

Safety

Know the Collision Regulations

Rule 9 (b) - A vessel of less than 20 metres in length or a sailing vessel shall not impede the passage of a vessel, which can safely navigate only within a narrow channel or fairway.

Rule 9 (d) - 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 such channel or fairway. The latter vessel may use the sound signal prescribed in Rule 34(d) if in doubt as to the intentions of the crossing vessel.

Rule 10 - Traffic Separation Schemes

Rule 10(b) - A vessel using a Traffic Separation Scheme shall: (i) proceed in the appropriate traffic lane in the general direction of traffic flow for that lane; (iii) normally join or leave a traffic lane at the termination of the lane, but when joining or leaving from either side shall do so at a small an angle to the general direction of flow as practicable.

Rule 10(c) - A vessel shall, so far as practicable, avoid crossing traffic lanes but if obliged to do so shall cross on a heading as nearly as practicable at right angles to the general direction of traffic flow.

Rule 10(j) - A vessel of less than 20 metres in length or a sailing vessel shall not impede the safe passage of a power-driven vessel following a traffic lane.

Rule 18(b)(ii) - A sailing vessel under way shall keep out of the way of a vessel restricted in her ability to manoeuvre.

Rule 18(d)(i) - Any vessel other than a vessel not under command or a vessel restricted in her ability to manoeuvre shall, if the circumstances of the case admit, avoid impeding the safe passage of a vessel constrained by her draught, exhibiting the signals in Rule 28.

Before Sailing

- Check the weather forecast by:
 - listening to the shipping or local radio forecast, watching Teletext
 - ITV, telephoning the Maritime and Coastguard Agency or listening to its reports on VHF Channel 67.
- Check the condition of the boat and its equipment.
 - Ensure the engine is well maintained. Carry a tool kit and essential spares.
 - Ensure safety equipment is in good order and is provided for all on board.
- Carry day and night distress flares, first aid kit and a torch.
 - Carry VHF radio with marine frequencies, do not rely on Cellnet and
 - other portable phones.
- Check local conditions, tide rates, shoal waters.
- Obtain and carry the appropriate charts and tide tables.
- Plan your trip.
- Ascertain how long the voyage will take.
- It is prudent to set watches for crew members.
- Plan safe havens en route and alternatives.
- Have sufficient crew for voyage.

Radio Procedures

Distress

"MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY. ALL STATIONS, ALL STATIONS, ALL STATIONS. THIS IS "

Used to indicate that the vessel (or aircraft) is in grave and imminent danger, is sinking or about to sink or is on fire.

Urgency

"PAN, PAN, PAN: ALL STATIONS, ALL STATIONS, ALL STATIONS. THIS IS..... "

Used to indicate that the station has a very urgent message concerning the safety of a ship or person on board.

Safety

"SE'CURITE', SE'CURITE', SE'CURITE'. THIS IS "

Used to indicate that the station is about to transmit an important navigational or meteorological warning.

International Code of Signals

'V': "I require assistance."

'F': "I am disabled; please communicate with me."

'Q': "I request free pratique, my vessel is healthy."

'U': "You are running into danger."

'O': "Man overboard."

'W': "I require medical assistance."

Helicopter Rescue

When the helicopter is sighted by a boat in distress, a flare, orange smoke signal, dye marker or a well-trained Aldis lamp will assist recognition (very important if there are other vessels in the vicinity).

Survivors from a yacht with a mast may need to be picked up from a dinghy or liferaft at least 100 ft (30 m) away.

If a crewman descends, he will take charge: obey his instructions. Never secure the winch wire to the yacht and beware that it may carry a lethal static charge if it is not dipped (earthed) in the sea before handling.