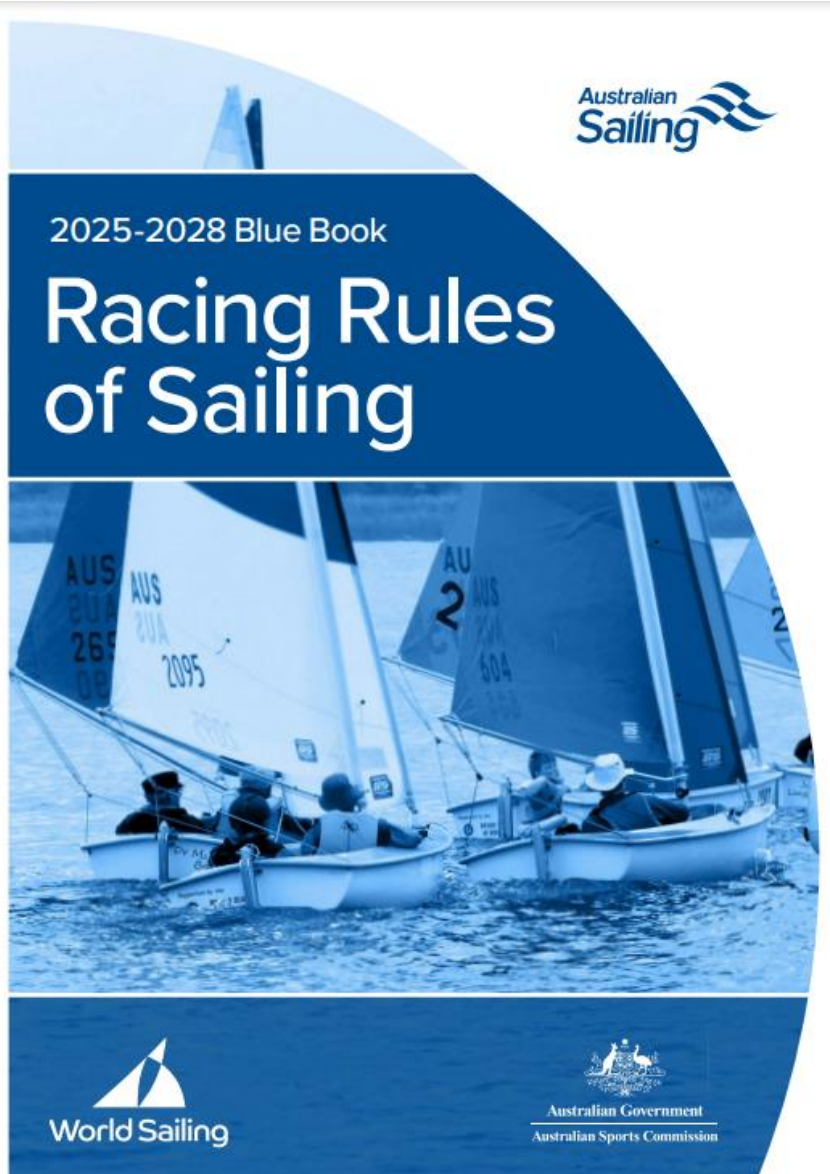




SASC



RRS 2025-28:

Around the course without protest
29th October 2025

An evening with John Sturrock
Hosted by Phil Tanner

Racing Rules of Sailing 2025-2028

What's changed and why it matters?

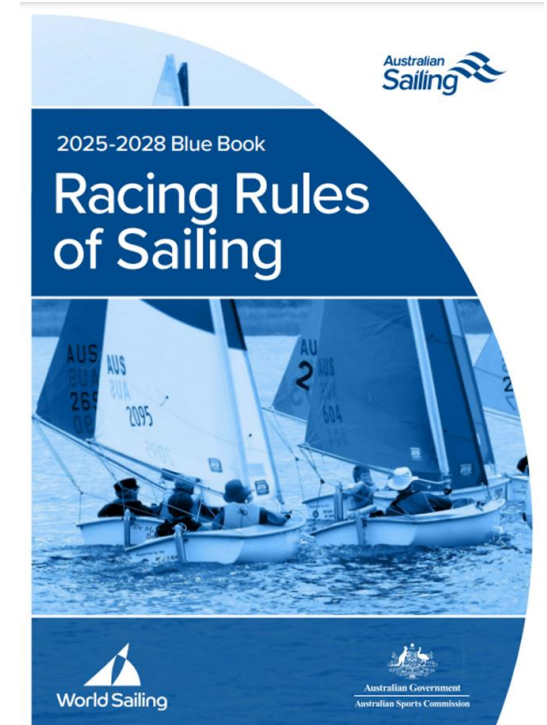
Racing is a *self-regulated* sport...

Important that competitors understand the rules

Or

it may become a *regulated* sport

Rules provide a shared framework for safe and fair racing



Racing Rules of Sailing 2025-2028

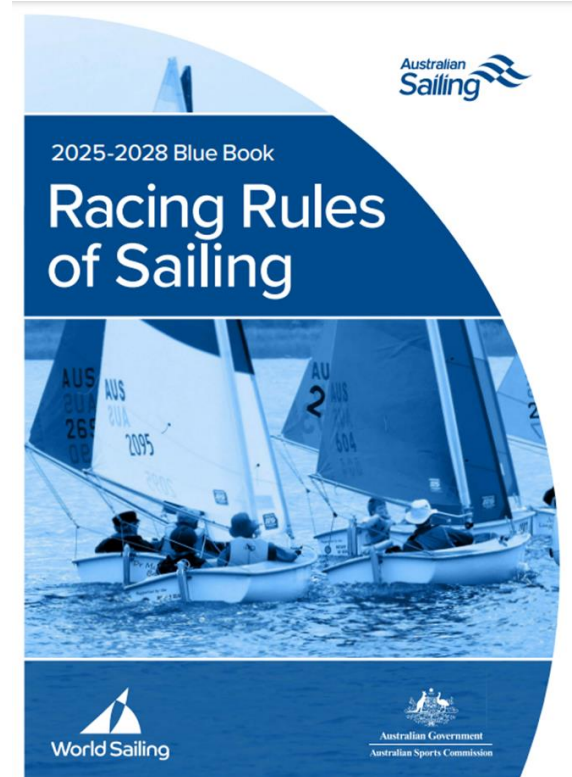


BASIC PRINCIPLES

The Basic Principles shall not be changed.

SPORTSMANSHIP AND THE RULES

Competitors in the sport of sailing are governed by a **body of rules** that they are **expected** to **follow** and **enforce**. A fundamental principle of sportsmanship is that when a boat breaks a rule and is not exonerated, she will promptly take an appropriate penalty or action, which may be to retire.



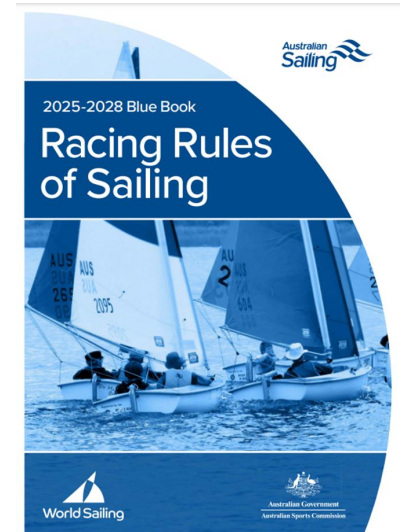
Tonight, we'll follow a race from start to finish, focusing on key updates, tricky scenarios and practical decisions

RRS - Key Updates 2025-2028



Key Updates:

- 🚢 Clearer Mark Room and Obstruction definitions
- 🚢 Updated Proper Course Guidance
- 🚢 Rule 14 – Avoiding Contact
- 🚢 Rule 20.1 Room to Tack at an Obstruction
- 🚢 Finish - changed definition



🚢 Full details: <https://sasc.com.au/sailing/#RacingRulesSailing>

Update– Australian Sailing.



Australian Sailing are hosting the Sydney Harbour Club Co-ordination Forum involving 18 clubs.

- ⚓ The first meeting was held in September 2025.
- ⚓ Objective for clubs to share and communicate better to avoid conflict on race days.



Key actions regarding RRS to be undertaken by Australian Sailing:

- ⚓ Establish a key group of rules seminar presenters and a standardized structure
- ⚓ Create a standard template for delivering Skipper / Sailor Briefings



Race scenarios – Start to Finish

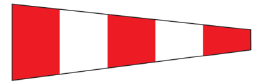
- 🚢 Starting the race
- 🚢 Upwind leg
- 🚢 Rounding Marks
- 🚢 Downwind Leg
- 🚢 Finishing the race
- 🚢 Penalties and protests

RACE SIGNALS

The meanings of visual and sound signals are stated below. An arrow pointing up or down

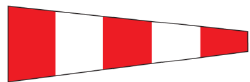
(↑ ↓) means that a visual signal is displayed or removed. A dot (•) means a sound; five short dashes (-----) mean repetitive sounds; a long dash (—) means a long sound. When a visual signal is displayed over a class flag, fleet flag, event flag or race area flag, the signal applies only to that class, fleet, event or race area.

Postponement Signals



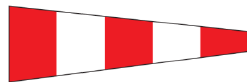
↑ • • • ↓ •

AP Races not started are postponed. The warning signal will be made 1 minute after removal unless at that time the race is postponed again or abandoned.



↑ • •

AP over H Races not started are postponed. Further signals ashore.



↑ • •

AP over A Races not started are postponed. No more racing today.

AP over a Numeral Pennant 1–9

Postponement of 1-9 hours from the scheduled starting time.



Pennant 1 ↑ • • ↓ •



Pennant 2 ↑ • • ↓ •



Pennant 3 ↑ • • ↓ •



Pennant 4 ↑ • • ↓ •



Pennant 5 ↑ • • ↓ •



Pennant 6 ↑ • • ↓ •



Pennant 7 ↑ • • ↓ •



Pennant 8 ↑ • • ↓ •



Pennant 9 ↑ • • ↓ •

Abandonment Signals



↑ • • • ↓ •

N All races in progress are abandoned. Return to the starting area. The warning signal will be made 1 minute after removal unless at that time the race is abandoned again or postponed.



↑ • • •

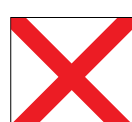
N over H All races in progress are abandoned. Further signals ashore.



↑ • • •

N over A All races in progress are abandoned. No more racing today.

Safety



↑ —

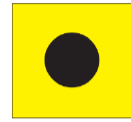
V Monitor communication channel for safety instructions (see rule 37).

Preparatory Signals



↑ • ↓ —

P Preparatory signal.



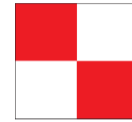
↑ • ↓ —

I Rule 30.1 is in effect.



↑ • ↓ —

Z Rule 30.2 is in effect.



↑ • ↓ —

U Rule 30.3 is in effect.



↑ • ↓ —

Black flag. Rule 30.4 is in effect.

Recall Signals



↑ •

X Individual recall.



↑ • • ↓ •

First Substitute General recall. The warning signal will be made 1 minute after removal.

Shortened Course



↑ • •

S The course has been shortened. Rule 32.2 is in effect.

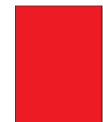
Changing the Next Leg



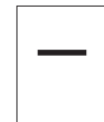
C The position of the next mark has been changed:



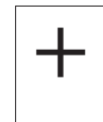
to starboard;



to port;



to decrease the length of the leg;



to increase the length of the leg.

Other Signals



↑ •

L Ashore: A notice to competitors has been posted. Afloat: Come within hail or follow this vessel.

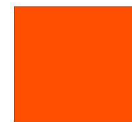


M The object displaying this signal replaces a missing mark.



↑ •

Y Wear a personal flotation device (see rule 40).



(no sound)

Orange flag. The staff displaying this flag is one end of the starting line.



(no sound)

Blue flag. The staff displaying this flag is one end of the finishing line.



Approx. 35
Flags to
learn...

Probably
only about
10 you'll
need for
racing with
the SASC 😊

Racing Rules of Sailing 2025–2028 terminology



Term	When Used	Rule Reference	Meaning	Flag
Postponed	Before start	27.3	Delay start, race still intended	AP
Abandoned	Before or after start	27.3 / 32.1	Race declared void; may be re-sailed	N / N over H / N over A
Cancelled*	Informal (not RRS)	—	Race not run at all (treated as abandoned before start)	—

* SASC are not continuing to use this term, to align with RRS terminology

Starting the race - Refresh of rules



Before the start:

- ⚓ A race can be postponed or abandoned and all boats advised via communication set out in the NoR/SI.
- ⚓ The race may be sailed at a later time, or date.

At the start:

- ⚓ Boats keep clear unless starting. A race is deemed to be starting when the “P” Flag is raised.
- ⚓ RRS 26 - Times can only be taken from Visual signals (i.e. flags). Sound Signals may be used to draw attention to the visual signals.
- ⚓ RRS 27.1 - The course signal (flag) can be raised up to the time of the warning signal.

After the start:

- ⚓ The Course can be shortened – S flag displayed (two sounds before the first boat finishes)
- ⚓ The Race can be abandoned – N flag displayed (three sounds)
- ⚓ If no boats finish within the time limit that race, or division is abandoned

Starting the Race



Pre-start: Port or Starboard (scenario 1)

Focus: pre-start manoeuvres, rights, and common infringements

Question

Who has Right of Way when approaching the start?

Answers



RRS 10 – ON OPPOSITE TACKS

⚓ When boats are on opposite tacks, a port-tack boat shall keep clear of a starboard-tack boat.

RRS 11 ON THE SAME TACK, OVERLAPPED

⚓ When boats are on the same tack and overlapped, a windward boat shall keep clear of a leeward boat.

RRS12 ON THE SAME TACK, NOT OVERLAPPED

⚓ When boats are on the same tack and not overlapped, a boat clear astern shall keep clear of a boat clear ahead.

Keep-clear definition emphasizes anticipating the other boat's movement.

Starting the Race

The start line (Scenario 2)



(Focus: pre-start manoeuvres, rights, and common infringements)

Questions:

- 🚤 What happens under Rule 29.1 (Individual Recall)?
- 🚤 Starting in wrong division
- 🚤 Starting after the start signal

Answers



RRS 29.1 Individual Recall

- 🚤 When at a boat's starting signal any part of her hull is on the course side of the starting line or she must comply with rule 30.1, the race committee shall promptly display flag X with one sound. The flag shall be displayed until the hull of each such boat has been completely on the pre-start side of the starting line or one of its extensions, and until all such boats have complied with rule 30.1 if it applies, but no later than four minutes after the starting signal or one minute before any later starting signal, whichever is earlier

SASC Approach

- 🚤 Non-Pointscore (Fridays, stand alone races) – a little more discretion...
- 🚤 Pointscore (Saturday, Sunday series) – boats not returning will be marked OCS.

Starting in the wrong division

- 🚤 If the start is in advance of the correct division for that boat the boat is OCS.
- 🚤 If the start is in arrear of the correct division for that boat, then the boat may be allowed to continue.
- 🚤 Discretion rests with the Race officer.

Starting after the start signal

- 🚤 Usually, a five-minute grace period is allowed for a late start.

2. Upwind Leg – RRS 10 -13



SECTION A - RIGHT OF WAY

A boat has right of way over another boat when the other boat is required to keep clear of her. However, some rules in Sections B, C and D limit the actions of a right-of-way boat.

10 ON OPPOSITE TACKS

When boats are on opposite tacks, a port-tack boat shall keep clear of a starboard-tack boat.

11 ON THE SAME TACK, OVERLAPPED

When boats are on the same tack and overlapped, a windward boat shall keep clear of a leeward boat.

12 ON THE SAME TACK, NOT OVERLAPPED

When boats are on the same tack and not overlapped, a boat clear astern shall keep clear of a boat clear ahead.

13 WHILE TACKING

After a boat passes head to wind, she shall keep clear of other boats until she is on a close-hauled course. During that time rules 10, 11 and 12 do not apply. If two boats are subject to this rule at the same time, the one on the other's port side or the one astern shall keep clear.

2. Upwind Leg – RRS 14



SECTION B - GENERAL LIMITATIONS

14 AVOIDING CONTACT

If reasonably possible, a boat shall;

- ⚓ avoid contact with another boat,
- ⚓ not cause contact between boats, and
- ⚓ not cause contact between a boat and an object that should be avoided.

However, a right-of-way boat, or one sailing within the [room](#) or [mark-room](#) to which she is entitled, need not act to avoid contact until it is clear that the other boat is not *keeping clear* or giving [room](#) or [mark-room](#).

2. Upwind Leg Cross or duck (scenario 3)



(Focus: right of way, tacking, and avoiding collisions)

Question

Can port cross starboard safely?

Answer



RRS 10 - ON OPPOSITE TACKS

When boats are on opposite tacks, a port-tack boat shall keep clear of a starboard-tack boat.

If attempting to cross,

RRS 14 - AVOIDING CONTACT

If reasonably possible, a boat shall

- (a) avoid contact with another boat,
- (b) not cause contact between boats, and
- (c) not cause contact between a boat and an object that should be avoided.

However, a right-of-way boat, or one sailing within the room or mark-room to which she is entitled, need not act to avoid contact until it is clear that the other boat is not keeping clear or giving room or mark-room.

Safe option: duck early; right-of-way does not excuse contact.

3. Approaching the windward mark (Scenario 4)



Focus: mark-room, overlaps, and tactical approaches.

Question

Who is entitled to mark room?



Answer

RRS 18.2 – Giving Mark Room

- (a) – When the first of two boats reaches the zone,
- (1) if the boats are overlapped, the outside boat at that moment shall give the inside boat mark-room;
 - (2) if the boats are not overlapped, the boat that has not reached the zone at that moment shall give the other boat mark-room.

When a boat is required to give mark-room by this rule, she shall continue to do so for as long as this rule applies, even if later an overlap is broken or a new overlap begins.

- (b) - Rule 18.2(a) no longer applies if the boat entitled to markroom passes head to wind or leaves the zone.
- (c) - When rule 18.2(a) does not apply and the boats are overlapped, the outside boat shall give the inside boat mark-room.
- (d) If a boat obtained an inside overlap from clear astern or by tacking to windward of the other boat and, from the time the overlap began, the outside boat has been unable to give mark-room, rules 18.2(a) and 18.2(c) do not apply between them.
- (e) If there is reasonable doubt that a boat obtained or broke an overlap in time, it shall be presumed that she did not.

4. Downwind Luffing Rights (Scenario 5)



(Focus: right-of-way between different sail configurations, tactical passing, and penalties)

Question: How far can the leeward boat luff?

16 CHANGING COURSE

- 16.1 When a right-of-way boat changes course, she shall give the other boat room to keep clear.
- 16.2 In addition, on a beat to windward when a port-tack boat is keeping clear by sailing to pass to leeward of a starboard-tack boat, the starboard-tack boat shall not bear away if as a result the port-tack boat must change course immediately to continue keeping clear.

17 ON THE SAME TACK; PROPER COURSE

- If a boat clear astern becomes overlapped within two of her hull lengths to leeward of a boat on the same tack, she shall not sail above her proper course while they remain on the same tack

5. The Finish



Focus: last-minute tactical decisions and finishing-line infractions

Question 1: When is the race finished?

Question 2: How are boats scored?

Answers



Question 1: When is the race finished

A boat finishes when, after her starting signal, any part of her hull crosses the finishing line from the course side. However, she has not finished if after crossing the finishing line she:

- (a) takes a penalty under rule 44.2,
- (b) corrects an error in sailing the course made at the line, or
- (c) continues to sail the course.

After finishing she need not cross the finishing line completely.

The sailing instructions may change the direction in which boats are required to cross the finishing line to finish.

Question 2: How are boats scored

Equal overlap = equal score unless SI specifies otherwise.

Penalties and protests

Scenario: Minor contact, no damage.

Question: What should the infringing boat do?



Answer



- ⚓ RRS 14: Avoid contact even when right-of-way.
- ⚓ RRS 61.1(a) – When both boats are racing and in sight of each other, the protesting boat must hail “Protest” and display a red flag at the first reasonable opportunity. The hail and flag are intended to give the other boat prompt notice that an incident has occurred and may be subject to a protest.
- ⚓ “Immediately” is interpreted as at the first reasonable opportunity—that is, once the boat is clear to do so safely and practically.(For example, in heavy traffic or when tacking to avoid danger, a very short delay is acceptable.)
- ⚓ RRS 44.2: Two-Turns Penalty (each turn includes one tack and one gybe).
- ⚓ Submit protest form within time limit – SASC: 11am first working day after the race.

Key Takeaways & References



- ⚓ Rights change constantly — anticipate.
- ⚓ Give room early.
- ⚓ Avoid contact.
- ⚓ Know your exoneration options.
- ⚓ Use the rules to make racing safe and fairer.

References:

- ⚓ World Sailing RRS 2025–2028
- ⚓ Australian Sailing Interpretations
- ⚓ World Sailing Cases & Calls 2025

Close



Questions?

Thankyou for your attendance!

Tender for the Green Shed leaving soon !!