

# Tidal Water Navigation Rules

## Navigation Rules

There are two terms that help explain these rules:

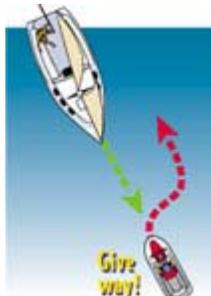
**Stand-on boat** The vessel which should maintain its course and speed.

**Give-way boat** The vessel which must take early and substantial action to avoid collision by stopping, slowing down or changing course.



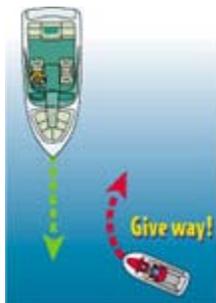
### Meeting Head-On

**Power vs. Power:** Neither vessel is the stand-on boat. Both vessels should keep to the starboard (right).  
**Power vs. Sail:** The powerboat is the give-way boat. The sailboat is the stand-on boat.



**Power vs. Power**

**Power vs. Sail**



### Crossing Situations

**Power vs. Power:** The vessel on the port (left) is the give-way boat. The vessel on the starboard (right) is the stand-on boat.  
**Power vs. Sail:** The powerboat is the give-way boat. The sailboat is the stand-on boat.



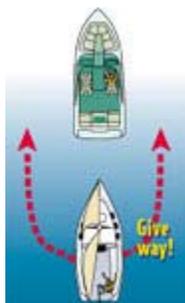
**Power vs. Power**

**Power vs. Sail**



### Overtaking

**Power vs. Power:** The vessel which is overtaking another vessel is the give-way boat. The vessel being overtaken is the stand-on boat.  
**Power vs. Sail:** The vessel which is overtaking another vessel is the give-way boat. The vessel being overtaken is the stand-on boat.



**Power vs. Power**

**Power vs. Sail**

# U. S. Aids to Navigation System (ATON)

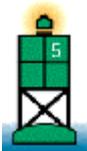
Buoys and markers are the “traffic signals” that guide operators safely along some waterways. They also identify dangerous or controlled areas and give directions and information. As a recreational vessel operator you will need to know the lateral navigation markers and non-lateral markers of the U. S. Aids to Navigation System.

## Lateral Markers

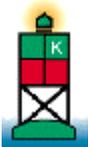
These navigation aids are used to mark the edges of safe water areas; for example, to direct travel within a channel. They use a combination of colors and numbers, which may be applied to buoys or permanently placed markers.



**Red colors, red lights, and even numbers** indicate the right side of the channel as a boater enters from the open sea or heads upstream.



**Green colors, green lights and odd numbers** indicate the left side of the channel as a boater proceeds from the open sea or heads upstream.



**Red and green colors and/or lights** indicate the preferred (primary) channel. If green is on top, the preferred channel is to the right; if red is on top, the preferred channel is to the left.



**Lighted Buoys** use the lateral marker shapes, colors and numbers discussed above; in addition, they have a matching colored light.



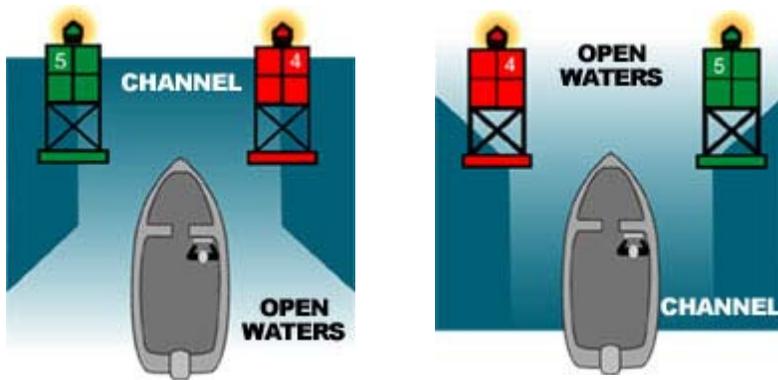
**Nuns** are cone-shaped buoys marked with red colors and even numbers.



**Cans** are cylindrical-shaped buoys marked with green colors and odd numbers.



**Daymarks** are permanently placed signs attached to structures such as posts in the water. Common daymarks are red triangles (equivalent to nuns) and green squares (equivalent to cans) and may also be lighted.



### **Red Right Returning**

is a reminder of the correct course when returning from open waters or heading upstream.

Some common sound signals that you should be familiar with as a recreational boater are:

#### **Changing Direction**

- One short blast tells other boaters “I intend to turn to my right.”
- Two short blasts tells other boaters “I intend to turn to my left.”
- Three short blasts tells other boaters “I am backing up.”

#### **Restricted Visibility**

- One prolonged blast at intervals of not more than two minutes is the signal used by powerboats underway.
- One prolonged plus two short blasts at intervals of not more than two minutes is the signal used by sailboats under sail alone.

#### **Warning**

- One prolonged blast is a warning signal (for example, when coming around a blind bend or exiting a slip)
- Five (or more) short, rapid blasts are used to signal danger or to signal that you do not understand the other boater’s intentions.

