

8 What the beginner needs to know about the racing rules

Rules applicable when boats meet

updated for 2021-2024 RRS

2A: basic right of way between boats *racing*

10. port keep clear of starboard
11. windward keep clear of leeward
12. same tack > overtaking boat keep clear
13. tacking boat keep clear

2B & 2C: limitations (mostly on r-o-w)

14. avoid contact
 15. acquiring right of way
 16. course change by r-o-w
 17. same tack > proper course
- 2C (18-20 basically do not apply at start)
18. mark-room (more below)
 19. room at obstruction
 20. room to tack

2D: 21, 22 override 2A, 2B

21. *keep clear* if returning from OCS, doing turns, or sailing backwards
22. *keep clear* of capsized, rescue in progress
23. not *racing* keep clear of *racing*

fouls, exoneration & atonement

31. touching a mark > one-turn penalty
43. exoneration if foul was forced by other boat
- 44.2 other foul > two-turns penalty

18 Mark-Room (largely protections for give-way boat)

18.1 does this rule apply?

- * as soon as first of an *overlapped* group enters *zone* around any *mark* of the course? **yes**
- * between port/starboard beating? **no**
- * at start mark? **almost never**

18.2 giving *mark-room*: freeze-frame as first hull enters *zone*: outside *overlapped* to give *mark-room* to inside boat > *mark-room* rights/obligations remain regardless of subsequent changed overlap status unless *mark-room* boat leaves *zone* or tacks

18.3 completing tack to starboard in *zone* near a boat already laying *mark* to be left to port: the tacking boat must

- * **not** make the other boat sail above close-hauled to *keep clear*, and
- * must give *mark-room* if other boat becomes *overlapped* inside > the real killer here is that the tacker loses the protection of rules 16 and 15 *Acquiring Right of Way*

18.4 at a gybe *mark*: inside *overlapped* boat must sail *proper course* until she gybes