

**Explanations to  
ANSA Annual Skipper Review and Refresher  
Inland Rules Of The Road Exam  
Revised 2014**

1. Rule 9 (d) states “A vessel shall not cross a narrow channel or fairway if such crossing impedes the passage of a vessel which can safely navigate only within that channel or fairway. The latter vessel shall use the danger signal prescribed in Rule 34 (d) if in doubt as to the intention of the crossing vessel.”
2. Rule 3 (f) states “The term ‘vessel not under command’ means a vessel which through some exceptional circumstance is unable to maneuver as required by these Rules and is therefore unable to keep out of the way of another vessel.”
3. Rule 21 (d) states that “Towing light means a yellow light having the same characteristics as the ‘sternlight’ defined in paragraph (c) of this Rule.”
4. Rule 30 provides that “a vessel at anchor shall exhibit where it can best be seen: ( I ) in the fore part, an all-round white light or one ball, and (ii) at or near the stern and at a lower level than the light prescribed in subparagraph ( I ), an all-round white light.” The only special anchorage exception provided in Rule 30 is 30 (g) for vessels of less than 20 meters.
5. Rule 15 states that “when two power-driven vessels are crossing so as to involve risk of collision, the vessel which has the other on her starboard side shall keep out of the way....” Rule 3 defines a power-driven vessel as “any vessel propelled by machinery.” The fact that your engine is not running or your transmission is not engaged is immaterial unless you have a "not under command" situation.
6. Llana and Wisneskey, Handbook of the Nautical Rules of the Road, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, p. 16, state “The presence of more than two vessels may preclude full compliance with the Rules; action required with respect to one vessel may conflict with the action required with respect to one or more of the others....special circumstances exist.”
7. Rule 3 c provides that the term “sailing vessel” means a vessel under sail provided that propelling machinery is not being used.
8. Rule 7 (b) requires that “proper use shall be made of radar equipment if fitted and operational . . . to obtain early warning of risk of collision.”
9. Rule 5 requires that “Every vessel shall at all times maintain a proper look-out by sight and hearing as well as by all available means appropriate in the prevailing circumstances and conditions so as to make a full appraisal of the situation and of the risk of collision.”
10. Rule 10 provides for two exemptions from compliance: “(k) A vessel restricted in her ability to maneuver when engaged in an operation for the maintenance of safety of navigation,” and “(l) a vessel restricted in her ability to maneuver when engaged in an operation for the laying, servicing, or picking up of a submarine cable.”

11. Rule 13 (d) explains that any subsequent alteration of the bearing between the two vessels shall not make the overtaking vessel a crossing vessel or relieve her of the duty of keeping clear of the overtaken vessel until she is finally past and clear.
12. Sailing vessels apply Rule 12 whether crossing or approaching head-on. It is power-driven vessels (not sailing vessels!) which, in a head-on situation, must each alter course to starboard so that they pass port to port of each other as per Rule 14.
13. Two power-driven vessels approaching head-on, apply Rule 14 (a), each altering their course to starboard. (Note that this does not apply to two sailing vessels; they must apply Rule 12.)
14. Rule 35 states: “A vessel towed or if more than one vessel is towed the last vessel of the tow, if manned, shall at intervals of not more than two minutes sound four blasts in succession; namely, one prolonged followed by three short blasts.”
15. Rule 3 (b) defines a power-driven vessel as any vessel propelled by machinery. Consider a sailboat with machinery on board, but not in use. It does not become a power-driven vessel until it is propelled by machinery.
16. Although the phrase “making way” is not defined in the text of the rules, court interpretations indicate that a vessel is making way only when it is moving through the water as a result of its own propulsion. A vessel simply drifting with the wind or current is “underway” but not “making way,” and it will sound different fog signals and perhaps show different lights than a vessel that is moving through the water.
17. Rule 3 (k) defines the term “restricted visibility” as any condition in which visibility is restricted by fog, mist, falling snow, heavy rains, storms, sand storms, or any other similar causes.
18. Vessels are only in sight of each other when one can be visually observed from the other. See Rule 3 (j).
19. Rule 35 (f) and (g). Fog signals for vessels NOT underway (at anchor or aground) shall be sounded at intervals not to exceed one minute except for vessels engaged in fishing at anchor and vessels restricted in ability to maneuver at anchor.
20. Whistle signals for course changes or intentions of passing are only sounded for vessels within sight of each other. Rules 34 (a) and 3 (k) apply. You MUST continue to sound only fog signals until the other vessel is sighted.
21. Rule 35. All vessels underway sound one prolonged followed by two short blasts at intervals not to exceed two minutes EXCEPT:
  - a. Power-driven vessels underway making way – 1 prolonged blast at intervals not to exceed two minutes.
  - b. Power-driven vessels underway not making way - 2 prolonged blast at intervals not to exceed two minutes.
  - c. Vessels being towed – 1 prolonged blast followed by three short blasts immediately following the towing vessel’s signal.

Note: Vessels engaged in fishing and vessels restricted in ability to maneuver sound the same 1 prolonged followed by two short at intervals not to exceed 2 minutes both underway and at anchor.

22. Rule 23a. This is probably a larger vessel (vessels of less than 50 meters are not required to have a second masthead light) with a house (and sidelights) towards the stern.
23. Dayshapes shall be shown during daylight hours. See Rule 20 (d).
24. Rule 25 (e) requires that sailing vessels "also being propelled by machinery shall exhibit forward, where it can best be seen, a conical shape, apex downward. A vessel of less than 12 meters in length is not required to exhibit this shape, but may do so.
25. Rule 23a requires a vessel 50 meters or longer to display another masthead light abaft of and higher than the forward one. Rule 24a states that when towing astern a vessel shall display two masthead lights in a vertical line, giving a total of three on a bow on aspect.
26. A power-driven vessel when pushing ahead or towing alongside shall exhibit two towing lights in a vertical line. Rule 24 (a) iii.
27. A vessel engaged in fishing, other than trawling, shall, when there is outlying gear extending more than 150 meters horizontally from the vessel, exhibit an all-round white light or a cone apex upwards in the direction of the gear.
28. At night, vessels not under command will display 2 all-round red lights in a vertical line plus sidelights and sternlight when making way. By day they display 2 black balls in a vertical line. Rule 27 (a).
29. Small vessels engaged in diving operations where it is impracticable to exhibit all the lights and shapes for vessels restricted in maneuverability shall display a rigid replica of code flag "A" so that it can be seen through 360 degrees. Rule 27 (e).
30. Rule 12 applies here and only one vessel gives way: the one on port tack. The case when two vessels each turn to starboard and pass port-to-port holds only for two power driven vessels and is covered by Rule 14.
31. A sailing vessel underway shall exhibit sidelights and a sternlight when underway. They never show masthead lights. Rule 25 (a). A sailing vessel underway of less than 20 meters (65.6 feet) may show a tri-color light at the top of the mast in lieu of the sidelights and stern light on deck. Rule 25 (b). As yet another option, a sailing vessel underway may show sidelights and a sternlight plus optional red over green all-round lights near the top of the mast. ("Red over green, sailing machine.") Rule 25 (c).
32. A vessel engaged in dredging shall indicate the side on which another vessel may pass with two all-around green lights or two diamonds in a vertical line. Rule 27 (d)(ii).
33. The green sidelight has a visibility of 112.5 degrees, from dead ahead to 22.5 degrees abaft the starboard beam. A vessel due east of you would therefore have to be on a course between SSE (157.5 degrees) and due west (270 degrees). Rule 21 (b).

34. Vessels being towed are required to show sidelights and a sternlight. Rule 24 (e).
35. A vessel engaged in underwater operations shall exhibit two red lights in a vertical line on the obstructed side, and two green lights on the unobstructed side at night. By day she shall display two black balls on the obstructed side and two black diamond shapes on the unobstructed side. Rule 27 (d) (i).
36. Vessels aground show three black balls in a vertical line. Rule 30 (d) (ii).
37. A vessel being towed alongside shall exhibit...a special flashing light....” Rule 24 (f)(ii). Rule 21 (g) defines a special flashing light as a yellow light flashing at a rate between 50 and 70 per minute.
38. The short blast has a duration of about 1 second. A prolonged blast has a duration of 4 to 6 seconds. There is no long blast. Rule 32 (b).
39. Three short blasts mean, “I am operating astern propulsion.” Remember: vessels must be within sight of each other to use this signal. Rule 34 (a) (i).
40. Rule 34 (a) (i) states that when two power-driven vessels are meeting on Inland Waters, one short blast would mean, “I intend to leave you on my port side.”
41. Rule 14 (a) provides that in Inland waters where two power driven vessels are meeting head to head or nearly so, each shall alter course to starboard so as to pass on the port side of the other. Rule 34 (a) states that vessels shall indicate this intention by sounding one short blast on the whistle to mean, “I intend to leave you on my port side.”
42. Rule 30 applies. Also note that Rule 23 (a), with the forward light lower than the second one abaft of it is for masthead lights (shining a forward 225 degree arc) on vessels underway, not at anchor. And note that anchored vessels required to use the available working or equivalent lights to illuminate their decks is for vessels over 100 meters.
43. Rule 17 (a) requires the stand-on vessel to maintain course and speed.
44. Rule 17 (a) (ii) states that the stand-on vessel MAY take appropriate action to avoid collision as soon as she determines that the give-way vessel is not taking appropriate action in compliance with the Rules.
45. Vessels must be within sight of each other in order to have a stand-on and give-way vessel. Rule 11.
46. ANY vessel overtaking ANY vessel must keep clear and therefore is the give-way vessel. See Rule 13 (a).
47. Rule 12 applies. For the purpose of this Rule, the windward side shall be deemed to be the side opposite to that on which the mainsail is carried. If the boom is close to centerline, look to see how the sail is filled. Then apply “Starboard Tack (stand-on) over Port Tack (give-way)” and, “Leeward (stand-on) over Windward (give-way).”

48. As applied to a sloop, Rule 12 defines the “tack” of a vessel as the side opposite to that on which the mainsail is carried. This nicely covers the two anomalous cases when the wind is directly from astern and when sailing by the lee. Note that when sailing by the lee with the wind on the starboard side, the boom is on the starboard side, too, and your boat is really on a port tack.
49. A vessel engaged in fishing shall exhibit a shape consisting of two cones with their apexes together in a vertical line one above the other. Rule 26(b) and (c).
50. Rule 15 (a) states that the give way vessel in a crossing situation should avoid crossing ahead of the stand-on vessel.
51. A red light, near the water level might be a buoy or a sailboat passing port-to-port. A red over green up high with a red near the water is a close sailboat passing port-to-port. A horizontal red and green near the water level is a somewhat distant vessel heading your way and should get your attention. However, a horizontal red and green up high is a very close vessel about to collide.
52. Rule 2 (b) states: Due regard shall be had to all dangers of navigation and collision and to any special circumstances which makes departure from the Rules necessary to avoid immediate danger.
53. The danger signal consists of five or more short and rapid blasts on the whistle. This may be supplemented by five or more flashes of a white light. Do not confuse the danger signal with a distress signal. Rule 34 (d).
54. A vessel restricted in her ability to maneuver, except a vessel engaged in mineclearance operations, shall exhibit three shapes in a vertical line where they can best be seen. The highest and lowest of these shapes shall be balls and the middle one a diamond. Rule 27(b).
55. An inconspicuous, partly submerged vessel that is less than 25 meters will have one all-round white light at or near each end. Rule 24 (g) i.
56. Rule 30 (a) i. states that a single white light or a ball should be displayed at the bow of an anchored vessel.
57. The only light you can see coming up astern of another vessel would be his sternlight which shines from dead astern to 67.5 degrees on each side of the stern of the other vessel. Arcs of visibility of the sternlight do not overlap with either the masthead lights or the sidelights. Rule 21.
58. When towing astern and the length of the tow exceeds 200 meters, the vessel towing must display three masthead lights on either the forward or after mast. Rule 24 (a) (i).
59. Remember that towing lights are yellow with the same arc of visibility as the sternlight. Rule 24 (d). A towing light is shown ABOVE the sternlight when towing astern. Rule 24 (a) (iv).
60. Each and every vessel being towed astern at night shall exhibit sidelights and a sternlight. Masthead lights are never shown on vessels being towed. Rule 24 (e).

61. Rule 24 (c) applies. A yellow over white is for a power-driven vessel towing astern which and is covered by Rule 24 (a).
62. Rule 18 (d) provides that “A seaplane on the water shall, in general, keep well clear of all vessels and avoid impeding their navigation.”
63. Rule 7 (b) requires that “proper use shall be made of radar equipment if fitted and operational . . . to obtain early warning of risk of collision.”
64. When towing astern and the length of the tow exceeds 200 meters, the vessel towing must display three masthead lights on either the forward or after mast. Rule 24 (a) (i).
65. The yellow light is a towing light which has the same characteristics as the sternlight, and is shown above the sternlight by a towing vessel towing astern. Rule 24 (a) (iv).
66. Law enforcement vessels may display a flashing blue light when engaged in direct law enforcement activities. Annex V to the Rules, sub-section 88.11.