

- If a vessel with the wind on the port side sees a vessel windward and cannot determine with certainty whether the other vessel has the wind on the port or starboard side, it shall keep out of the way of the other.

2. 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.

When a power-driven vessel and a sailing vessel are on a collision course, the powerboat must keep out of the way of the sailboat. But the rule does not give the sailboat the right to hamper the passage of a vessel that safely navigates only within a narrow channel. Sailing vessels must also keep out of the way of

- Disabled vessels
- Those vessels restricted in ability to maneuver (i.e., rowboats, canoes)
- Fishing vessels engaged in fishing (As a courtesy, all boats should attempt to stay away from fishing activities. However, a fishing boat should not anchor in the fairway or tie up to a navigational aid.)

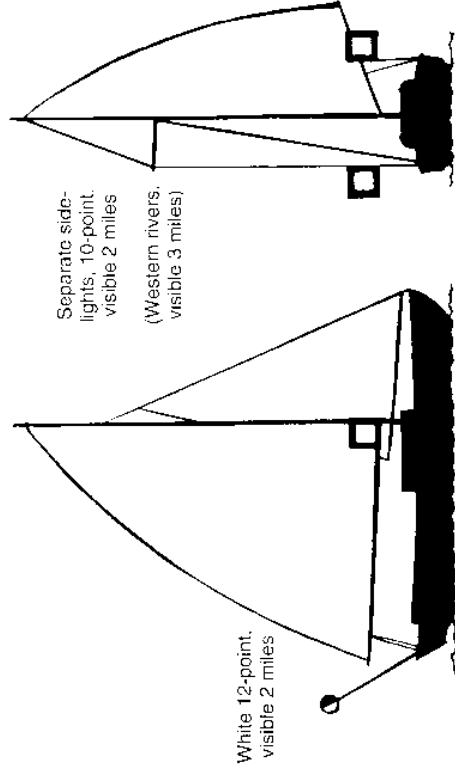
Overtaking vessels—those coming up on another from more than 2 points (22.5 degrees) abaft its beam—must keep clear of the boat being passed. This means that sailboats must keep clear of any slow-moving vessels they overtake. This is a good idea, rule or no rule. If there is any doubt as to whether a vessel is overtaking another, it shall be assumed that this is the case, and action must be taken accordingly.

When two vessels are crossing in a way that may put them at risk, the vessel that has the other on its starboard must keep out of the way. Whenever possible, it should not cross ahead of the other vessel.

A boat coming out of a slip or a basin into open water has no rights until it is entirely clear: move out with caution at low speed. Skippers are responsible for damage caused by the wakes of the boats.

**Question:** When is a sailboat not a sailboat?

**Answer:** When it turns on its auxiliary engine. Whether an engine is a fixed inboard or a portable outboard, the minute that engine goes on, the sailboat becomes a motorboat. As a motorboat, it loses the privileges it had as a sailboat and must follow the rules of the road for powerboats.



## Lights

Between sunset and sunrise, or during periods of reduced visibility, sailboats 23 feet (7 meters) or longer must carry red and green side-lights. The light must be visible up to 2 miles. The red light must *not* be visible on the starboard side, nor the green on the port. Sailboats must also show a white light from the stern.

With this system, an approaching vessel can tell that another boat is in front of it, and can gauge its course and speed.

Vessels 20 meters or longer anchoring at night, whether power or sail, must show a white light in the forward part of the vessel visible all around the horizon for at least 2 miles. Sailboats normally hang this anchor light from the jibstay as far up as possible.

Instead of the lights required on larger vessels, sailboats less than 23 feet in length must carry a flashlight or lantern that can be quickly shown to prevent a collision. Shining a flashlight on your sail is a good precaution at night. It's an easy and effective way of letting other boats know where you are.

For more information on lighting and rules, check with your local marine safety office or nearest Coast Guard facility. Members of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary or the U.S. Power Squadron are also good sources. You may write to the U.S. Government Printing Office for a copy of *Navigation Rules: International-Inland (COMDTINST M16672.2A)*.