

THE MOST IMPORTANT SAILING RULES

This overview comprises a simplified representation of boating rules on the water. You can find the complete list at [www.VisuRIS.be/ships regulations](http://www.VisuRIS.be/ships_regulations). In addition, skippers must also comply with the temporary regulations that come into force through issue of a shipping notice, see www.VisuRIS.be/scheepvaartberichten.



WWW.VISURIS.BE

 De Vlaamse
Waterweg ^{NV}

PRIORITY RULES

1ST GENERAL RIGHT OF WAY RULE

The vessel that holds to the starboard bank (or side of the waterway) has right of way (unless a barge requests an exception to the oncoming vessel by showing a blue board with a white border). For that reason, you should sail as much as possible on the right, the starboard side.

- **Starboard:** is the right side of a vessel when looking towards the bow
- **Port:** is the left side of a vessel when looking towards the bow

2ND GENERAL RIGHT OF WAY RULE

Large vessels (> 20 m) and commercial shipping go before for small ones.

FURTHERMORE, THERE ARE THREE CATEGORIES/SITUATIONS:

1 Opposing courses/sailing head to head:

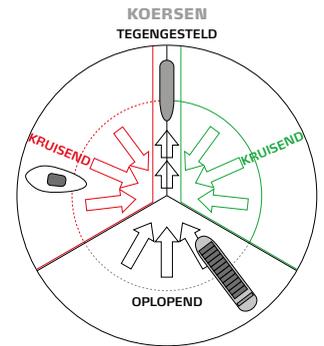
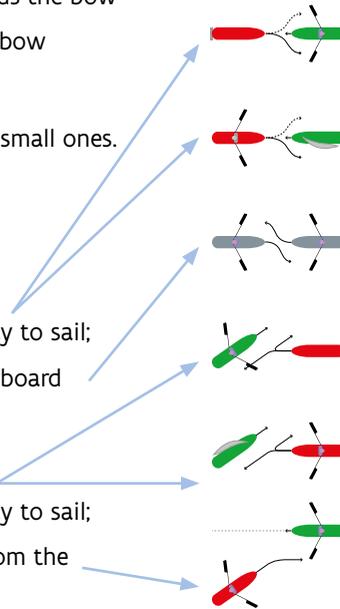
- motor vessels give way to manually powered vessels (e.g. rowing boats canoes, etc.) and the latter give way to sail;
- motor and manually powered vessels, both go to starboard

2 Crossing courses:

- motor vessels give way to manually powered vessels (e.g. rowing boats canoes, etc.) and the latter give way to sail;
- both motor and manually powered vessels coming from the right have right of way.

3 Overtaking courses

The **over taker** (the vessel passing the other) must always give way.
When opposing large vessels, small vessels are asked to cooperate, for example by slowing down.



SOUND SIGNALS

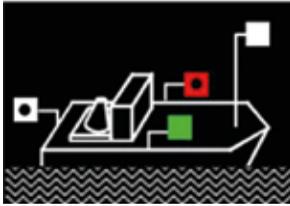
By preference, use your radio. Recreational vessels may use the following signals if necessary.

GENERAL SIGNALS

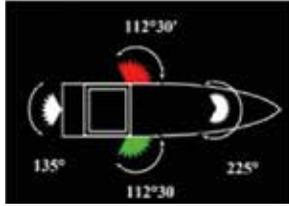
	Attention (a warning)
	I'm going to starboard
	I'm going to port
	I am reversing
	I cannot manoeuvre
	Imminent danger of collision
	I am in need of assistance

OPTICAL SIGNALS ON VESSELS

The general light configuration comprises four navigation lights: the stern light, the masthead light, and the sidelights, port and starboard. These are only visible from certain sectors. The various visible combinations allow you to determine which direction a vessel is sailing in relation to yours.

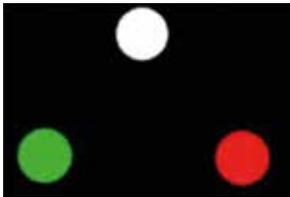


General presentation

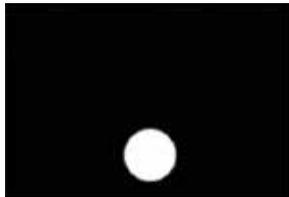


Sectors viewed from above

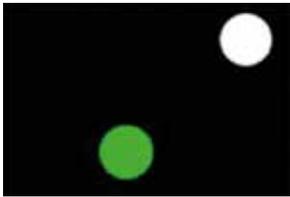
Visible lights from each sector



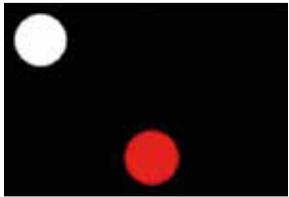
Fore



After



Starboard side



Port side

THE MAIN TRAFFIC SIGNS

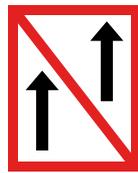
PROHIBITION SIGNS



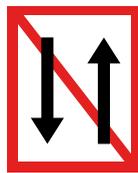
Sailing onwards prohibited



Decommissioned part of the waterway



No overtaking



Prohibited to approach on opposing course



Mooring prohibited



Anchoring or towing anchors, cables and chains prohibited



Mooring prohibited on the banks of the waterway



Causing any problematic water movements prohibited



Sailing outside a specified boundary prohibited



End of permitted water skiing zone



Prohibited for manually powered vessels



End of permitted high speed boating zone

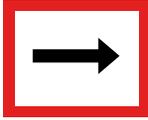


Launching or hauling a vessel out of the water prohibited

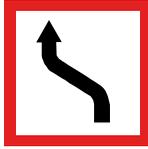


End of permitted zone for jet boats (powerboats)

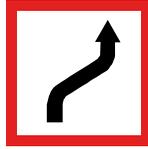
MANDATORY SIGNS



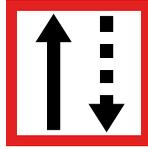
Required to sail in the direction indicated by the arrow



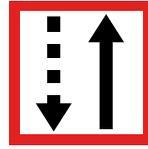
Required to go to the port side of the navigation channel



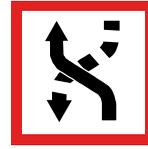
Required to go to the starboard side of the navigation channel



Required to maintain a course on the port side of the navigation channel



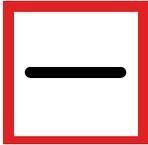
Required to maintain a course on the starboard side of the navigation channel



Required to cross the channel to port



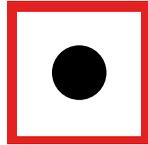
Required to cross the channel to starboard



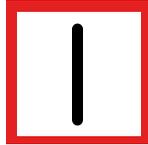
Obligation to stop in front of the sign under the circumstances described in the regulations



Obligation to limit the vessel speed as indicated



Obligation to give a sound signal



Obligation to pay particular attention



Mandatory use of VHF radio

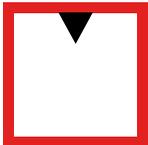


Mandatory use of radio on the indicated channel

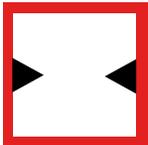
RESTRICTION SIGNS



Depth of water limited



Clearance height limited

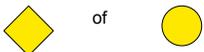


The width of the navigation channel or passage is limited



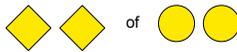
The navigation channel is located at a distance from the right (left) bank

ADVISORY SIGNS



of

In both directions: passage permitted from the opposite direction (yellow sign or yellow light)



of

In one direction: passage from the opposite direction is forbidden (yellow sign or yellow light)

SAILING RULES

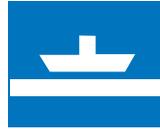
DESIGNATION SIGNS



Passage allowed



High voltage line



Non free-sailing ferry
(e.g. a cable ferry)



Free sailing ferry



Permission to take
a berth



Permission to
anchor



Permission to
moor



The channel
followed is the main
channel with respect
to the channel that
flows into it



End of a prohibition,
a one-direction
sailing order or the
end of a restriction



Drinking water



Beginning of
permitted water
skiing zone



Manually powered
vessels permitted



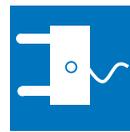
Beginning of
permitted high
speed boating
zone



Permitted area for
launching or hauling
vessels out of the
water



End of permitted
zone for jet boats
(powerboats)



Electricity



Environmental
station



Marina

DESIGNATION SIGNS



No through passage permitted

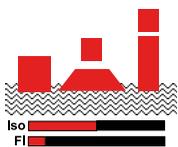


Enter now (locks), through
passage permitted

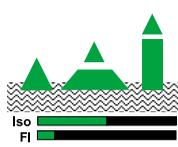


BUOYS AND BEACONS

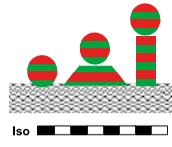
LATERAL MARKING



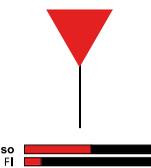
Right side of the
navigation channel
from upstream to
downstream



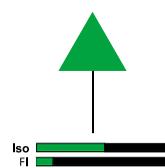
Left side of the
navigation channel
from upstream to
downstream



Navigation channel
splits



Right side from
upstream to
downstream



Left side from
upstream to
downstream



● Marinas/mooring places

VISURIS:

DISCOVER THE ADVANTAGES FOR PLEASURE CRAFT:

- Are you looking for the technical requirements for your boat, or do you want to know more about the waterway vignette? VisuRIS offers a handy overview of all relevant regulations for pleasure craft.
- Plan your trip well and enjoy a carefree voyage! You can map out your route free of charge on www.VisuRIS.be . You indicate where and when you want to depart and the stops you want to make. VisuRIS can use that information and take account of the actual operating times of the locks and bridges, and even the expected traffic. You can also enter the dimensions of your boat so that they are also considered. From that information VisuRIS gives you a completely planned route, with all the necessary and useful data you will need on your voyage, such as the VHF channels and telephone numbers of the locks and the movable bridges, the location of and data concerning marinas, moorings and berths, etc.
- If you have noticed any incorrect data anywhere, please do not hesitate to report it to us, using the form at www.VisuRIS.be/contact.
- For urgent cases, you can call the RIS centre 24/7 on one of the following telephone numbers: **0800 30 440** or **+32(0)78 055 440**.