

Rules of the Road

Know and follow the “rules of the road” when you’re out on the water. These rules advise what every boater should do to avoid hitting or being hit by another vessel.

Some basic rules:

1. Power boats must always give way to sailboats and paddle craft
2. Sailboats give way to paddle craft
3. Sailboats under power are considered power boats and give way accordingly.

1. Port

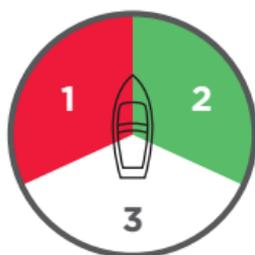
If a power-driven vessel approaches within this sector, maintain your course and speed with caution.

2. Starboard

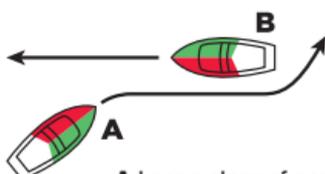
If a power-driven vessel approaches within this sector, take early and substantial action to avoid a collision by passing behind the approaching boat.

3. Stern

If any vessel approaches this sector, maintain your course and speed with caution.



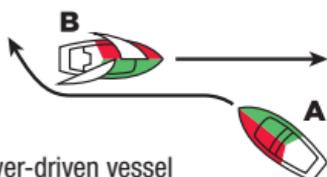
A blows one blast and alters course to starboard. B blows one blast and alters course to starboard.



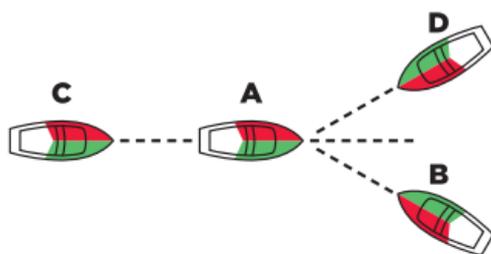
A keeps clear of and must avoid crossing ahead of B.



Any vessel overtaking another must keep clear.



A power-driven vessel keeps clear of B sailing vessel.



A keeps clear of B
B keeps clear of D
C keeps clear of A and B
D keeps clear of A and C

Keep Watch to Avoid Collisions

Keeping constant watch for others on the water is common sense and the law. If you are sharing the water with large vessels, remember that it is harder for them to see you or change their route to avoid you. It also takes them longer to stop. These are all good reasons to be ready to move out of their way.

The safest practice is to always be mindful when operating in shipping lanes and steer clear of tugs, vessels under tow, actively fishing, adrift or at anchor.