



## Irish National Sailing & Powerboat School

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### IRPCS – Introduction International Regulations for Prevention of Collisions at Sea Powerboating Version

#### IRPCS - Colregs

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International Regulations for Preventions of Collisions at Sea (IRPCS), and sometimes known as Colregs, are an internationally agreed set of rules to govern who has right of way and who has to give way in potential conflicts between vessels.

The most important thing to remember:

**AVOID COLLISIONS AT ALL COSTS**

#### IMPORTANT NOTE

Racing Rules are different to IRPCS, and only govern interactions between vessels in an agreed race. They **DO NOT** apply to vessels not involved in that race, therefore if a sailing boat taking part in a race meets one that is not, IRPCS apply, even if the racing boat loses out. This is an important distinction and must be remembered by skippers of racing boats.

#### Some Terminology

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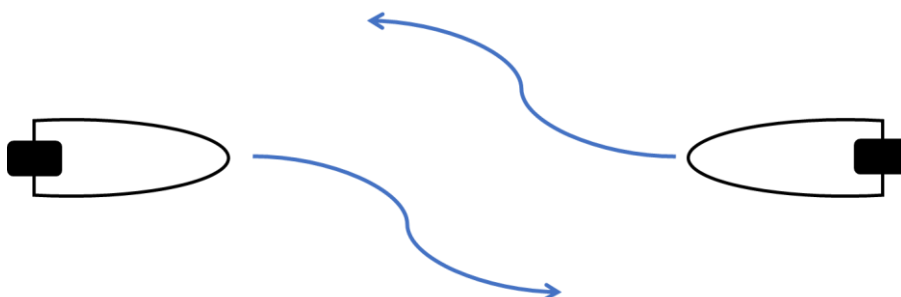
- **Stand On Vessel** – this is what the vessel that “has the right of way” is called. The Stand On Vessel must hold their course and not make unexpected deviations.
- **Give Way Vessel** – this is what the vessel that “does not have the right of way is called”. The Give Way Vessel must alter course/speed to avoid the collision

#### IRPCS that applies to Powerboats

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##### Two powerboats meeting head on

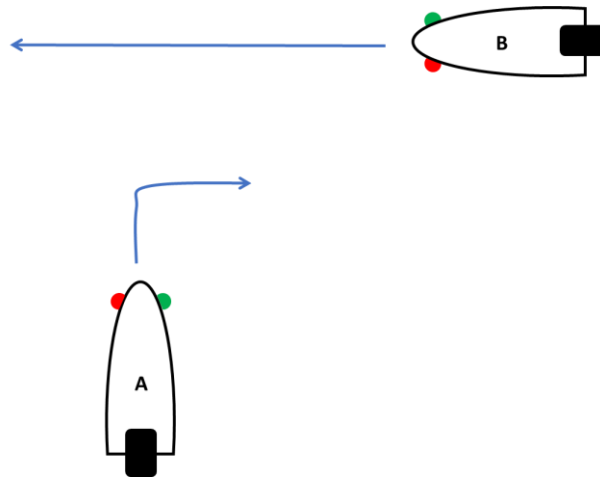
Both boats are required to turn to the right, in such a manner that each boats port bow will pass the other. Passing Port side to Port side can be seen as driving on the right hand side. In a head on situation, both vessels are required to take action.



## Two Powerboats that will collide, but are not “head on”

Boats must pass Port-to-Port. So in this instance, the vessel that already has one on its Port side (left side), is the stand on vessel. The vessel with the other boat on its starboard side (right side) is the give way vessel.

For example, boat B already has boat A on its port side, so holds course. Boat A must turn/slow down so that it either has boat A on its port side, or allows boat B to pass in front of it.

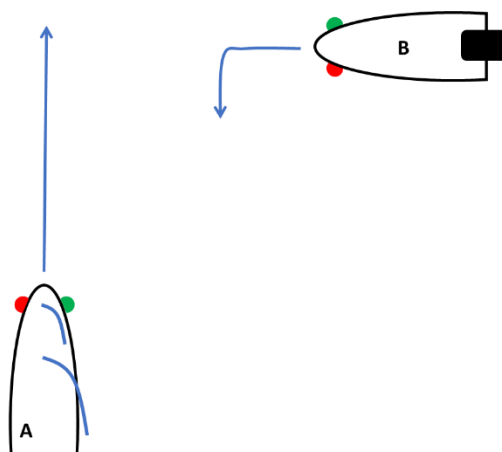


### Tip for Remembering

Imagine you're in boat A, looking at Boat B, you can see its Port Light (which is red). A bit like a traffic light, Red indicates you should stop. Equally, if you were in Boat B, you would see Boat A's Starboard light (which is green) so you can proceed.

## Powerboat Versus Sailing Boat

As long as a sailing boat does not have their engine on, they have right of way over powerboats engaged in recreational activity. The powerboat must take action to avoid.



## Overtaking

The boat overtaking another must keep clear. This applies to sailing and powerboats.