



# How to...

<b>A</b> • —	<b>N</b> — •	<b>1</b> • — — —	<b>6</b> — • • •
<b>B</b> — • • •	<b>O</b> — — —	<b>2</b> • • — —	<b>7</b> — — • • •
<b>C</b> — • — •	<b>P</b> • — — •	<b>3</b> • • • —	<b>8</b> — — — • •
<b>D</b> — • • •	<b>Q</b> — — • —	<b>4</b> • • • •	<b>9</b> — — — — •
<b>E</b> •	<b>R</b> • — •	<b>5</b> • • • • •	<b>0</b> — — — — —
<b>F</b> • • — •	<b>S</b> • • •	<b>?</b> • • — — • •	<b>,</b> • — • • — —
<b>G</b> — — • •	<b>T</b> —	<b>!</b> • • — — — —	<b>.</b> — — — — —
<b>H</b> • • • •	<b>U</b> • • —		
<b>I</b> • •	<b>V</b> • • • —		
<b>J</b> • — — —	<b>W</b> • — —		
<b>K</b> — • — —	<b>X</b> — • • •		
<b>L</b> • — • • •	<b>Y</b> — • • — —		
<b>M</b> — — —	<b>Z</b> — — — • •		

**FUN FACT**  
SOS, the international call for help, doesn't stand for anything but was chosen because the letters are easy to type in Morse code.

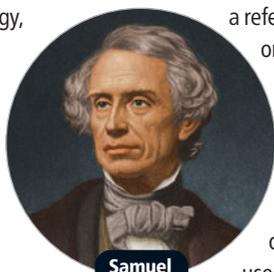
# Send secret messages

Morse code is a special alphabet that lets you communicate using dots and dashes.

Would you like to write a private note in your journal that your brother can't read? Or send a secret message to a pal using a flashlight? Try learning Morse code! This is a fun way to send messages by using different combinations of dots and dashes that represent each letter of the alphabet. You can write the codes on paper or convey them via flashing lights or bursts of sound. Morse code was one of the first ways people could send long-distance messages in the 1800s and was used around the world. Today, Morse code has been replaced by new technology, but people still like to use it as a fun hobby. Here's how you can try it out.

## Learn the history

Morse code is named after an American inventor named Samuel Morse. He developed the code in the 1830s to send messages over a machine called the telegraph, which was an exciting invention that let people communicate over long distances. The telegraph sent long and short electric signals over a wire that was connected to a receiver in a different location. The person operating the receiver could translate the patterns into letters. By the 1890s, Morse code was also being used to send messages through early radios using tones. People also transmitted Morse code with long and short flashing lights.



Samuel Morse

## Dashes and dots

Each letter in Morse code is represented by a combination of dots and dashes. The dots correspond to short bursts of sound or light. The dashes correspond to longer bursts of sound or light that are about three times as long as a dot. There are also codes for the numbers 0–9 and for punctuation marks.

## Master the alphabet

Use the Morse code alphabet at the top of this page as a reference, or have an adult help you print one out at [morsedecoder.com](http://morsedecoder.com). (If you want to send a message to a friend, make sure they have a copy of the alphabet, too.) You'll notice that more commonly used letters have simpler codes. For example, the letter E has a code of one dot. But the letter Q, which is used less frequently, has a more complicated code of dash-dash-dot-dash.

## Send a message

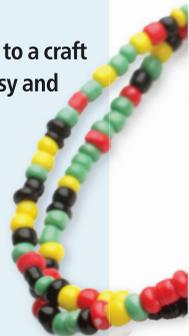
You could use a whistle or a blinking flashlight to create each dot and dash as you message a friend. Or write out the letters using the dashes and dots. Whatever you choose, start with a simple message (like "Hi there") and pause between each letter so your recipient can decipher what you're saying.

## Get crafty with Morse code

Add coded messages to a craft project with these easy and fun ideas.

### Beaded necklaces

Spell out your name or initials using small beads that represent the dots and dashes in Morse code. Use one bead for a dot and three of the same color for a dash. Use a different color bead for the spaces between each dot and dash.



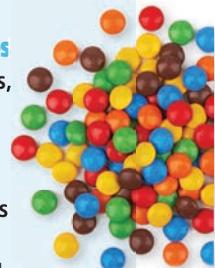
### Lego sign

Spell out a brief message using Lego bricks. Start with a large baseplate, then use small Lego bricks for dots and longer Lego bricks for dashes.



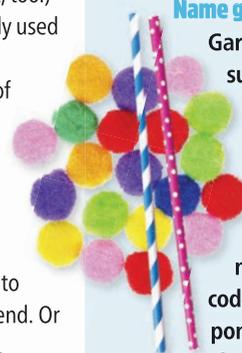
### Homemade cookies

Bake sugar cookies, then spell out messages or names using candies like M&M's (for the dots) and Mike and Ike (for the dashes).



### Name garland

Garlands make super-cute decorations for your room. Create one that spells out your name in Morse code by tying pom-poms (for dots) and stringing cut-up straws (for dashes) onto a long piece of string.



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