

7 Can You Safely Navigate Canada's Waterways?

Captain's Challenge

Welcome aboard! You've just been hired as the captain of a passenger vessel touring the beautiful waterways of the Thousand Islands.

Every day, passenger vessel operators safely transport visitors through Canada's lakes, rivers, and coastal waters. To do this, they follow a common set of navigation rules that help vessels avoid collisions and keep everyone safe. Today, it's your turn to make the right decisions!

Before You Begin - Learn the Language of the Water

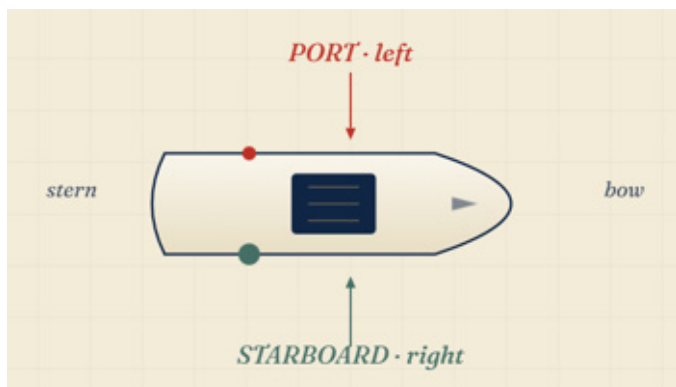
Parts of a Vessel

Bow = Front of the vessel

Stern = Back of the vessel

Port = Left side

Starboard = Right side

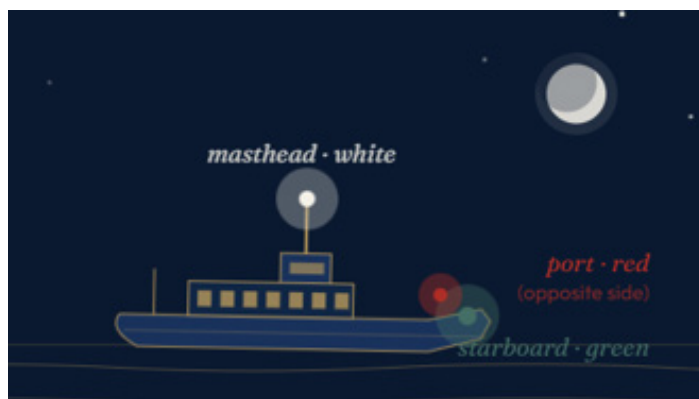


Memory Tip: Port and left both have four letters.

Navigation Lights

When it gets dark, vessels communicate using coloured lights.

-  Port = Red
-  Starboard = Green
-  White = Masthead and stern lights



If you see both the red and green lights directly ahead, another vessel is travelling toward you.

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Captain's Challenge

Situation 1

You are operating a passenger vessel. Another power-driven vessel is travelling directly toward you. What should happen?



- ☐ Both vessels continue straight.
- ☐ Both vessels turn to port.
- ☐ Both vessels turn to starboard so they pass safely.

Situation 2

It's nighttime. You look ahead and see both a red and green navigation light. What does this tell you?



- ☐ The vessel is moving away from you.
- ☐ The vessel is crossing your path.
- ☐ The vessel is travelling toward you.

Situation 3

A sailboat and your passenger vessel are approaching one another under normal conditions. Which vessel should give way?

- ☐ Sailboat
- ☐ Passenger vessel

Situation 4

During the day, you notice another vessel displaying one black ball. What does this mean?

- ☐ The vessel is fishing.
- ☐ The vessel is anchored.
- ☐ The vessel cannot steer.

Situation 5

Why do you think every captain should follow the same navigation rules?

Situation 6

Imagine you are carrying a large group of passengers on a sightseeing cruise. Before leaving the dock, what are three things you would check or think about to help ensure a safe trip for your passengers?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Interested in learning more? Try Kingston 1000 Islands Cruises' interactive navigation challenge and discover more about careers in Canada's passenger vessel industry.

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Captain's Challenge – Answers

Situation 1

You are operating a passenger vessel. Another power-driven vessel is travelling directly toward you. What should happen?



- ☐ Both vessels continue straight.
- ☐ Both vessels turn to port.
- ☒ **Both vessels turn to starboard so they pass safely.**

Explanation: When two power-driven vessels meet head-on, each alters course to starboard (right) so they pass port-to-port. This is one of the fundamental "Rules of the Road."

Situation 2

It's nighttime. You look ahead and see both a red and green navigation light. What does this tell you?



- ☐ The vessel is moving away from you.
- ☐ The vessel is crossing your path.
- ☒ **The vessel is travelling toward you.**

Explanation: Seeing both the red (port) and green (starboard) navigation lights means you are looking at the front (bow) of another vessel, indicating it is approaching head-on.

Situation 3

A sailboat and your passenger vessel are approaching one another under normal conditions. Which vessel should give way?

- ☐ Sailboat
- ☒ **Passenger vessel**

Explanation: In this simplified scenario, the passenger vessel (a power-driven vessel) gives way to the sailboat, which is the stand-on vessel under normal conditions.

Situation 4

During the day, you notice another vessel displaying one black ball. What does this mean?

- ☐ The vessel is fishing.
- ☒ **The vessel is anchored.**
- ☐ The vessel cannot steer.

Explanation: A single black ball displayed during daylight means a vessel is at anchor.

Situation 5

Why do you think every captain should follow the same navigation rules?

- To prevent collisions.*
- To keep passengers safe.*
- So every captain knows what to expect.*
- To make boating safer for everyone.*
- To reduce confusion on the water.*

Situation 6

Imagine you are carrying a large group of passengers on a sightseeing cruise. Before leaving the dock, what are three things you would check or think about to help ensure a safe trip for your passengers?

- Safety of passengers and crew*
- Weather conditions*
- Other boats nearby*
- Rocks, shoals, or other hazards*
- Navigation rules*
- Water depth*
- Speed*
- Visibility (fog, darkness)*
- Communication with other vessels*
- Wildlife or swimmers*

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