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Chapter 3

RULES OF THE ROAD

The following material is an introduction to the provisions of acts and regulations that apply to boaters in Canada.

Acts (or statutes) are laws which contain and enable regulations. Once enabled in an act, a code or a regulation is a law. Thus, the codes and regulations introduced in this course are laws (not just good ideas or recommended practices) and failure to comply with them will result in significant penalties.

The seven chapters of this study guide contain the information that you must know to pass a Transport Canada Boating Safety Test in order to obtain your Pleasure Craft Operator Card (PCOC).

This chapter contains the following sections:

- 3.1 [Collision Regulations](#)
 - 3.2 [When Power-Driven Vessels Meet](#)
 - 3.3 [When Sail-Driven Vessels Meet](#)
 - 3.4 [Navigation Lights](#)
 - 3.5 [Other Navigation Lights](#)
 - 3.6 [Vessel Operation Restriction Regulations](#)
 - 3.7 [Charts and Nautical Publications Regulations](#)
 - 3.8 [Criminal Code of Canada](#)
 - 3.9 [Enforcement](#)
- [Chapter 3 Review Quiz](#)

3.1 COLLISION REGULATIONS

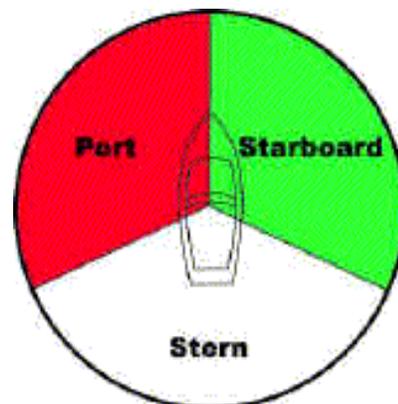
Travelling on a body of water is much like driving a car across a broad surface upon which other cars can approach yours at various speeds and from any direction. So, when your vessel's course crosses the course being travelled by another vessel, who has the right of way?

When two vessels are on a crossing course, the *Collision Regulations* (http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/C.R.C.,_c._1416/) set out the “Rules of the Road” to help the vessel operators to determine which vessel has the right of way (referred to as the stand-on vessel) and which vessel gives way (referred to as the give-way vessel). When one has the right of way, one maintains course and speed (with caution). When giving way to another vessel, one must take early, obvious, and substantial action (i.e.: alter course and speed) to stay well clear of and to pass well astern of the other vessel. The *Collision Regulations* (Rules of the Road) apply to all sizes and all types of vessels (from small pleasure craft up to the largest freighters) operating on any navigable Canadian waterway.

Failure to comply with the *Collision Regulations* can result in fines, imprisonment, or both.

To understand how to use the *Collision Regulations*, one must first think of the space around any vessel as being divided into three sectors:

1. Port sector,
2. Starboard sector, and
3. Stern sector



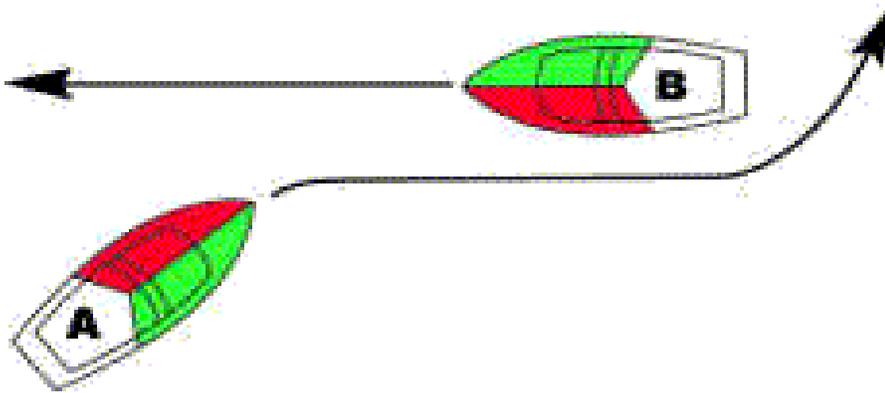
3.2 WHEN POWER-DRIVEN VESSELS MEET

The Rules of the Road for when power-driven vessels meet can be summarised as:

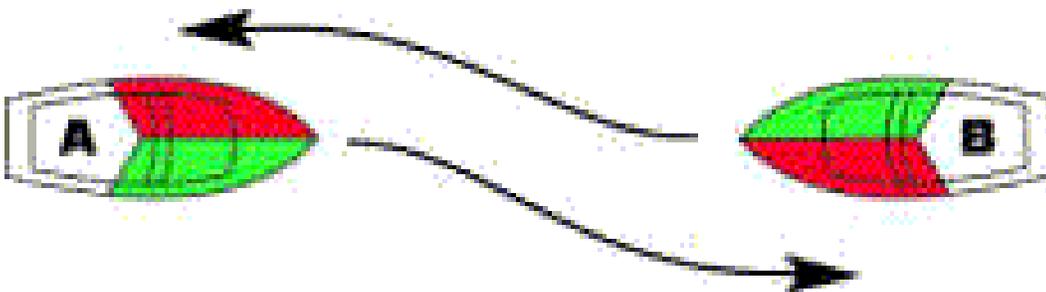
- **Port sector:** If a power-driven vessel approaches your power-driven vessel from your port sector, then you are the stand-on vessel and you have the right of way (i.e.: you will maintain your course and speed with caution).
- **Starboard sector:** If a power-driven vessel approaches your power-driven vessel from your starboard sector, then you are the give-way vessel (take early and substantial action to stay well clear of the other vessel and pass well astern).
- **Stern sector:** If a power-driven vessel approaches yours from the stern sector, then you have the right of way (maintain your course and speed with caution).

The Rules of the Road for powered vessels can thus be illustrated and summarized in the following examples:

- If a power-driven vessel approaches your powered vessel from your port sector, then yours is the stand-on vessel. Maintain your course and speed (with caution) and be ready to take evasive action quickly if the approaching vessel does not take appropriate action to stay clear of you.

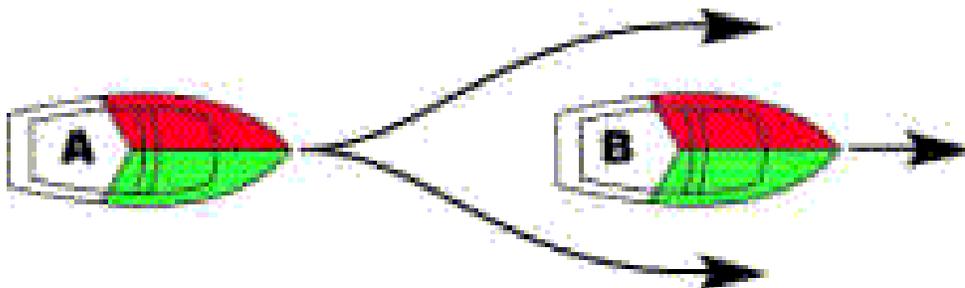


- If a power-driven vessel approaches your powered vessel from within your starboard sector and there is a risk of collision, then yours is the give-way vessel. You must alter your course and speed to take early, obvious, and substantial action to stay well clear of the other vessel as well as avoid passing in front of the other craft. Take action early, obviously, and substantially to make your intentions clear.
- If a power-driven vessel approaches your power-driven vessel from directly in front of you (i.e. on a reciprocal course), then you should deliver one short-blast sound signal and alter your course to starboard so that your vessel passes the approaching vessel on your port side. (Note: The term “short blast” means a blast of about one second’s duration. The term “prolonged blast” means a blast of from four to six seconds in duration).



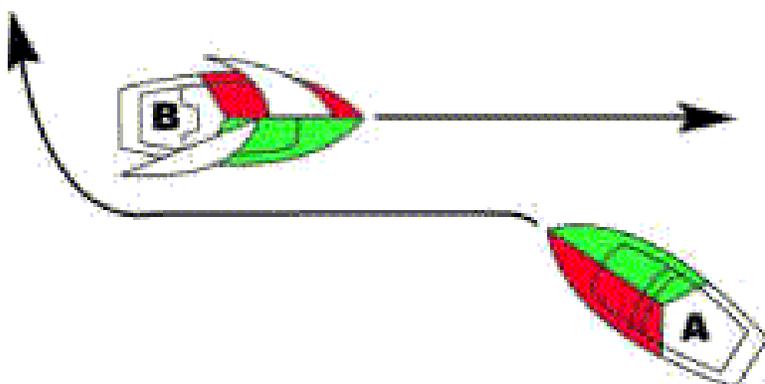
(Note: Stay well clear; never get as close to another vessel as pictured in the diagrams on this page).

- If any vessel approaches your vessel from within your stern sector, maintain your course and speed (with caution). Any vessel overtaking another must take early and substantial action to keep well clear of the vessel being overtaken (i.e.: the vessel being overtaken has the right of way). This rule applies to both powered vessels and sailing vessels.



Note: Whenever passing another vessel (whether giving way or standing on), **always ensure that you alter your speed to reduce your wake when passing other vessels** (especially smaller vessels) so as to avoid capsizing smaller vessels (such as rowboats, canoes, and kayaks).

- If your power-driven vessel is on a crossing course with either a sail-driven vessel or a vessel that is fishing with nets or trawls, then you must take early and substantial action (alter your course and speed) to keep well clear of the other vessel.



(Note: sail-driven vessels must keep clear of vessels fishing with nets or trawls.)

Note: In all of the preceding examples of crossing situations, the give-way vessel must always give way early, obviously, and substantially and pass well astern of the stand-on vessel (i.e.: never get as close to another vessel as pictured in the diagrams on this page).

The *Collision Regulations* state that **less-maneuvrable vessels must always be given the right of way**. Thus, a vessel restricted in its ability to manoeuvre (such as a freighter in a shipping channel, a vessel towing a barge, or a vessel that is fishing with nets or trawls, or a vessel not under command) is usually the stand-on vessel when on a crossing course with a powered vessel that is fully manoeuvrable (where the term “manoeuvrable” means that the vessel is unimpaired in its ability to change alter course or speed).

Sport fishing boats and water-ski boats are considered to be fully manoeuvrable (unimpaired in their ability to alter course or speed) and are not exempt from the *Collision Regulations*.

To summarise, a power-driven vessel that is underway and fully manoeuvrable shall keep out of the way of:

- A vessel not under command
- A vessel restricted in her ability to manoeuvre
- A vessel engaged in fishing with nets or trawls
- A sail-driven vessel

3.2.1 Navigating in Narrow Channels



On inland waters there are circumstances where a smaller vessel, even if it is the stand-on vessel, must give way to a vessel that is large or for which manoeuvring is difficult. For instance, **if two vessels meet in a narrow channel where tide or river flow creates dangerous currents, then the vessel going down river automatically has the right of way.**

In addition, a vessel proceeding along the course of a narrow channel or fairway shall always keep as near to the outer limit of the channel or fairway which lies on her starboard side as is safe and practicable.

3.2.2 Navigating in or near Commercial Shipping Channels

As a general rule, smaller vessels and vessels engaged in fishing should steer clear of commercial shipping lanes and inshore traffic zones and must use extreme caution when crossing a shipping channel or inshore traffic zone.

Always keep these points in mind when navigating in commercial shipping channels or inshore traffic zones:

- Respect right-of-way rules and keep well clear of the path of larger vessels;
- Do not obstruct the channel; for example, never moor to a navigational buoy;
- Be seen. A radar reflector helps larger, less manoeuvrable vessels to detect your presence on their radar screens; and
- Have on board the marine charts for the area in which you are navigating.



When operating a small craft in or near a shipping lane, you should navigate in groups of other small boats, whenever possible, to make yourself more visible to larger vessels.

Both power-driven and sail-driven vessels that are less than 20 m (65.6 ft.) in length must give way to a vessel that can safely navigate only in a narrow channel or that is following a traffic lane. In such cases the smaller vessel not confined to a traffic lane is always the give-way vessel regardless of its course.



Smaller vessels should also always keep clear of docked ferries, ferries in transit, or a vessel that is being towed. Note that a ferry will signal that it is leaving dock by sounding one prolonged blast on a horn (a prolonged blast is 4 to 6 seconds in length).

Also, be aware that many ferries are attached at both ends to a cable, which they follow back and forth between docks. Such cables are sometimes attached below the waterline and are out of sight. When crossing between a ferry and a dock, you may strike the cable with the lower end of your motor, thus disabling the motor, or trapping your boat on the cable.

Under Rule 10 of the *Collision Regulations*, all vessels must always be prepared to yield to any vessel for which manoeuvrability is constrained by its draft. And under Rule 16 of the *Collision Regulations*, any vessel directed by a larger vessel to give way (often by using five short-blast sound signals) must always do so.

3.2.3 Using Sound Signals to Avoid a Collision

Sound signals (blasts on an air horn, fog horn, siren, or whistle) are used to both attract attention and to indicate a vessel's intentions. For instance, during low-visibility conditions, sound signals are used to attract attention:

- **Signals used during periods of restricted visibility** - When you are not in sight of other vessels and you are in or near an area of restricted visibility, you must proceed at a safe speed and signal your presence by sounding a combination of long and short blasts using an approved sound signalling device or appliance.

In addition, you can use sound signals to signal your intentions, such as when departing a dock:

- **Departing a dock** – a vessel will signal that it is leaving dock by sounding one prolonged blast on a sound signalling device or appliance (such as a horn).

Pursuant to Rule 34 of the *Collision Regulations*, sound signals are also used to communicate when you are manoeuvring in a particular direction:

- **One short blast** – One short blast means: “I am altering course to starboard”*
- **Two short blasts** – Two short blasts means: “I am altering course to port”
- **Three short blasts** – Three short blasts means: “I am manoeuvring using astern propulsion” (i.e.: I am moving backwards);
- **Four short blasts** – Four short blasts means: “I am unable to manoeuvre”.
- **Five short blasts** – An operator employs five blasts on a horn when he or she does not understand the intentions of another.

The *Collision Regulations* require that you carry a sound signalling device to alert other vessels to your presence or operational intentions. Sound signals are necessary under certain circumstances, including meeting, crossing, and overtaking situations. In addition, **all vessels are required to use a sound signal during periods of fog, mist, heavy rain, or other conditions of reduced visibility.**

A vessel 12 m (39 ft.) or more in length shall be provided with at least a whistle.

A vessel of 20 metres or more shall be provided with a bell in addition to a whistle.

The sound signalling device must have an audible range of at least 1.5 nautical miles for vessels under 20 m (65.6 ft.) in length, and 1.0 nautical miles for vessels 20 to 75 m (246 ft.) in length, and be capable of a "prolonged blast" (a blast of four to six seconds duration).

Sound-producing devices can be either hand-, mouth-, or power-operated for commercial vessels less than 12 metres in length, provided the sound signalling device is able to make an efficient sound signal. The sound signalling devices must also be capable of producing a four- to six-second blast with a range of 0.5 nautical miles. A compressed air horn is an acceptable sound signalling device under the regulations.

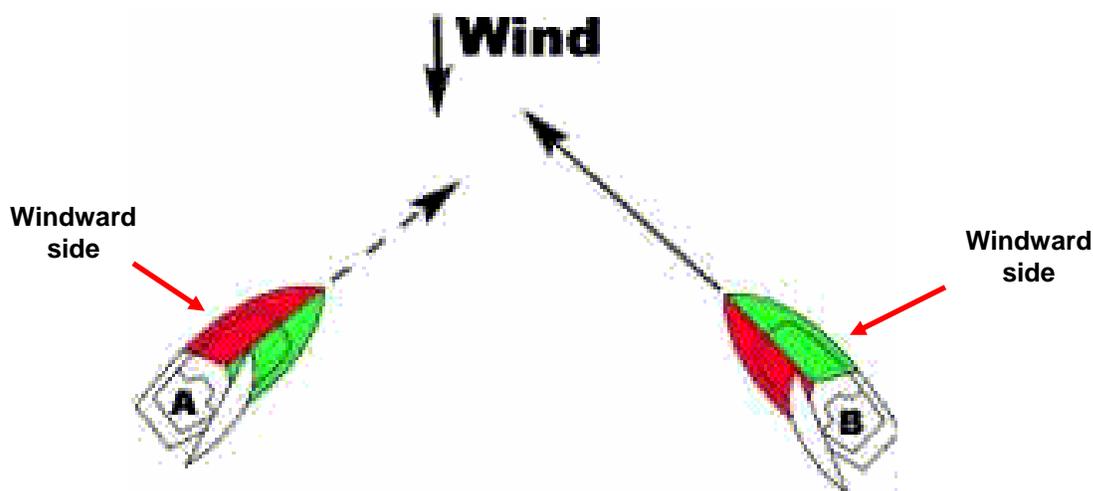
3.3 WHEN SAIL-DRIVEN VESSELS MEET

A **sail-driven vessel is any craft under sail, provided that propelling machinery, if fitted, is not being used**. The deciding factor in establishing right of way when sailing vessels meet each other is to determine which side of both vessels is the “windward side”.

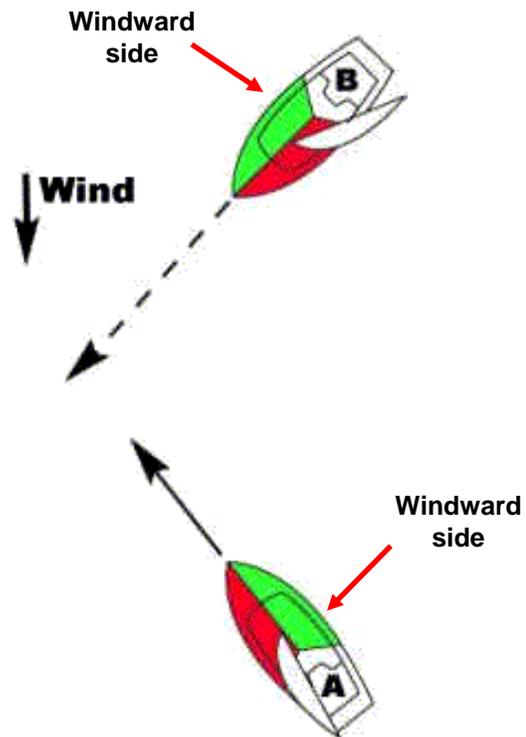
Under the *Collision Regulations*, the “**windward side**” of a sail-driven vessel is defined as the side of the vessel that is opposite the side on which the main sail is set (being carried). If the sail is lying on (carried on) the starboard (right) side, then the port (left) side of the vessel is the windward side. The Rules of the Road for sailing vessels can be summed up in the following crossing situations:



- A sail-driven vessel with port as its windward side must take early, obvious, and substantial action to keep well clear of any sailing vessel that has starboard as its windward side, i.e. the vessel with the wind on its starboard side is the stand-on vessel. Thus, in the crossing situation depicted below, vessel A must alter course and speed to stay well clear of vessel B.



- If two sail-driven vessels both have the same windward side, then the sail-driven vessel to windward (the vessel that is upwind) must take early and substantial action to keep well clear of the leeward vessel (the vessel that is downwind). Thus, in the crossing situation depicted on the right, Vessel B's windward side is starboard and Vessel A's windward side is also starboard. And since Vessel A is further downwind, Vessel B is the give-way vessel and must alter course and speed to stay well clear of Vessel A.



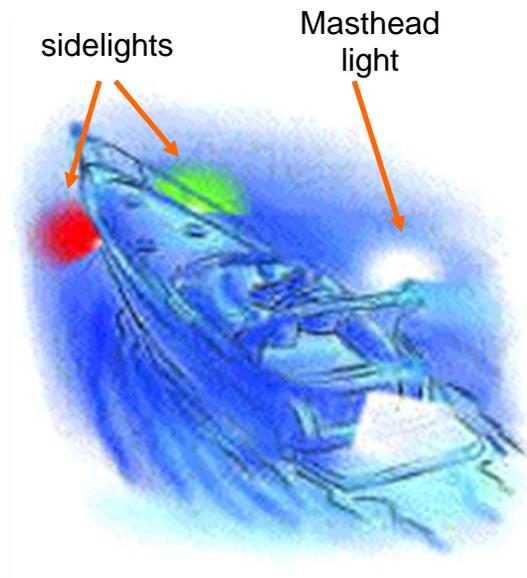
- If a sail-driven vessel has the port (left) side as its windward side but the operator cannot determine with certainty if an upwind (windward) sailing vessel has the wind on its port or starboard side, then the downwind sailing vessel with the wind on its port side will take early and substantial action to keep well clear of the upwind vessel.

A sail-driven vessel while underway shall keep out of the way of:

- A vessel not under command (i.e.: a vessel adrift).
- A vessel restricted in its ability to manoeuvre.
- A commercial vessel engaged in fishing.

3.4 NAVIGATION LIGHTS

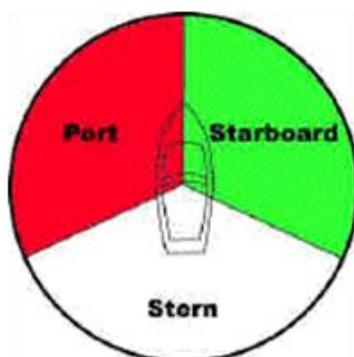
The colour and location of a vessel's navigation lights (also called running lights) vary depending on the vessel's size, whether it is sail-driven or power-driven, and whether it is underway or at anchor. When on a crossing course with another vessel the arrangement and colours of the lights that you see on the approaching vessel will let you determine if you are the stand-on vessel or the give-way vessel.



The two coloured lights on the sides of a vessel at the front are called sidelights. The **port (left) sidelight** is red-coloured and the **starboard (right) sidelight** is green-coloured. One can remember that the port sidelight is red-coloured by remembering that port is a kind of red wine. The **stern light** is always white in colour.

The white-coloured light that shines forward and is mounted higher than the sidelights is referred to as a **masthead light**. This light is activated in order to indicate that the vessel is power-driven.

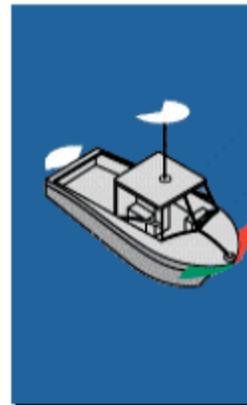
Navigation) lights must be displayed on any power-driven or sail-driven pleasure craft that operates between sunset and sunrise or during periods of restricted visibility, such as is caused by fog, mist, or rain.



The port sidelight displays a red-coloured light through a horizontal arc (angle) of 112.5° from straight ahead to 22.5° abaft the beam. The starboard sidelight displays a green-coloured light through a horizontal arc (angle) of 112.5° from straight ahead to 22.5° abaft the beam. The stern light is white-coloured, shines directly aft, and displays light through a horizontal arc (angle) of 135° across the stern.

When underway at night or in reduced visibility, sail-driven vessels must display sidelights and a stern light.

When underway at night or in reduced visibility, power-driven vessels must display sidelights, a stern light, and a **masthead light**. A masthead light is a white-coloured light that faces forward, is mounted higher than the sidelights over the fore and aft centreline of the vessel, and displays a white-coloured light through an arc (angle) of 225°.



If a power-driven vessel underway is less than 12 m (39 ft.) long, it may display from sunset to sunrise an **all-round light and sidelights (instead of a masthead light forward, sidelights, and a stern light)**. The all-round light is a white-coloured light that shines through an arc (angle) of 360° and must be mounted higher than the sidelights so that it is visible to all directions.

The masthead light lets you determine if another vessel is under power and, thus, whether you will stand on or must give way. Any sailboat using its engine (i.e.: when a sailboat is power-driven) must display lights to indicate that it is a power-driven vessel [i.e.: sidelights, a stern light, and a masthead light which faces forward and is mounted over the fore and aft centreline of the vessel, higher than the sidelights, and displaying a white-coloured light through an arc (angle) of 225°].



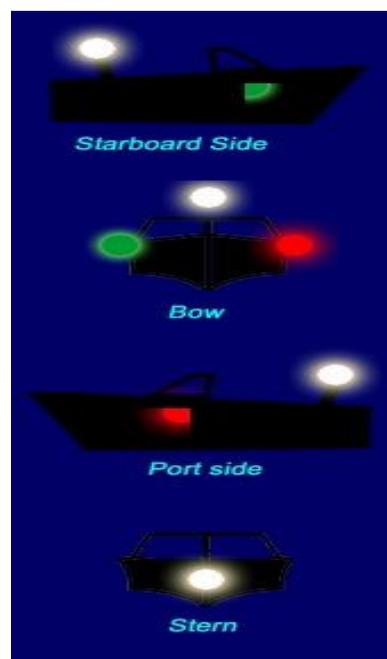


During daytime operation, a vessel proceeding under sail when also being propelled by machinery must exhibit a conical day-shape, apex downward.

Vessels less than 12 metres in length are not required to exhibit the day-shape in Canadian waters of a roadstead, harbour, river or inland waterway. Sailing vessels operating under machinery (or under sail *and* machinery) are considered to be power-driven vessels and must display the lights prescribed by the *Collision Regulations* for a power driven vessel.

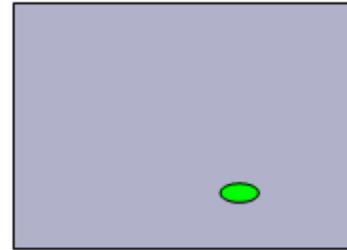
When encountering another vessel at night, (such as the one pictured at right), the first question an operator must always ask oneself is this: “Is that vessel a power-drive vessel? Or is it sail-driven?”

In the case of the vessel pictured at the right, the presence of an all-round light clearly identifies the vessel as a being power-driven.

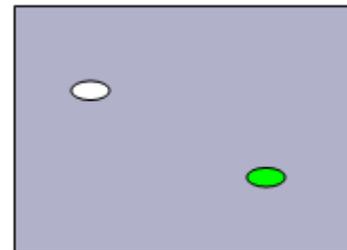


Following are some examples of crossing situations that you as a power-driven operator might encounter while underway at night.

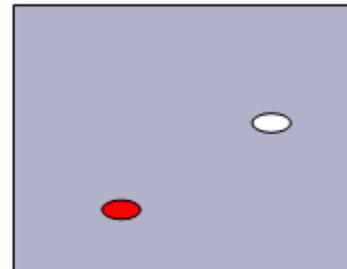
- If you meet a vessel on which you can see a green sidelight but no masthead light, then **it is sail-driven and you are the give-way vessel**. Take early, obvious, and substantial action in altering course and speed to stay well clear of the stand-on vessel and pass it abaft its stern



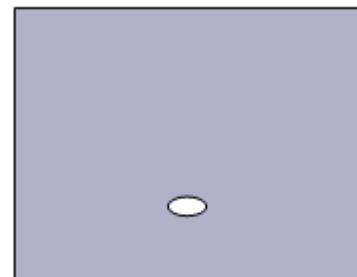
- If you meet a vessel on which you can see a green-coloured sidelight and a white-coloured masthead light, then **the vessel is under power and you are the stand-on vessel**. Maintain your course and speed (with caution). Note that the arrangement of running lights in this crossing situation is much like traffic lights at a street intersection (i.e.: if you are the stand-on vessel, then you will see a green-coloured sidelight (and a white-coloured masthead light or all-round light) on the other vessel).



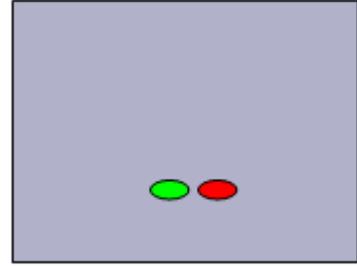
- If you meet a vessel on which you can see a red sidelight and a white masthead light, then **that vessel is under power and you are the give-way vessel**. As in the previous example, the arrangement of running lights in this crossing situation is much like traffic lights at a street intersection (i.e.: if you can see the red sidelight on a motorboat crossing your course, then you do NOT have the right of way (just like driving a car when you have a red light when approaching traffic lights) and thus you must give way.



- If you come upon a vessel displaying a white stern light, then **you are overtaking that vessel; you must alter course and speed to stay well clear of the vessel being overtaken**.



- If you meet a vessel on which you can see both sidelights (a green-coloured sidelight and a red-coloured sidelight) at the same time, then **you are on a reciprocal course (head-on collision course) with that vessel and you must alter course and speed to give way to that vessel**. To do so, you will sound one short-blast sound signal and alter course to starboard so as to have the other vessel on your port side as you pass.

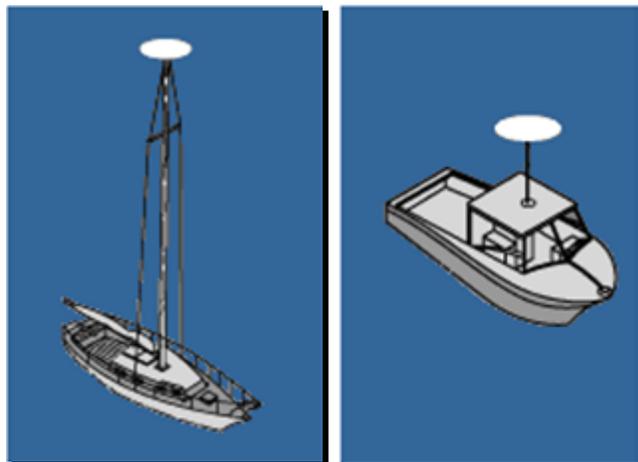


3.5 Other Navigation Lights

Other navigation lights you should be familiar with include:

- Flashing yellow – a light flashing at regular intervals at a frequency of 120 flashes or more per minute to indicate an air cushion vessels that is operating in non-displacement mode (i.e; during flight mode).
- Special flashing yellow – a yellow-coloured light, flashing at a frequency of 50 to 70 flashes per minute. Placed at the forward end of a vessel that is engaged in towing or of a vessel that is being pushed.
- Flashing blue – a blue-coloured, all-round flashing light that is used on any government or police vessel while engaged in duties.
- Flashing Morse Code for “U” - A white light in which two short flashes is followed by one long flash, the whole sequence being repeated two times per minute. Used to indicate a stationary exploration or exploitation vessel.

If a vessel that is less than 50 m in length is at anchor between sunset and sunrise, then it must display an all-round light in the forepart, which is a white light that displays an unbroken arc of light through a horizontal angle of 360°.



Sail-driven vessels must display sidelights and a stern light while underway between sunset and sunrise. Sail-driven vessels that are less than 20 m in length have the option of displaying a tri-light at the top of the mast (in lieu of sidelights and a stern light). A tri-light is divided into three sectors: a red light showing through a horizontal arc of 112.5°, a green light displayed through an arc of 112.5°, and a white light (to show across the stern) displayed through an arc of 135°.



Almost all vessels are required to have at least one working, watertight flashlight on board. This is especially true for small boats not equipped with navigation lights.

For non-powered vessels, as well as sailboats that are less than 7m (23 ft.) in length, a watertight flashlight qualifies as navigation lights.

For sailing vessels that are under 7 metres in length and for which navigation lights are impractical, the operator must have readily at hand a watertight flashlight or lantern showing a white light so that an approaching vessel can be signalled in time to avoid a collision. It is sometimes effective to use the light to illuminate the sail.



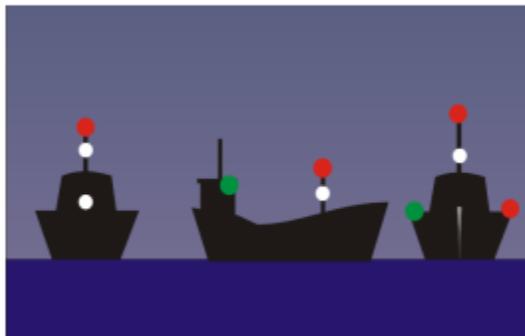
Vessels under oars or paddles (rowboats, canoes, and kayaks,) and without a power supply to operate navigation lights must carry a watertight flashlight or lantern showing a white light to signal their presence to other vessels when travelling after dark.



3.5.1 Lights for Vessels Engaged In Fishing (no trawl)

A vessel engaged in fishing, other than trawling, while underway or at anchor, shall exhibit:

- a) Two all-round lights in a vertical line, the upper being red-coloured and the lower white-coloured (or in daytime, a shape consisting of two cones with their apexes together in a vertical line one above the other);
- b) When there is outlying gear extending more than 150 metres horizontally from the vessel, an all-round white light or a cone apex upwards; and
- c) When making way through the water, in addition to the lights prescribed in this paragraph, sidelights and a stern light.



3.5.2 Lights for Vessels Engaged In Fishing (with trawl)

A vessel when engaged in trawling, by which is meant dragging through the water a net or other apparatus used as a fishing appliance, shall exhibit:

- a) Two all-round lights in a vertical line, the upper being green and the lower white; (or in daytime: a shape consisting of two cones with their apexes together in a vertical line one above the other)
- b) A masthead light abaft of and higher than the all-round green light (a vessel of less than 50 metres in length shall not be obliged to exhibit such a light but may do so); and
- c) When making way through the water, in addition to the lights prescribed in this paragraph, sidelights and a stern light.

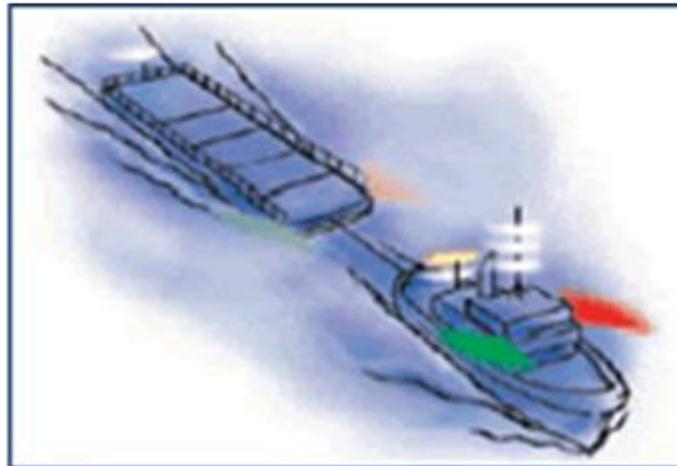


3.5.3 Lights for Vessels Engaged In Towing

When tugboats are towing barges or ships, the length of the tow-line can be so great that the line hangs below the surface of the water and is virtually invisible. If a small vessel strikes the submerged tow-line it can capsize or be disabled and then run down by the tow. **Never pass between a tug and its tow. Make sure you are aware of the special lights displayed by tugs towing barges or other vessels or objects.**

In the case of a power-driven vessel towing another vessel from her stern, the towing vessel must exhibit:

1. Sidelights and stern light.
2. Towing light (yellow-coloured light at the stern with the same characteristics as the stern light).
3. Two masthead lights in a vertical line (three of these lights if the tow exceeds 200 metres).
4. A diamond shape where it can best be seen, if the tow exceeds 200 metres.



In the case of the vessel being towed, it must exhibit:

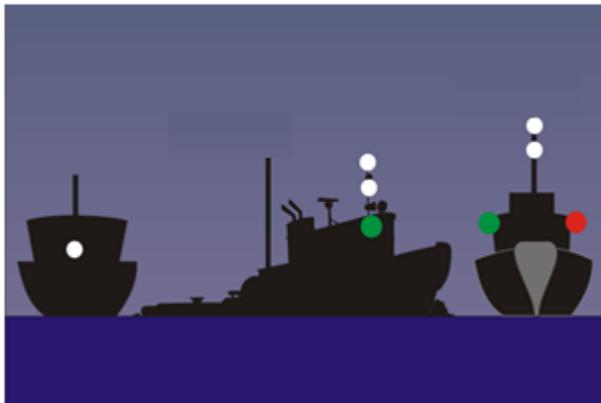
1. Sidelights and stern light.
2. A diamond shape where it can best be seen if the tow exceeds 200 metres.
3. If it is impractical for the vessel being towed to comply with the lights stated above, it shall carry one all-around white light at each end (fore and aft).

As per Rule 24 (i) of the *Collision Regulations*, in addition to operating its regular navigation lights, if a pleasure craft (or any other type of vessel) is engaged in towing another vessel in distress or otherwise in need of assistance, then **both vessels shall take all possible measures to indicate the nature of the relationship between the towing vessel and the vessel being towed. At the very least, both vessels must illuminate the tow-line to alert other vessels to its presence.**

3.5.4 Lights for Vessels Engaged in Pushing

A power-driven vessel when pushing ahead (or towing alongside) shall exhibit:

- a) Two masthead lights in a vertical line;
- b) Sidelights; and
- c) A stern light.



3.5.5 Lights for Vessels Engaged in Pushing (Rigidly Connected)

When a pushing vessel and a vessel being pushed ahead are rigidly connected in a composite unit they are regarded as a single, power-driven vessel and must exhibit the lights normally displayed by a power-driven vessel underway at night.



3.6 VESSEL OPERATION RESTRICTION REGULATIONS

The *Vessel Operation Restriction Regulations* - SOR/2008-120 (VORRs) regulate the operation of small vessels on specific bodies of water in Canada (see <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/sor-2008-120/>).

These regulations may impose shoreline speed zones (whether posted or not), they may restrict the maximum horsepower on motorboats, and they may prohibit certain types of vessels from a body of water. For instance, a body of water may be restricted to only non-powered boats such as canoes and sailboats.

3.6.1 Age and Horsepower Restrictions

Under the *Vessel Operation Restriction Regulations*:

- Children less than 12 years old may only operate powered vessels with motors up to 10 HP (7.5 kW) while unaccompanied by an adult.
- A person who is between 12 and 16 years old may only operate vessels powered by motors no greater than 40 HP (30 kW) while unaccompanied by an adult.
- No-one under 16 years of age may operate a personal watercraft. (PWC)

The restrictions do not specify power restrictions for boaters 16 years of age or older. Note also that everybody (including youths under 16 years old, supervised or not) require proof of competency to operate any motorized boat.

3.6.2 Restrictions on Activities

The *Vessel Operation Restriction Regulations* may also restrict when and where certain boating activities are permitted. Water-skiing, for instance, might be restricted to certain parts of a lake or to certain times of the day. Boaters should always be on the lookout for boating restriction signs. Failing to comply with a restriction (either posted or not) can result in substantial fines for the operator.

Under the VORRs, operators are responsible for the safe operation of their vessel and for knowing when and where restrictions on boating activities exist; i.e.: claiming ignorance of any local restriction on boating activities is not a valid reason for failure to obey local restrictions. Thus, operators are required to be familiar with the waterways in which they operate (i.e.: they must be aware of all local water hazards as well as any local boating restrictions such as local speed limits, activity restrictions, and noise restrictions).

To ensure compliance with local vessel operation restrictions, all operators should familiarise themselves with the *Vessel Operation Restriction Regulations* signage system. Some samples are shown here:



No internal combustion or steam engines permitted

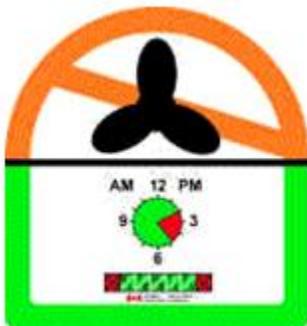


Power limit
(7.5KW = 10 HP)



Speed limit (usually 5, 10, 25, 40, or 55 km/h)

The main borders on restriction signs are orange in colour. If a special condition applies to the restriction (such as times of day when an activity is allowed, then a section of the border will be green in colour). For example, if special conditions apply to a **time restriction**, (time of day, days of the week, or months of the year) then the times when an activity is permitted will be indicated within the green border. **For time restriction conditions, red indicates the prohibition period and green indicates the permissible period of operation.** If the border of the restriction sign incorporates an arrow shape, then the restriction applies in the direction indicated by the arrow.



No power vessels between the hours and days indicated in red.



No water skiing north of the restriction sign



No power vessels in the direction of the arrow

Universal Shoreline Speed Limit

Not all boating restrictions are posted. For instance, **within 30 metres of the shoreline, a 10 km/h speed limit is in effect on all waters within British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, and Nova Scotia as well as on selected lakes and rivers in other provinces (whether or not speed limit signs are posted)**. There are some exemptions to these restrictions; they include:

- Water skiing, where the towboat follows a course perpendicular to the shoreline (i.e.: going away or returning);
- Where buoys designate that another speed is permitted; and
- In rivers or canals less than 100 m in width.

All operators are legally obligated to comply with all speed restrictions. Since not all restrictions can be posted (it would require millions of signs and buoys), **it is the responsibility of the boater to check locally and be fully aware of all speed restrictions or any other *Vessel Operation Restriction Regulations* in effect locally.** In other words, claiming ignorance of speed limits and shoreline restrictions is not an acceptable defence.

3.6.3 Noise Restrictions

In addition to the above restrictions, on all Canadian waters any motorized pleasure craft equipped with a motor other than a stock (unmodified) outboard engine must have a muffler and use it while operating within five (5) nautical miles (9.26 km) of shore.

This rule does not apply to you if your vessel was built before January 1, 1960, or if you are in an official competition, or in formal training or final preparation for an official competition.

3.7 CHARTS AND NAUTICAL PUBLICATIONS REGULATIONS

Marine charts are graphic representations depicting water areas, including depths, underwater hazards, traffic routes, aids to navigation, and adjacent coastal areas. Chart # 1 of a set of charts will usually contain definitions of symbols, abbreviations, acronyms, and explanations of terms that appear on the other pages of the charts.

Canadian marine charts are published by the Canadian Hydrographic Service (<http://www.charts.gc.ca/>) of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. Topographic maps as well as global positioning system (GPS) devices also provide information that is useful to users of waterways.

By knowing the draft of one's vessel, one can use marine charts to verify which waterways provide safe passage for your vessel. You should carry and review marine charts for all waterways where you plan to operate.

Under the *Charts and Nautical Publications Regulations* (<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/SOR-95-149/>) operators of all vessels are required to have on board the latest edition of the largest scale chart, documents, and publications for each area in which they navigate. It is important to keep these charts and publications up to date so that you can determine the latest changes on routes, buoys, and water depths. One can keep charts and nautical publications up to date by referring periodically to the Canadian Coast Guard's monthly *Notices to Mariners*, which are available at: <http://www.notmar.gc.ca/>

The master and owner of a vessel of less than 100 tons are not required to have on board the charts, documents, and publications if the person in charge of navigation has sufficient knowledge of the following information, such that safe and efficient navigation in the area where the vessel is to be navigated is not compromised:

a.) The location and character of charted:

- Shipping routes;
- Lights, buoys, beacons, and marks;
- Navigational hazards; and

b.) The prevailing navigational conditions, taking into account such factors as tides, currents, ice, and weather patterns.

When operating in areas influenced by tides, it is recommended that you also carry on board a copy of the *Canadian Tide and Current Tables*. This publication provides daily predictions of the times of slack water, of the times and rates of maximum flood and ebb streams, and the direction of water flow. The tables can also be accessed at this web site: <http://tides.gc.ca/eng>

3.8 CRIMINAL CODE OF CANADA

A pleasure craft operator charged with an offence under the *Criminal Code of Canada* can receive a fine, jail time, or both. Operators can be charged with a criminal offence under any of the following sections of the *Criminal Code of Canada*:

Section 249 (1) (b) – This section of the code states that **it is an offence to operate any type of pleasure craft in a fashion that is dangerous to the public**. Thus, it is illegal if an operator operates dangerously close to other vessels, or operates at dangerously high speeds, or disturbs swimmers with the vessel's wake, or fails to slow the vessel when visibility is reduced.

Section 250 (1) – This section states that **a pleasure craft operator must have a responsible person as spotter to keep watch on any person being towed**. In other words, a rear-view mirror does not count. In addition to the driver, there must be a human being on board, facing aft, acting as spotter, and reporting to the driver.

Section 250 (2) – Under this section **it is an offence for a pleasure craft operator to tow a person after dark (from one hour after sunset until sunrise)**. The inherent danger here is that at night other boaters will not be able to see the person being towed.

Section 251 (1) – Under this section, **it is an offence for an operator to knowingly operate a vessel that is unseaworthy. A vessel is considered seaworthy if the hull is undamaged and appropriate for the type of sea condition, the engine is in conformance to the Hull Compliance Notice, the vessel is not overloaded, and all equipment is in good working order.**

Section 252 – Under this section, **if you are involved in an accident with another vessel you must render assistance to that vessel and if you happen upon the scene of a collision, you must stop and offer assistance. In addition, operators of vessels involved in an accident must exchange their names and addresses.**

In addition to Section 252 (1) of the *Criminal Code of Canada*, under Section 451 of the *Canada Shipping Act, 2001*, the operator of a pleasure craft (insofar as he/she can do so without serious danger to his/her craft and passengers) must assist any person found on any Canadian waters and in danger of being lost.

Section 253 (a) – **This section of the code makes it a criminal offence to consume drugs or alcohol while operating any type of vessel.**

Section 253 (b) – **This section of the code makes it a criminal offence to operate a vessel while in any way impaired by drugs or alcohol.** A person is considered to be legally impaired if one has a blood alcohol level higher than 0.08 percent (0.08% is a federal criminal offence; while 0.05% is a provincial offence). The consumption of alcohol, drugs, or controlled substances can rapidly and significantly impair a person's ability to operate a pleasure craft. **Just as with automobiles, never hitch a ride with a boat operator who is impaired; instead, take action (including calling the police) to prevent an impaired person from operating a vessel.**

Section 254(5) – **Under section 254(5), it is an offence to, without reasonable excuse, fail or refuse to comply with a demand made by an enforcement officer.**

Section 255 – Under Section 255, anyone who commits an offence under section 253 or 254 is guilty of an offence and liable to punishment, namely:

1. For a first offence, to a fine of not less than six hundred dollars,
2. For a second offence, to imprisonment for not less than fourteen days, and
3. For each subsequent offence, to imprisonment for not less than ninety days.

Special Note

Section 1007 of the *Small Vessel Regulations* of the *Canada Shipping Act, 2001* reads as follows: Section 1007 - Prohibition Against Careless Operation - No person shall operate a vessel in a careless manner, without due care and attention or without reasonable consideration for other persons. Examples of behaviors which are considered careless under Section 1007 include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Operating a vessel at high engine regime in circular or crisscross patterns for extended periods of time in the same location;
- Jumping waves or the wake of another vessel unreasonably close to that vessel or so as to cause engine RPM to peak and make unusual or excessive noise;
- Weaving through congested traffic at more than slow speed;
- Swerving at the last possible moment to avoid collision (playing chicken);
- Operating a vessel at a speed higher than is necessary to maintain steerage way when near swimmers, or non-powered vessels.

Section 372 – **Under this section of the code it is an offence to send false messages or signals.** If a rescue unit is responding to a false call for help, then it is unavailable for a real emergency, which could cost somebody their life.

Section 439 – **This section prohibits interfering in any way with any aid to navigation. Under this section, it is an offence to conceal, remove, or alter an aid to navigation (such as a buoy, day beacon, signal, or sea-mark).** Tying up to a buoy, for instance, is thus illegal since the mass of your vessel and engine can cause the buoy's anchor to be dragged (thus, removing the buoy from its location). In addition, anchoring next to a buoy is thus also illegal since your pleasure craft can conceal or partially conceal the buoy from other boaters.

Section 259(4) – **Under this section it is an offence to operate a vessel while disqualified or legally prohibited from doing so.**

3.9 Enforcement

An act (or any code, guideline, or regulation enabled under an act) is considered to be a law that prescribes punishments for non-compliance with the law. It is important to remember that the requirements set out in the laws discussed in this course are *minimum* requirements. Thus, it is recommended that boaters always endeavour to exceed the requirements of the law.

There are no age exemptions and no grandfather clauses for any of the acts and regulations (laws) that apply to boaters; they apply to all boaters in Canada (except for Nunavut). **The laws that apply to boaters are enforced by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), provincial police forces, municipal police forces, and other designated enforcement officers.** You must comply with the demands of any enforcement officer.



Enforcement officers are tasked with verifying that you are complying with the rules and, thus they are empowered to:

- Monitor for careless operation;
- Demand that you stop;
- Go on board and inspect your vessel;
- Check for all required safety equipment;
- Verify that you are carrying photo identification;
- Verify that you are carrying proof of competency;
- Ask any pertinent questions; and
- Hand out fines as required.

Any government vessel or any vessel that is owned or operated by a harbour, river, county, or municipal police force may exhibit as an identification signal a blue-coloured flashing light when the vessel is providing assistance or is engaged in law enforcement duties.

End of Chapter 3



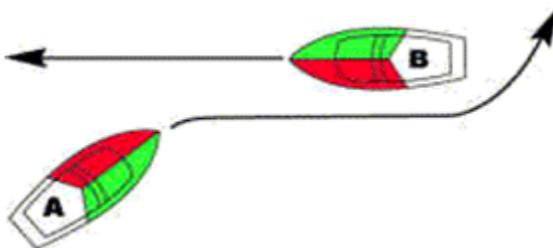
Chapter 3 Review Quiz

The questions included in the following quiz are not sample questions taken from actual tests. They are provided merely to acquaint you with the breadth and depth of knowledge required to pass a Transport Canada Boating Safety Test. Merely memorizing these questions and answers will not be adequate preparation to pass the Boating Safety Test; you must acquire an understanding of the material contained in all seven chapters of this free course. Every topic in this course is a potential test question.

QUESTIONS

Select the response that best answers the question.

1. You have determined that your vessel is the give-way vessel in a crossing situation. What is the standard method for giving way?
2. Two pleasure craft are approaching each other on a reciprocal course (head-on). To pass by each other safely, should they each alter course to port or to starboard?
3. Two powerboats are crossing courses (i.e.: there may be a risk of collision; thus, the *Collision Regulations* apply). Boat A will cross in front of Boat B from Boat B's port sector. Which is the give-way vessel?

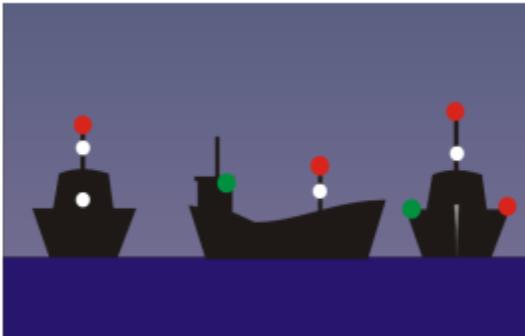


4. A sailboat usually has the right of way over a power-driven vessel except:
 - a.) When it is less than 20 m in length and crosses path with a large vessel that must remain in a shipping lane.
 - b.) When it crosses path with a commercial fishing vessel towing nets.
 - c.) When the sailboat is under power
 - d.) All of the above
5. A vessel being overtaken must:
 - a.) Move to port
 - b.) Move to starboard
 - c.) Maintain course and speed with caution
 - d.) Maintain course but slow down
6. What should you do when operating your small pleasure craft in or near a commercial shipping lane?

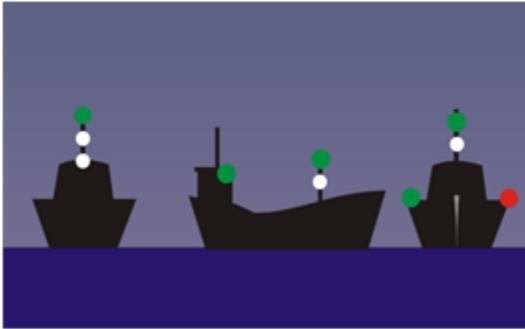
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7. When must running lights (navigation lights) be displayed?
 8. What is a masthead light?
 9. What lights must a power-driven vessel display while underway at night?
 10. What light(s) must a boat less than 50 m display when at anchor at night?
 - a.) All-round light
 - b.) Side lights
 - c.) Side lights and stern light
 - d.) Side lights, stern light, and masthead light
 11. What lights are displayed at night by a fishing vessel towing a trawl?
 12. What is the maximum horsepower of engine that a person between 12 and 16 years of age may operate while unaccompanied by an adult?
 - a.) 10
 - b.) 20
 - c.) 30
 - d.) 40
 13. What is the minimum age required for a person to operate a PWC?
 - a.) Local legal drinking age
 - b.) Fourteen years old
 - c.) Sixteen years old
 - d.) Local legal voting age
 14. When must a powered vessel use a muffler?
 15. You are not responsible for obeying a regulation if you do not know that it even existed:
True? Or False?
 16. Under which statute is it an offence to operate a vessel while disqualified or legally prohibited from doing so.
 17. What actions must you take if you are involved in an accident with another vessel or if you happen upon the scene of a collision?
 18. Under Section 1007 of the *Small Vessel Regulations*, what are some examples of careless behaviour?
 19. Not all restrictions on boating activities are posted on control buoys and command signs. Give an example of a boating restriction that is often not posted.

- 20. What publications does the Canadian Hydrographic Service issue to pleasure craft operators to aid them in navigation?**
- 21. Do all operators have to carry marine charts? How does one keep them up to date?**
- 22. What publication provides predictions for the times of tides?**
- 23. Under what conditions can you refuse to render aid to someone in danger at sea?**
- a.) If a storm is underway
 - b.) If you have to risk your life or the lives of your passengers
 - c.) If rescuing someone will overload your boat
 - d.) If it takes more than 10 minutes to reach them
- 24. Mooring your pleasure craft to an aid to navigation such as a navigation buoy violates which statute?**
- a.) The *Private Buoys Regulations*
 - b.) The *Small Vessel Regulations*
 - c.) The *Criminal Code of Canada*
 - d.) The *Vessel Operation Restriction Regulations*
- 25. Are there any special circumstances under which it is permissible to moor your pleasure craft to a navigation buoy?**
- 26. PWC operators do not need a spotter when towing people:**
True? or False?
- 27. How can one determine if a vessel is unseaworthy?**
- 28. What is so wrong about operating an unseaworthy vessel?**
- 29. What enforcement bodies enforce boating rules in Canada?**
- 30. Enforcement officers need permission to board your boat:**
True? or False?
- 31. What does a blue flashing light on a vessel usually signify?**
- 32. On what page of a marine chart can one find definitions for symbols, abbreviations, acronyms, and terms that appear on the charts.**
- 33. What action should the operator of a pleasure craft take when on a crossing course with a ferry or a vessel engaged in towing.**
- 34. What is the minimum size of vessel allowed in a shipping channel or inshore traffic zone?**

35. When operating a small craft in or near a shipping channel, what can one do to improve one's visibility?
36. What must be carried by the operator of a vessel under oars or paddles (rowboats, canoes, and kayaks,) and without a power supply to operate navigation lights, to signal their presence to other vessels when travelling after dark?
37. You are operating a powered craft and you are on a crossing course with another powered craft. By interpreting the *Collision Regulations*, you have determined that you are the Stand-On Vessel (you have the right of way) but the other vessel is not altering course or speed; what do you do?
38. How does one use sound signals to indicate that one is altering course to starboard? Or that one is altering course to port?
39. You are the operator of a small pleasure craft (under 6m in length) and find yourself on a crossing course with a very large vessel. The larger vessel is crossing from your port sector, thus you technically have the right of way. Will you exercise that right?
40. What should you be alert for when operating near a tugboat engaged in towing?
41. What light configuration must a tugboat display to indicate towing is underway?
42. What is indicated by this light configuration?



43. What is indicated by this light configuration?



44. How should you as the operator of a pleasure craft react to a vessel that is towing at night?

45. What is indicated by a flashing blue-coloured light?

46. What colour is a port sidelight?

47. What must you do if you are involved in a collision with another vessel?

48. What lights must be displayed by a vessel under 50 m in length while at anchor at night between sunset and sunrise?

ANSWERS

1. **If you are the give-way vessel, then you must alter your course and speed to take early and substantial action to stay well clear of the other vessel as well as avoid passing in front of the other craft.** Take action early and substantially to make your intentions clear.
2. Give a one-blast sound signal and then alter course to starboard (to the right).
3. Boat A is the give-way vessel and must alter course and speed early, obviously, and substantially so as to pass to the stern of Boat B.
4. d.)
5. c.)
6. When operating a small craft in or near a shipping lane, navigate in groups of other small boats, when possible, to make yourself more visible to larger vessels.
7. Whenever underway between sunset and sunrise.
8. A masthead light is used to indicate that a craft is power-driven. It is a white light that is mounted higher than the sidelights, faces forward, and shines through an arc of 225°.
9. Sidelights, stern light, and a masthead light (or sidelights and an all-round light).
10. a.) All-round light
11. A vessel when engaged in trawling, shall exhibit: two all-round lights in a vertical line, the upper being green and the lower white, both lights must be visible for 360 degrees; a masthead light abaft of and higher than the all-round green light (a vessel of less than 50 metres in length shall not be obliged to exhibit such a light but may do so); and, when making way through the water, in addition to the lights prescribed in this paragraph, sidelights and a stern light.
12. d.) 40 hp. (30 kW).
13. c.) Sixteen years of age.
14. On all Canadian waters any motorized craft equipped with a motor other than a stock (unmodified) outboard engine must have a muffler and use it while operating within five (5) nautical miles (9.26 km) of shore. This does not apply to you if your vessel was built before January 1, 1960, or if you are in an official competition or in formal training or final preparation for an official competition.
15. False - Under the *Vessel Operation Restriction Regulations*, operators are responsible for knowing when and where restrictions on boating activities exist; i.e.:

claiming ignorance of any local restriction on boating activities is not a valid reason for failure to obey local restrictions.

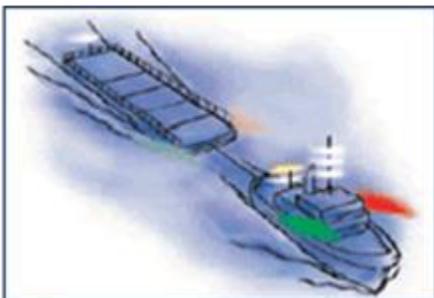
16. The *Criminal Code of Canada*

17. Render what assistance you can without seriously endangering yourself (i.e.: make sure your vessel is secure and then render aid to the other vessel) and exchange names, addresses, telephone numbers, and insurance information with the operator of the other vessel.
18. Examples of behaviors which should be considered careless under Section 1007 of the *Small Vessel Regulations* include (but are not limited to):
- Operating vessel at high engine regime in circular or crisscross patterns for extended periods of time in the same location;
 - Jumping waves or the wake of another vessel unreasonably close to that vessel or so as to cause engine RPM to peak and make unusual or excessive noise;
 - Weaving through congested traffic at more than slow speed;
 - Swerving at the last possible moment to avoid collision (playing chicken);
 - Operating a vessel at a speed higher than is necessary to maintain steerage way when near swimmers, or non-powered vessels.
19. Not all boating restrictions are posted. For instance, within 30 metres of the shoreline, a 10 km/h speed limit is in effect on all waters within British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, and Nova Scotia as well as on selected lakes and rivers in some other provinces, whether or not speed limit signs are posted.
20. The *Canadian Hydrographic Service* publishes Canadian marine charts. Marine charts are graphic representations depicting water areas, including depths, underwater hazards, traffic routes, aids to navigation, and adjacent coastal areas. Chart # 1 of a set of charts will usually contain definitions of symbols, abbreviations, acronyms, and terms that appear on the other pages of the charts.
21. The *Charts and Nautical Publications Regulations* require operators of all vessels to have on board the latest edition of the largest scale chart, for each area that they navigate and to keep these publications up to date. One can keep charts and nautical publications up to date by referring periodically to the Canadian Coast Guard's monthly, Notices to Mariners, which are available at this web site (<http://www.notmar.gc.ca/>).
22. The *Canadian Tide and Current Tables* provide daily predictions of the times of slack water, the times and rates of maximum flood and ebb streams, and the direction of water flow.
23. b.) Whenever rendering aid poses a serious and real danger to your life or the lives of your passengers

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24. c.) The *Criminal Code of Canada*
25. No. It is forbidden at all times.
26. False - A PWC (a Seadoo or a jet ski) is a pleasure craft under the regulations. And a pleasure craft operator must have a responsible person as spotter to keep watch on any person being towed. In other words, a rear-view mirror does not count. In addition to the driver, there must be a human being on board, facing aft, acting as spotter, and reporting to the driver.
27. A vessel is considered seaworthy if the hull is undamaged and appropriate for the type of sea condition, the engine is in conformance to the hull compliance notice, the vessel is not overloaded, and all equipment is in good working order.
28. It is a criminal offence (i.e.: it is a violation of the Criminal Code of Canada) to knowingly operate a vessel that is unseaworthy (thus, placing your life and the lives of others at risk).
29. The laws that apply to boaters are enforced by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), provincial police forces, municipal police forces, and other designated enforcement officers.
30. False - You must comply with the demands of any enforcement officer. Enforcement officers are tasked with verifying that you are complying with the rules and, thus they are empowered to (among other things):
- Demand that you stop;
 - Go onboard and inspect your vessel;
 - Check for all required safety equipment;
 - Verify that you are carrying photo identification;
 - Verify that you are carrying proof of competency;
31. Any government vessel or any vessel that is owned or operated by a harbour, river, county or municipal police force may exhibit as an identification signal a blue flashing light when the vessel is providing assistance or is engaged in law enforcement duties.
32. Chart # 1 of a set of charts will usually contain definitions of symbols, abbreviations, acronyms, and terms that appear on the other pages of the charts.
33. Vessels engaged in towing have a cable below the surface between the towing vessel and the vessel being towed. Never cross between a towing vessel and the vessel being towed; otherwise you may strike the cable, be disabled, and then you would be run down by the vessel being towed. Similarly, ferries are often connected to a subsurface cable. Thus, do not cross courses with a ferry, stay well clear.
34. Craft of all sizes may cross shipping channels and inshore traffic zones. As a general rule, smaller vessels and vessels engaged in fishing should steer clear of

commercial shipping lanes and inshore traffic zones and must use extreme caution when crossing a shipping channel or inshore traffic zone.

35. Navigate in groups of other small boats, when possible, to make yourself more visible to larger vessels.
36. Vessels under oars or paddles (rowboats, canoes, and kayaks,) without a power supply to operate navigation lights must carry a flashlight or lantern showing a white light to signal their presence to other vessels when travelling after dark.
37. If you are operating a powered craft and you are on a crossing course with another powered craft and by interpreting the *Collision Regulations*, you have determined that you are the Stand-On Vessel (you have the right of way) but the other vessel is not altering course or speed; then you must alter course and speed in order to avoid a collision.
38. Pursuant to Rule 34 of the *Collision Regulations*, on inland waterways, sound signals are also used to communicate when you are manoeuvring in a particular direction:
 - One short blast – One short blast means: “I am altering course to starboard”*
 - Two short blasts – Two short blasts means: “I am altering course to port”
 - Three short blasts – Three short blasts means: “I am manoeuvring using astern propulsion” (i.e.: I am moving backwards);
 - Four short blasts – Four short blasts means: “I am unable to manoeuvre”.
 - Five short blasts – One employs five blasts on a horn when one vessel fails to understand the intentions of another.
39. No. Keep clear of large vessels.
40. First of all, a tugboat engaged in towing will not be manoeuvrable and will, therefore, have the right of way. In addition, when giving way (altering course and speed to pass well astern the other vessel) make sure that you pass behind anything being towed as well (i.e.: never pass between a tug and its tow). Thus, when operating at night, it is crucial to know the light configuration that indicates that a tugboat is towing.
41. A tugboat engaged in towing should display these lights:



42. Vessel engaged in fishing (no trawl)
43. Vessel engaged in fishing (with trawl).
44. Whenever encountering a vessel towing at night, never pass between the towing vessel and its tow.
45. Any government vessel or any vessel that is owned or operated by a harbour, river, county or municipal police force may exhibit as an identification signal a blue-coloured flashing light when the vessel is providing assistance or is engaged in law enforcement duties.
46. A port sidelight is always red-coloured. To remember this, just remember that port (the drink) is a kind of red wine. A port sidelight is always installed on the port side of the bow. A starboard sidelight is always green-coloured and installed on the starboard side of the bow.
47. If you are involved in a collision with another vessel, the first thing that you must do is make certain that all persons are accounted for, check for injuries, and respond to those injuries. In addition, under Section 252 of the *Criminal Code of Canada*, if you are involved in an accident with another vessel you must render assistance to that vessel and if you happen upon the scene of a collision, you must stop and offer assistance. In addition, operators of vessels involved in an accident must exchange their names and addresses.
48. If a vessel under 50 m in length is at anchor, it must display an all-round light in the forepart, which is a white light that displays an unbroken arc of light through a horizontal angle of 360°.

