifty (50) points.
- 14. Satellite QSO:** Use a space based repeater to make a QSO. This is an exception to the repeater rule and is only scored under the non-QSO points. Twenty-five (25) points.
- 15. NWS storm spotter certification:** Attend the basic storm spotter course offered by your local National Weather Service office. Ten (10) points per cadet.
- 16. Warships on the air:** Participate in this special event in June. Make QSOs with historical naval vessels. Fifty (50) points per cadet.
- 17. Field Day/Winter Field Day:** Participate in field day in June, winner field day in January, or both. The field day events are a practice exercise for portable stations. Participating via a club's GOTA (Get On The Air) station counts for points. Fifty (50) points per cadet, cadets may collect challenge points for each.
- 18. POTA/SOTA:** Activate a park, summit, or WWFF site. Twenty-five (25) points for activating a park or WWFF site, and fifty (50) points for activating a summit. Bonus points are added on top of QSO points earned if done during the competition Saturday in November.
- 19. APRS:** Build an APRS station; i-gate, digipeater, or a weather station. Add to your local infrastructure and see there is more to APRS than just beaconing. Fifty (50) points for receiving only, one hundred and fifty (150) for transmitting and receiving APRS stations.
- 20. Armed Forces Day Crossband Test:** Participate in the Armed Forces Day Crossband test in May. Fifty (50) points per cadet.
- 21. Weather Radio:** Purchase and configure a weather radio for your area. Transceivers that have weather alerts count for this category. Ten (10) points per cadet.
- 22. ADS-B/AIS:** Receive and decode ADS-B (airplanes) or AIS (ships) packet data in your area. Ten (10) points per cadet.

23. Worked All States (WAS): Make contact with someone in every state. Five hundred (500) points per cadet. Bonus points are added on top of QSO points earned if done during the competition Saturday in November.

24. Weather satellite imagery: Download NOAA weather satellite imagery. Fifty (50) points.

25. Social media posts: Post on any social media about the competition or an activity occurring during the competition, use #milyota #milyota26 Unit social media and cadets social media eligible, five (5) points per post.

26. Professional communicators: Visit a public safety dispatch center, emergency management agency, or military comms unit and learn about the professional use of radio communications. Three hundred (300) points.

VI. ENTRY CATEGORIES:

Categories will consist of competing military youth groups, assisting radio clubs/ARES groups, and individual chasers.

A. Military youth group: Each local military youth group will act as a club for aggregate scoring. Only one transmitted signal is permitted at a time, per call sign. Multiple transmitting stations are allowed at the same time when using multiple callsigns. Only cadet QSOs count for scoring.

1. Each military youth group will submit one score sheet with logs on the google spreadsheet by email to ko4ish@mil-yota.com

B. Volunteer Organization: This category consists of any Amateur Radio Club, ARES group, or military communications unit that assists cadets in the competition.

1. Clubs earn points by total volunteer hours. Five (5) points an hour. Volunteer hours can be completed throughout the year. Number of stations, two (2) points per station.

2. Each Club will submit one google spreadsheet score sheet for volunteer hours by callsign and number of stations set up; to ko4ish@mil-yota.com

VII. AWARDS:

Participating Youth Military Organizations, clubs, and chasers will be recognized on the website. Electronic certificates are being worked on and should be available for 2026.

VIII. GENERAL RULES FOR ALL ENTRANTS:

1. This is for the cadets.

2. Cadets shall use their own call sign if possible, unlicensed cadets or cadets wanting to use a higher licenses' privileges will use a licensed volunteers' callsigns.

3. A call sign may be logged once per band per mode types (phone, digital or CW).

4. With each military youth group potentially operating multiple call signs, they may not contact the other call signs who will have their score aggregated together under the same military youth group for QSO points.

5. Each military youth group may operate multiple call signs at once, individual cadets may only operate one at a time.
6. Contesting reports with all info are not allowed. The cadet has to ask questions for any bonus points, encouraging the use of radio.
7. Remote receivers outside of the station location are not permitted.
8. All requests for contacts, responses to calls, and copying of call signs and contest exchanges must be accomplished during the contest period.
9. Correction of logged call signs and exchanges after the contest, by use of any database, recordings, email or other methods, is not allowed.
10. No repeater contacts are allowed for QSO points.
10. FT8 and other automated modes are not eligible for QSO points.
11. Units can only make QSOs for the amateur radio portion of the competition on ONE Saturday in November.
12. Civil Air Patrol units may use their authorized military frequencies in addition to amateur radio frequencies.

IX. LOG DEADLINE:

1. All entries must be sent WITHIN THREE (3) DAYS after the end of the contest: no later than 2359 CST December 3rd. Resubmitting an entry after the deadline will result in it being considered as a late log.
2. An extension may be requested by email at ko4ish@mil-yota.com The request should state a legitimate reason and must be received before the log deadline.
3. Logs submitted after the deadline may be listed in the results, but are not eligible for awards.

X. DECLARATION:

By submitting a Mil-YOTA contest log and any supporting documentation for score, you agree that you:

1. Have read and understood the rules of the contest and agree to follow them.
2. Operated according to all rules and regulations that pertain to amateur radio for the station location.
3. Agree the log entry may be made open to the public.
4. Agree that your military youth group unit name, score, and supporting materials (ie pictures) may be used on the contest website and social media.