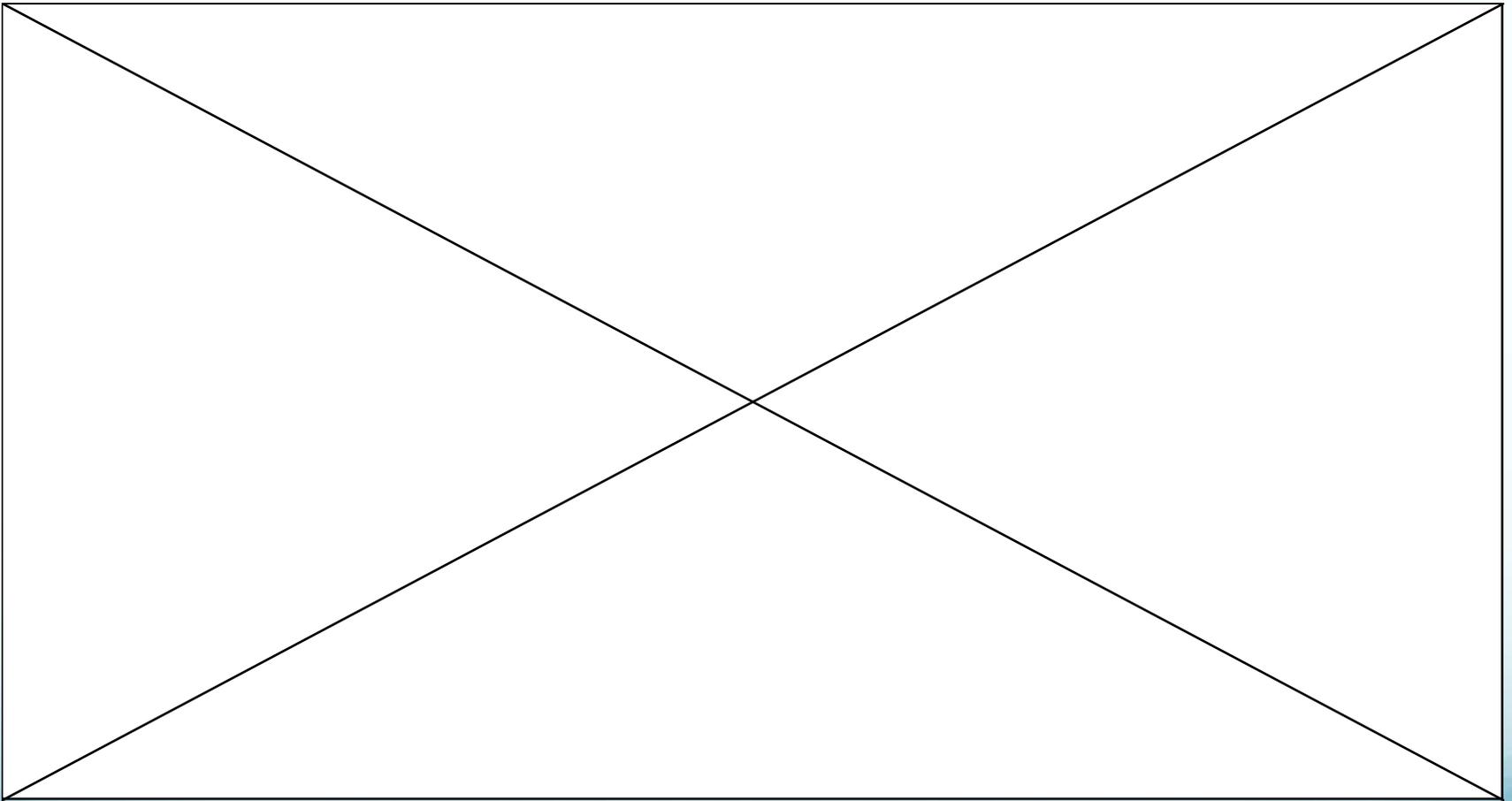


SOTA



Summits On The Air
Original version by Curtis KC5CW
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Read the History Online

Let's Jump Into the Fun

- Websites
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- Alerting
- Awards
- Lessons Learned

Websites

- Official SOTA Main Website: www.sota.org.uk
- Official SOTA Spotting Tool: www.sotawatch.org
- Official SOTA Database: www.sotadata.org.uk
- Our Area's Website: <http://www.qsl.net/kd9kc/>
- USA-W0 Website: <http://w0-sota.org>
- Summits Website: <http://listsofjohn.com>
- NA SOTA Reflector: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/nasota>
- Missouri SOTA Website: <http://www.mosota.org/>
- NA SOTA Website: <http://na-sota.org>
- Activation map: <http://www.sotamaps.com/>



The screenshot shows the SOTAwatch2 website interface. At the top, it says "SOTAwatch2" and "Logged in as KD9PVZ | Log out | Edit Account". Below this is a navigation menu with links for Home, Spots, Alerts, Summits, Reflector, Website, Database, Video, Photos, Recent Info, Shop, and Mapping. A status message indicates "This page refreshes every 1 minute. Last updated 01:21:53 UTC".

The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column is titled "Latest Spots" and contains a list of recent spots with columns for date, call sign, location, and frequency. The right column is titled "Reflector Latest" and contains a list of recent posts from the reflector.

Latest Spots

Date	Call Sign	Location	Frequency
Sat 01:19	YK1HAMZ on YK2/SW-033		14.315 ssb
Sat 01:13	YK1HAMZ on YK2/SW-033		14.315 ssb
Sat 01:04	YK6MMB on YK6/SW-048		7.090 ssb
Sat 01:02	YK3DAC on YK3/VG-033		14.310 ssb
Sat 00:58	YK6MMB on YK6/SW-048		7.090 ssb
Sat 10:42	YK3DAC on YK3/VG-033		7.085 ssb

Upcoming Activations

Date	Call Sign	Location	Frequency
Sat 01:00	YK1HAMZ on YK2/SW-033		7-ssb, 14.310-ssb
Sat 01:00	YK2QR on YK3/VE-001		7-ssb
Sat 02:00	YK2IBP on YK3/SC-025		7.028-cw, 7.090-ssb, 10.106-cw, 14.058-cw
Sat 02:00	YK3PPF on YK3/VG-152		7.090-ssb, 14.310-ssb

What is it?

- SOTA is an award program for radio amateurs and sw listeners that encourages portable operation in mountainous areas. SOTA has been carefully designed to make participation possible for everyone – this is not just for mountaineers!
- There are awards for activators (those who ascend to the summits) and chasers (who either operate from home, a local hilltop or even as activators on other summits).

General SOTA Principles

- One set of generic rules for everyone
- DX entities form one or more “Associations”
 - USA and Canada are exceptions
- Associations maintain a list of summits
- SOTA scoring is based on elevation
- Various awards
- Totally Internet based
- Patterned after Islands On The Air

Equipment

- Radios
 - Popular QRP rigs
 - KX-3
 - FT-817_
 - KX-1 & II
 - Ten-Tec (various)
 - KD1JV ATS, MTR, PFR
 - Whatever you can carry with you!
 - 100W rigs are not so popular due to weight
 - FT-897_ (portable 20/100W)
 - IC-706____
 - Whatever you can pack + batteries



Equipment Cont...

- Antennas
 - Random Wire
 - EFHW
 - Buddipole
 - Windom (various)
 - End fed Zepp (various)
 - Dipole with clip on length/band extenders
 - Homebrew verticals
 - G5RV and variants
- Throw rope/weight
- Crappie Pole/Jackite for supporting wire antennas



Apps

- Smart phones help... when there's coverage
 - SOTA Goat (iPhone)
 - SOTAwatch (google play)
 - SOTA finder (google play)
- SOTA Goat is extremely useful.
 - Map of the world with ALL summits
 - Alert
 - Spot
 - Search



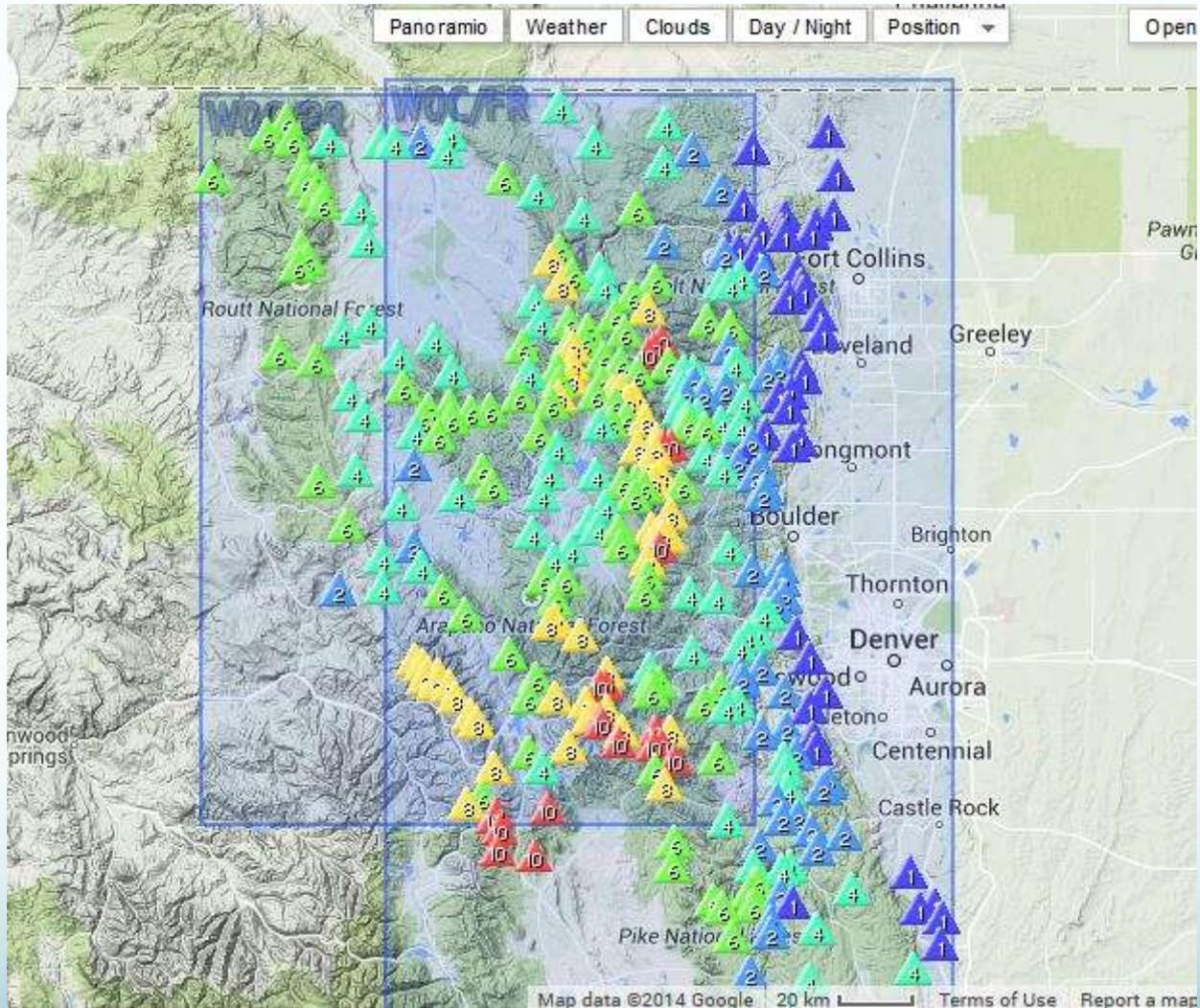


Travel/Weather



- Plan your trip ahead of time. Scout out a day trip or an overnight stay in either a hotel, a campsite, or with family/friends.
- Bring a camelback or enough bottled water and a snack you can pack with you
- Bring a buddy if you're hiking/bushwacking
- Look at weather forecasts, bring proper clothes
- Temp goes down 5.4 degrees every 1000'
- Going on a business or family trip? Scout out the summits!

What's Close?



Why is activating fun?

- You are the DX!
- It is great practice for contests, field day, EMCOMM, etc
- Low Noise level on summit (usually) means quiet receive signals
- Antennas can often be much lower to the ground, and more effective
- Exercise! Outdoors! Ham Radio!

Annual SOTA events

- 1st Sunday in August - Colorado Ham 14er event
- Week of 14er event – RM Rendezvous' in Buena Vista
- 1st Saturday in May – QRPTTF
- Mid September – NASOTA weekend
- Int'l SOTA weekend – coincides with QRPTTF
- Lots of local weekends for associations

Safety

- Some summits you can drive within 75' of the activation zone, you can probably handle that by yourself.
- Please don't go hiking up a remote summit by yourself (personal experience, you may NEED help)
- Leave a note on your dash saying where you're headed and a date/time
- Bring a cell phone and a 2 meter HT. Program local repeaters
- Hunting season? Wear a safety vest.
- Rock hopping? Wear a helmet.
- Zig-zag up the mountain, take breaks, keep your laces tied
- Get a first aid kit and either pack it or leave it in the vehicle



Logging

- Pen and Paper!
- Some use an iPad or Nexus/Android tablet with a wireless serial port from pignology.net
- After your done logging Qs, go to <http://www.sotadata.org.uk/> and upload/enter your logs
- One thing that is really appreciated is an activation report if you activated a summit. Send your report and your log to the nasota Yahoo! group
 - Sometimes you'll find that you can't read your writing or got a call sign wrong. Most chasers and activators are on the nasota reflector
- S2S - Summit to Summit contacts are logged under chaser entries on the website.

Logging - Chaser Entry

Submit Chaser Entry

a. Select the Association, Region and Summit

Association:	W5O - USA - Oklahoma
Region:	WI (Wichita Mountains)
Summit:	W5O/WI-002 (Scott, Mount)

b. Enter QSO Details

Date (dd/mm/yy)	<input type="text"/>
Time UTC (hh:mm)	<input type="text"/>
Callsign YOU used	<input type="text"/>
Other Callsign	<input type="text"/>
Band	--Select Band--
Mode	--Select Mode--
Notes	<input type="text"/>
S2S	<input type="checkbox"/> Is QSO S2S?

Modes

- CW is the most popular
- During contests, try WARC bands
- SSB works on other bands too! Don't stay on 20m, go to 40/30/17/10 so adjacent states, locals, band openings can work you. Frustrating to hear people in QSO with a summiteer but you're in the skip zone of the summit operator.

Chasing

- sotawatch.org is your friend, look at alerts to plan, spots to jump on the mini-pileup
- If you run MS Windows, there's an app that will alert you when a filtered summit or call sign is spotted. SOTA Spot Monitor by KU6J
- Minimum report is call sign and signal report, some also report grid square, name, state, etc... but usually keep it short since many times the activator is COLD and trying to work as many stations as they can before heading back down.

Chasing Cont...

- Some trips are planned on the nasota Yahoo! group with help from the members.
- Activating a mountain can lead to your own chaser contacts as summit to summit contacts happen fairly often.
- The pileups are usually in the single digits to teens, with 20+ possible on a weekend. Throw your call sign out there after you hear QRZ or the end to their calling CQ
- It's usually windy on a summit so be patient and keep trying. If you're using CW, they may be wearing gloves or have shaking hands, take that into consideration

Activating

- I usually start with some published QRP frequencies
- CW
 - 20m 14.061
 - 30m 10.110
 - 40m 7.03[1,2,3] sometimes 7.029 which can be DX 'up'
 - 160m 1.81 (very little 80m/160m on summits)
- SSB
 - 40m 7.285 in the morning, below 7.175 Extra
 - 20m 14.3425
- When none of these work, go up/down some

Activating Cont...

- More calling freq, but you can use what you want!
 - SSB
 - 20m 14.285 & HF Pack Freq 14.3425
 - 15m 21.385, 28.285
 - 10m 28.885, 28.385
 - CW
 - 20m 14.060
 - 17m 18.096
 - 15m 21.060, 21.110
 - 12m 24.906
 - 10m 28.060, 28.110
 - 6m 50.060
 - 2m 144.060, 144.200
 - FM 2m 146.52, 144.585 / SSB 144.285

Spotting/Alerting

- This is why having a calling freq isn't so important. If you Alert that you're headed to a summit and should be there around x:xx AM/PM (UTC), people will be waiting for you/calling for you.
- When you are spotted by someone, they will post a spot to sotawatch.org and then prepare to be inundated with your own little pileup. This will make you happy happy happy.
- You may self spot with SOTA Goat if you have internet, or if you are on CW, a RBN Gate will spot for you if you post an alert before you leave.

Awards

- <http://www.sota.org.uk/Awards>

At 1,000 points Activators achieve "Mountain Goat" status and Chasers/SWLs are "Shack Sloths". Achieving "Mountain Goat" and "Shack Sloth" status requires considerable dedication and effort and so, trophies can be claimed to mark this significant milestone. Each 9cm x 9cm "Ice block" is made entirely by hand in the Scottish Highlands. Craftsmen create a unique "running scallop" along each edge of the raw glass so each trophy will be unique. The trophy will be individually engraved with your callsign and the year in which you reached 1,000 points. Endorsements like "All CW" or "VHF" can also be engraved for a small additional charge.

"Ice Block"



KC5CW on top of King Mtn



G5RV Jr on a Crappie Pole

