



In The Netherlands

Safe boating!

Navigating rules for pleasure craft and commercial vessels

General

- Keep as much as possible to the starboard side (right side) of the waterway even in a water channel marked by buoys.
- Adjust your course and speed on time when you yield to another boat. Clearly indicate your course and give each other room to manoeuvre.
- Prevent dangerous situations and damage to other boats by being aware of the waves or suction caused by your boat. Reduce your speed on time..
- A small boat must be able to navigate at least 6 km an hour with its engine when on large waterways, rivers and canals. These waterways are also used by inland shipping and marine shipping.
- There is an additional general rule for the Westerschelde. In narrow main water channels for marine shipping, such as in the Nauw van Bath, the Bocht van Walsoorden and in the Sardijngeul and Oostgat near Vlissingen and Zoutelande, boats up to 12 m long must navigate as much as possible outside of the main channel.
- In some cases, large boats may navigate on port side (on the left). For example, in order to avoid a strong current or when entering a harbour. Boats on port side must navigate with a blue sign and a white blinking light for oncoming boats. This means overtake starboard to starboard. A small boat should overtake as much as possible on the side with the blue sign if, of course, the situation allows. On the Westerschelde, the Channel from Gent to Terneuzen and at the mouth of the Eems, the blue sign is not applicable.

At www.varendoejesamen.nl you can find more information about safe navigating and you can also download the informative brochures on junctions.



The most important right-of-way rules

The rules for vessels are described in chapter 6 of the Inland Waterways Police Regulations (BPR).

- A small vessel (up to 20 m) always yields to a large vessel (longer than 20 m). Ferries, passenger ships, towboats, tugs and fishing boats in operation have the same rights as do large vessels even if they are shorter than 20 m. See the BPR for exceptions to this rule.
- A vessel that wants to enter the main waterway must yield to a vessel in the buoyed channel on starboard side. There is an exception to this: a vessel that enters from a buoyed secondary waterway. In this situation, a small vessel on the main waterway must yield to a large vessel coming from the buoyed secondary channel.
- A small motorboat (up to 20 m) must yield to a small sailboat (up to 20 m) or a rowboat if their courses cross and neither of the vessels is on starboard. A large motorboat or a large sailboat yields to the ship approaching from starboard side.
- For small motorboats: If their courses cross and neither is on starboard side, the vessel coming from starboard has right of way.
- A small sailboat tacking to port has right of way over a small sailboat tacking to starboard. If both vessels are tacking to the same side, the windward vessel must yield to the leeward vessel.
- Vessels entering or crossing a main waterway from a harbour or a secondary waterway may not obstruct other vessels. The sign B.9 means that vessels on the main waterway always have right of way.
- There is an additional rule on the Waal, Neder-Rijn, Lek and the Pannerdensch Kanaal. If a descending vessel wants to turn to, for example, enter a harbour, this vessel must yield to an ascending vessel trying to reach the harbour. A descending vessel navigates with the current, and an ascending vessel navigates against the current.

Locks and drawbridges

- Avoid making irritating waves at waiting areas when you approach or leave a lock or when you pass a drawbridge.
- Vessels must enter a lock in the order of arrival. This also applies to mooring at the waiting area. If both commercial and recreational vessels meet at a lock, commercial vessels enter first unless the lock keeper indicates otherwise. This is to enhance safety and speed. For recreational vessels: do not enter the lock until the commercial vessels have moored and turned off the propellers. Moored? Propeller off!
- Be aware of the fall in the lock and make certain that you can loosen or tighten the ropes on time.
- Navigate quickly ahead when the bridge opens. Do not block road traffic unnecessarily.

VHF radio telephone

At least one radio telephone (sometimes two) are required on commercial vessels. Recreational vessels are not required to have this equipment on board. But navigating on large bodies of water is much safer with a radio telephone. The radio telephone enables you to communicate with traffic stations, the coast guard, lock keepers and other vessels. Remember to keep all calls short and to the point. Those who use a radio telephone must have an operation certificate and the Radio Telephone handbook on board. Practice using this equipment regularly so that you can act quickly in an emergency. For further information see:

www.agentschaptelecom.nl

Tips voor de beroepsvaart

1. Prepare your trip

Keep informed about the course you plan to navigate and the weather forecast.. In poor weather conditions, make certain that everything is well secured and that the hatches are shut if you are carrying cargo.

2. Blind area

Make certain that you have an unrestricted view on all sides. The blind area may not be longer than 350 m.

3. Look-out

Have a look-out on the forecastle if there are many small vessels on the waterway. If you leave or enter a harbour, a look-out can give you information and, if necessary, warnings.

4. Use the blue sign

Some skippers do not know what the blue sign means. The rules in the BPR and the RPR (Rhine Navigation Police Regulations) differ and are confusing to many recreational vessels. Be aware of this and allow the recreational vessel to sail on starboard side if necessary.

5. Reduce speed

Reduce speed on time so that you do not obstruct or endanger smaller vessels.

6. Radio telephone

Use the VHF radio telephone to avoid confusing or dangerous situations. If you spot problems on the water, report this to the closest traffic station or a patrol vessel from the Ministry of Waterways. If the skipper of a recreational vessel phones you, answer according to the rules.

7. Attention warning in case of danger

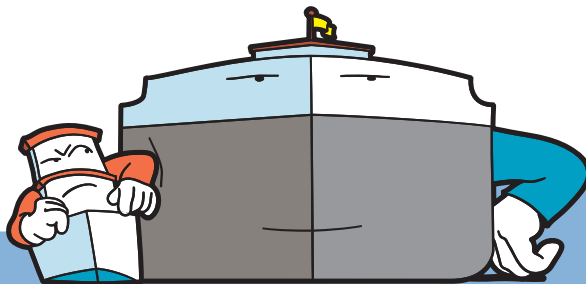
Warn small vessels of danger by giving one long blast with the horn.

8. Give each other room

When overtaking and passing, small and large vessels must give one another enough room. Be polite and give small vessels enough room as well!

9. Be professional

As a professional, you have a wealth of experience and skills. Help recreational vessels when navigating together and give a good example. Don't expect them to go aside for you, but show them how things should be done.



Be polite and give small vessels enough room!

Tips voor de recreatievaart

1. Prepare your trip

Keep updated navigation maps of your intended course on board. Listen to the weather forecast and do not navigate in the dark or if you do not need to. In poor weather conditions, make sure that everything is safely secured..

2. Blind area commercial vessels

Captains of commercial vessels are sometimes unable to see you because of the blind area of their ship. That can be as big as 350 m, which is the same as 3 consecutive football fields! Adjust your course and speed so that you stay out of the blind area. If you can see the captain's wheelhouse, he can also see you!

3. Clear course

Clearly indicate your course. Cross a waterway or channel as fast as possible by navigating in a straight line. In a channel, canal or river keep to starboard side as much as possible and look behind you often. Don't navigate in the middle of the waterway.

4. Rules for the blue sign

If a ship is displaying a blue sign with a white, blinking light, try to pass on the side of the blue sign if traffic permits this. Think ahead so you can react quickly. You can find a special folder on the blue sign at www.varendoejesamen.nl.

5. Reduce speed

Reduce speed on time so that other ships are not hindered by the waves from your bow or stern. And reduce speed so that a large vessel can overtake you.

6. Radio telephone

If you have a radio telephone, you are required to listen to it. Navigate with your radio telephone on and tuned to channel 10. Use the information to avoid dangerous situations. In maritime block areas, such as at traffic stations, locks and bridges, the appropriate radio telephone channel applies.

7. Warning signal in case of danger

Warn other ships of danger by giving a long blast on the horn.

8. Yield to commercial vessels

Keep as much as possible on the starboard side of the waterway and stay away from commercial vessels. Give them room to manoeuvre in curves and in harbours!!

9. See and be seen

Make sure you are always clearly visible, be sure you can see all around you and that you can hear the audio signals of other ships.



















10. Fast and safe in a lock

Make sure that you can moor on both port and starboard sides in a lock. Put enough fenders and mooring ropes on both sides of your boat before you enter a lock. Navigate into the lock in the order of arrival and close up the line of boats. Moor near stairs if possible.











See and be seen

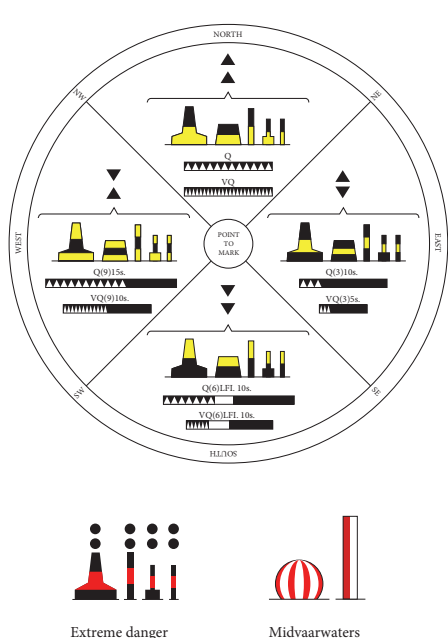
Traffic signs

	No entrance, exit or passage		Not allowed to make disturbing waves		Reduce speed required as indicated in km per hour
	Not allowed to drop anchor or moor on the side where the sign is located		Not allowed to navigate beyond the indicated boundaries		Permission to drop anchor or moor on the side where the sign is located
	Not allowed to drop anchor or moor within the width shown in metres starting at the sign		Small boats not allowed		End of a restriction or a prohibition/requirement applying to one direction
	Not allowed to drop anchor		Required to remain stationary in front of the sign under certain circumstances		Marine telephone channel for nautical information, for example channel 18
	Not allowed to moor		Use of radio telephone required		The waterway in question is the main waterway with respect to waterways that enter it
	Not allowed to turn		Not allowed to navigate onto or cross main waterway if this forces vessels on the main waterway to change their course or speed (B.9)		Permission to drop anchor or moor with boats alongside one another. The number indicates the maximum number of boats

Buoying inland waterways and lakes

	Main buoying right bank (even numbers), open branches
	Main buoying left bank (uneven numbers), closed branches
	Recreational buoying or obstacle VQ buoying in RPR waterways, right branch, open branches
	Recreational buoying or obstacle buoying in RPR water, left bank, closed branches
	Division: both waterways are main waterways
	Division: main waterway on left
	Division: main waterway on right
	Dangerous points and obstacles

Buoying sea inlets



Navigation rules in the Netherlands

- Binnenvaartpolitiereglement
- Rijnvaartpolitiereglement
- Scheepvaartreglement Westerschelde
- Scheepvaartreglement Kanaal Gent-Terneuzen
- Scheepvaartreglement Eems-Dollard
- Scheepvaartreglement Gemeenschappelijke Maas



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