In the early days of amateurradio the RST-system was defined as following: READABILITY (R) also known as "RADIO"

| 1 | - Unreadable |
|---|---|
| 2 | - Barely readable, occasional words distinguishable |
| 3 | - Readable with considerable difficulty |
| 4 | - Readable with practically no difficulty |
| 5 | - Perfectly readable |
| | SIGNAL STRENGTH (S) |
| 1 | - Faint signals, barely perceptible |
| 2 | - Very weak signal |
| 3 | - Weak signal |
| 4 | - Fair signal |
| 5 | - Fairly good signal |
| 6 | - Good signal |
| 7 | - Moderatly strong signal |
| 8 | - Strong signal |
| 9 | - Extremly strong signal |

TONE (T) only used in CW (continous wave = morse telegraphy), transmissions, now also in use for digital modes

| 1 | - Sixty-cycle ac or less, very rough and broad |
|---|--|
| 2 | - Very rough ac, very harsh and broad |
| 3 | - Rough ac tone, rectified but not filtered |
| 4 | - Rough note, some trace of filtering |
| 5 | - Filtered rectified ac but strongly ripplemodulated |
| 6 | - Filtered tone, definite trace of ripple modulation |
| 7 | - Near pure tone, trace of ripple modulation |
| 8 | - Near perfect tone, slight trace of modulation |

9 - Perfect tone, no trace of ripple of modulation of any kind

Note: no tone-report for speech transmissions

(Source: The ARRL handbook for radio amateurs 1992; ARRL = American Radio Relay Leag