

Chinese Radio Tip Sheet

Chinese dual band HT radios (e.g. Wouxun KG-UVD1P, Baofeng UV-5R) have some different operating characteristics as compared to common Japanese brands (e.g. Icom, Yaesu, Kenwood).

1. Most of these Chinese "dual band" radios can operate in both VHF and UHF bands simultaneously. It would be more appropriate to call them "two band" radios.
2. The Chinese radios have an A/B button that switches between two main displays. **This has nothing to do with being "dual band" radios.** It just means that you can toggle back and forth between the two two active frequencies, *regardless of them being VHF or UHF frequencies.*
3. The Chinese radios have the option of each memory channel showing the frequency or a six character alpha-numeric label. This choice is what is shown in either A or B main display, in addition to the corresponding channel number off to one side of the main display (if the radio has been programmed).
4. The Baofeng radios that have been programmed by Barry VE7WIT have been (cleverly) set up so that the label always appears in the A band and the frequency always appears in the B band, **BUT these do not correspond automatically.** If you want the displayed name to correspond with the displayed channel, you have to manually select the *same* channel number for both the A and B displays each time you change channel.
5. Whether Chinese or Japanese radios, there are two 'modes' of operation, but they are called different names. 'Channel mode' means the same as 'memory mode.' This might also be called programmed mode. If the operator just selects a channel number with the keypad, then the corresponding frequency and related parameters, which have been programmed into the radio memory by the operator, become the active frequency for transmit and receive.
6. The 'VFO (aka 'frequency mode') allows the operator to manually input a frequency and set the associated parameters for the active operation, just like using a touch-pad telephone. Alternatively, the up/down buttons change frequency by a step of 25 kHz, but the step size can be adjusted through the menu.
7. When toggling from channel mode to frequency mode, *both* A and B displays switch to frequency mode. While it would be nice to have one main display that is active in VFO mode while the other display stays in memory mode, it is not possible.
8. The transmit power level can be changed from high (HI - default) to low (LO) at any time, regardless of the active mode and programmed parameters. On a Baofeng, momentarily press the # key. On a Wouxun, press the green TDR button while transmitting to toggle the power. It is a good habit (and saves the battery) to use LOW power whenever possible.
9. There are many other useful features possible with these radios, including scanning, transmit time-out, DTMF, automatic shutoff and "busy channel lockout." The multi-button menu/select process can be frustrating when accessing these features but this diminishes with experience.