



NAVIGATION

Unlike when driving a car on the road, at sea there are no clear roads laid out for sailors. It is very important that ships follow basic rules in order to avoid colliding into other vessels.

The rules of the road are called the **International Regulations for Preventing Collision at Sea**.

Even if you are following the rules of the road very carefully it is always important to keep a good look-out in case other vessels have not seen you.

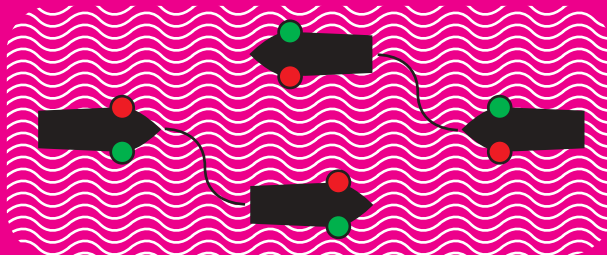
Rules of the road

Power vessels passing each other have to pass **portside to portside**. If you see both the red and the green bow lights coming towards you need to turn to starboard so that you pass each other portside to portside with your red lights facing each other.

Tip

Try and memorise this rhyme to remember the rule:

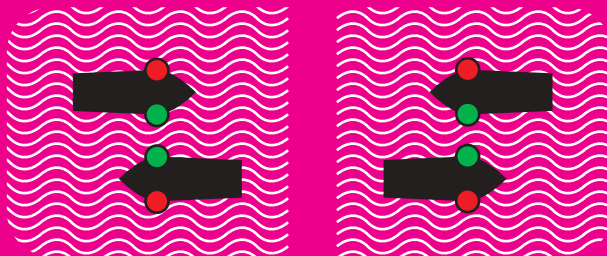
"Meeting steamers do not dread, if you see three lights ahead; Starboard wheel and show your red"



Is it safe to pass on the starboard side?

If another vessel is at a safe distance and they are passing green light to green light they are passing down your starboard side.

"Green to green or red to red, perfectly safe to go ahead!"



Which side of the road?

If you are sailing up or down a narrow channel it is important to keep to the **right-hand side**. If you are crossing over this channel you must give way to all vessels using the channel.

Who goes first?

The general rule is that **'power gives way to sail'**. This means that a boat, which is powered by an engine or oars, will allow a boat powered by wind to go first.

As with all these rules it is important to use your common sense. If there is a very large vessel in a narrow channel you cannot expect it to change its course for a little sailing boat.

Activity **Port and starboard game**

With friends or family try this game as a way of remembering which are your port and starboard sides.

One person is the captain and is in command. They shout out the instructions listed below. Try a warm-up go first. Then the last person to follow the command is 'out' until there is one final winner who has followed all the commands the quickest.

Port
(run to correct side of the space)

Starboard
(run to correct side of the space)

Submarines
(lie on the floor)

Captain's coming aboard (Stand to attention and Salute)

Hoist the mainsail (run on the spot – like climbing the rigging)

Mess deck
(sit cross legged on the floor – ready for lunch)

Davey Jones
(climb a tree, stand on a chair – anything so that you are not on the floor)

Up periscope
(stand up straight and hold hands to eyes as though looking through binoculars so that you are not on the floor)