

Boating Safety



OCE Watercraft Policy



- Complete a boating/watercraft safety course
- Read the Texas Water Safety Act
- Complete required training

OCE requires a boater/watercraft safety course for all SWQM staff, with a refresher class every 3 years.

Additional OCE requirements are:

- Watercraft must be operated, equipped, and maintained in accordance with the Texas Water Safety Act
- Boat motors must be equipped with an emergency kill switch which must be enabled whenever the boat is underway.
- USCG approved PFDs should be worn whenever the watercraft is underway.
- When possible, have at least two people on board. An employee **cannot** be required to boat alone.
- When electrofishing, there shall be at least three people on board. At least two should be trained in CPR.
- Staff must file a Float Plan with their immediate supervisor or designated representative prior to each trip.



A Float Plan should include:

- Names and contact information for each crew member
- Departure date and time and estimated return time
- Launch location(s), route, and sample stations
- Towing vehicle license number
- Boat registration number
- Description of the boat

The immediate supervisor, or designated representative, is responsible for verifying boaters are safely off of the water.



According to the Texas Water Safety Act:

How many PFD's are required for a boat under 26 feet?

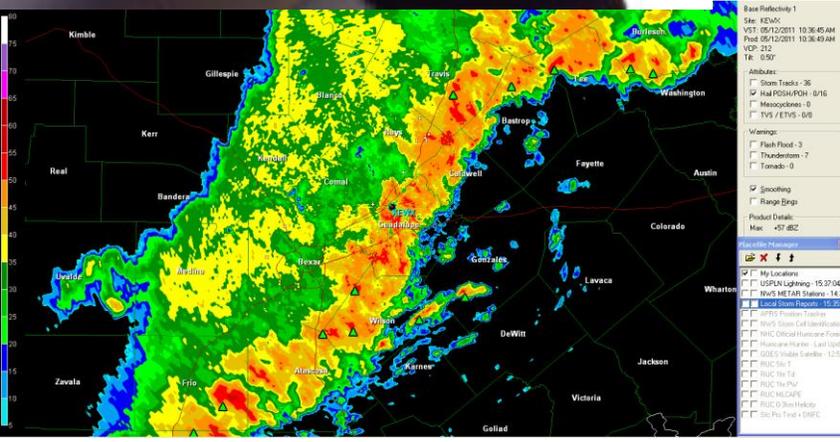
What is required for vessels 16 feet and longer?

What is required of vessels less than 12 meters during reduced visibility conditions?

All vessels are required to have a working and unexpired visual distress signal at all times. True/False

Which of the following boats would NOT require a fire extinguisher on board?





This is Texas, if you don't like the weather stick around a few minutes. If you get caught in severe weather:



- **Make sure everyone is wearing their PFD.**
- **Turn on the navigation lights.**
- **Prepare the boat by stowing unnecessary gear and closing all hatches and windows to prevent swamping.**
- **Decide whether to ride it out in open water or head for the nearest shore.**
 - **If you ride it out, use your “sea anchor” or a tethered bucket to reduce drift while pointing the bow into the waves.**
 - **If that is not sufficient to reduce drift, use your regular anchor.**
 - **If you try to make it to shore, go slowly and head the bow into the waves at a 45° angle.**





Protect yourself and be prepared to be on water longer than you planned





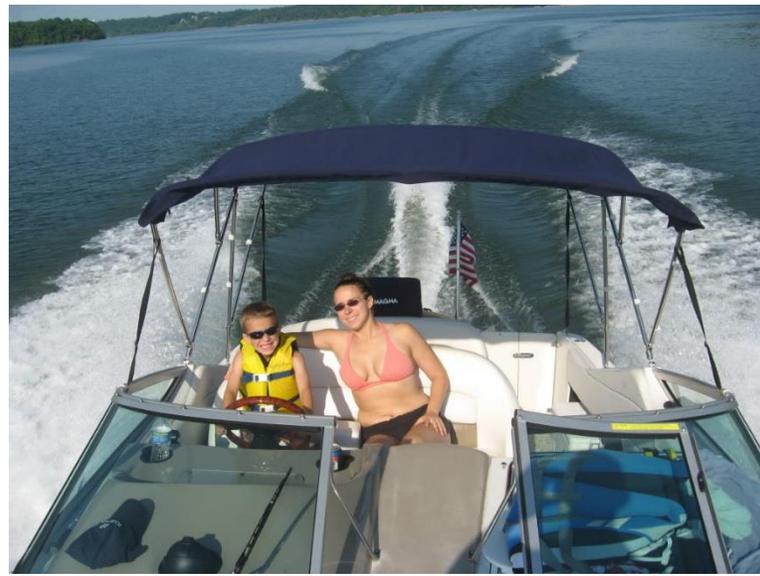
Easy to overlook common mistakes





HEAT
ESCAPE
LESSENING
POSITION

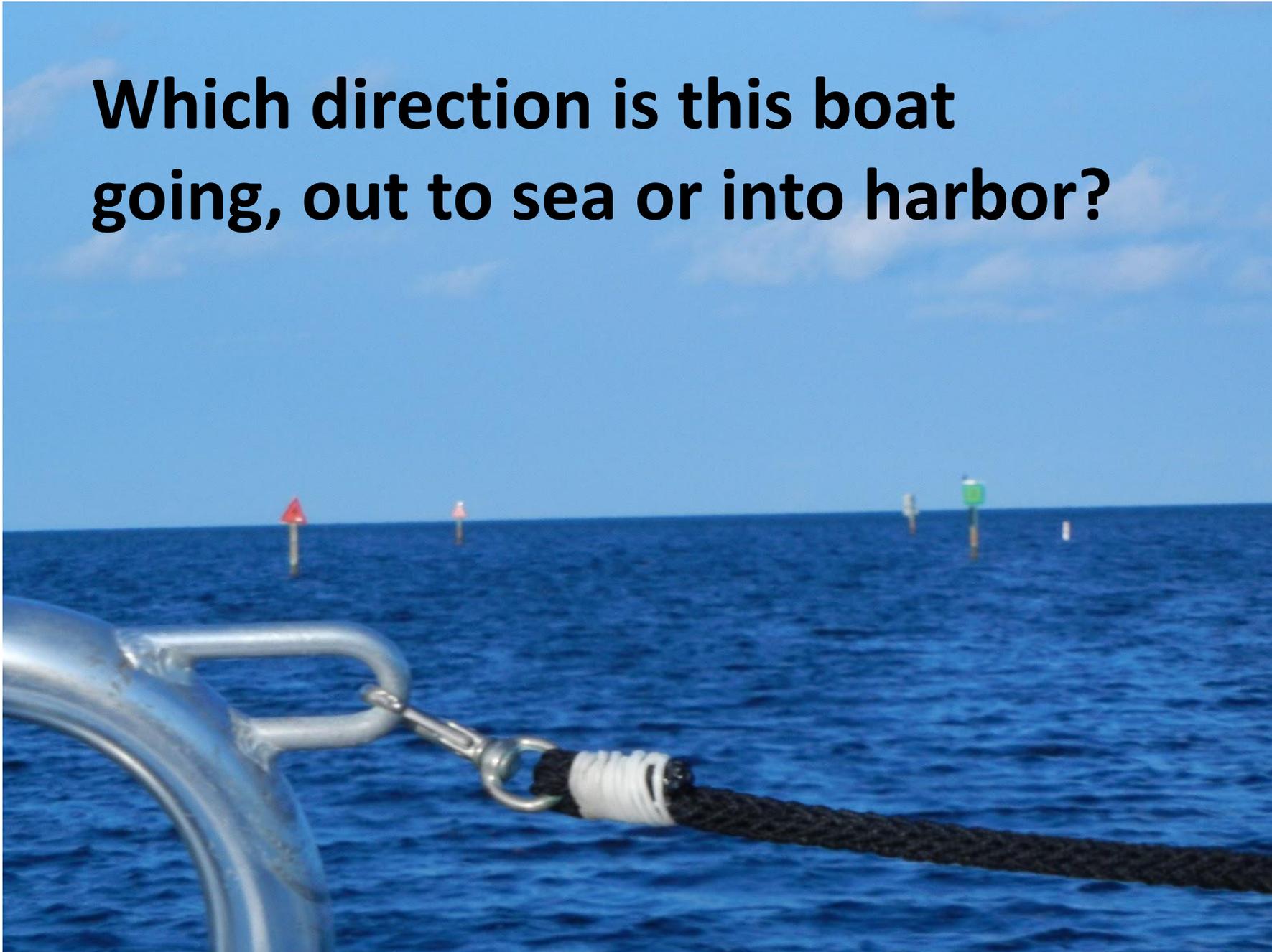




Diver-Down flags



Which direction is this boat going, out to sea or into harbor?



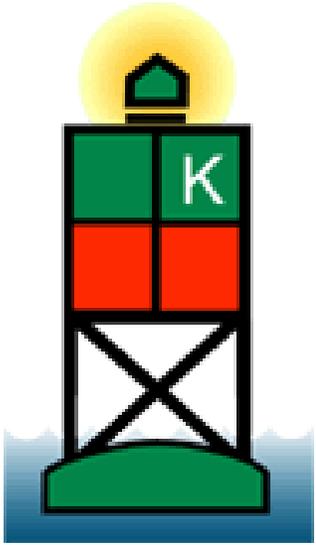


Green – “Can” buoys have odd numbers
Red – “Nun” buoys have even numbers

Daymarks are permanently placed signs which may also have lights. Red triangles and green squares.

Lighted buoys





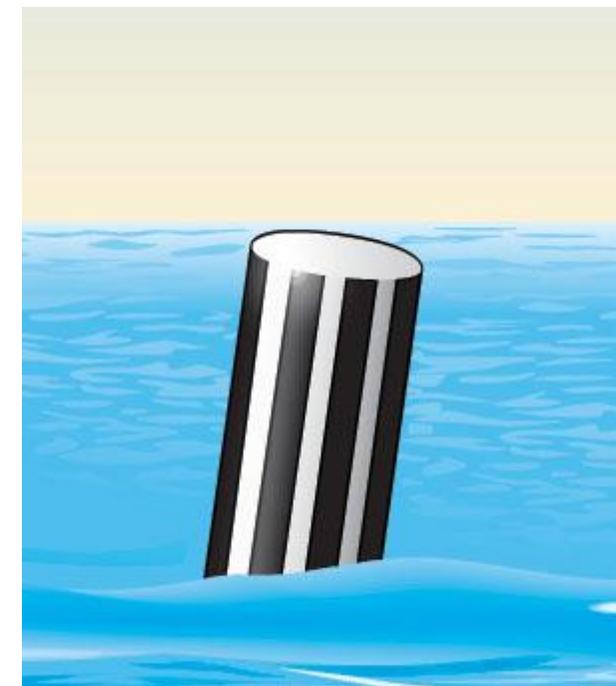
These are placed at the junction of two channels to indicate the preferred (primary) channel when a channel splits. If green is on top, the preferred channel is to the right. If red is on top, the preferred channel is to the left. These are also sometimes referred to as "junction buoys."

Not to be confused
with





- A. Do not operate vessel within 150 feet**
- B. Keep vessel to the right when returning to harbor**
- C. Mid-channel, marker may be passed on either side**
- D. KFC ahead**
- E. Diver-down buoy**



- A. Keep vessel to the right of marker**
- B. Keep vessel to the left of marker**
- C. Mid-channel, may be passed on either side**
- D. Navigation obstruction, do not pass between buoy and shore**
- E. Obstruction directly below marker**



A. Information buoy – food, repairs, supplies, etc.

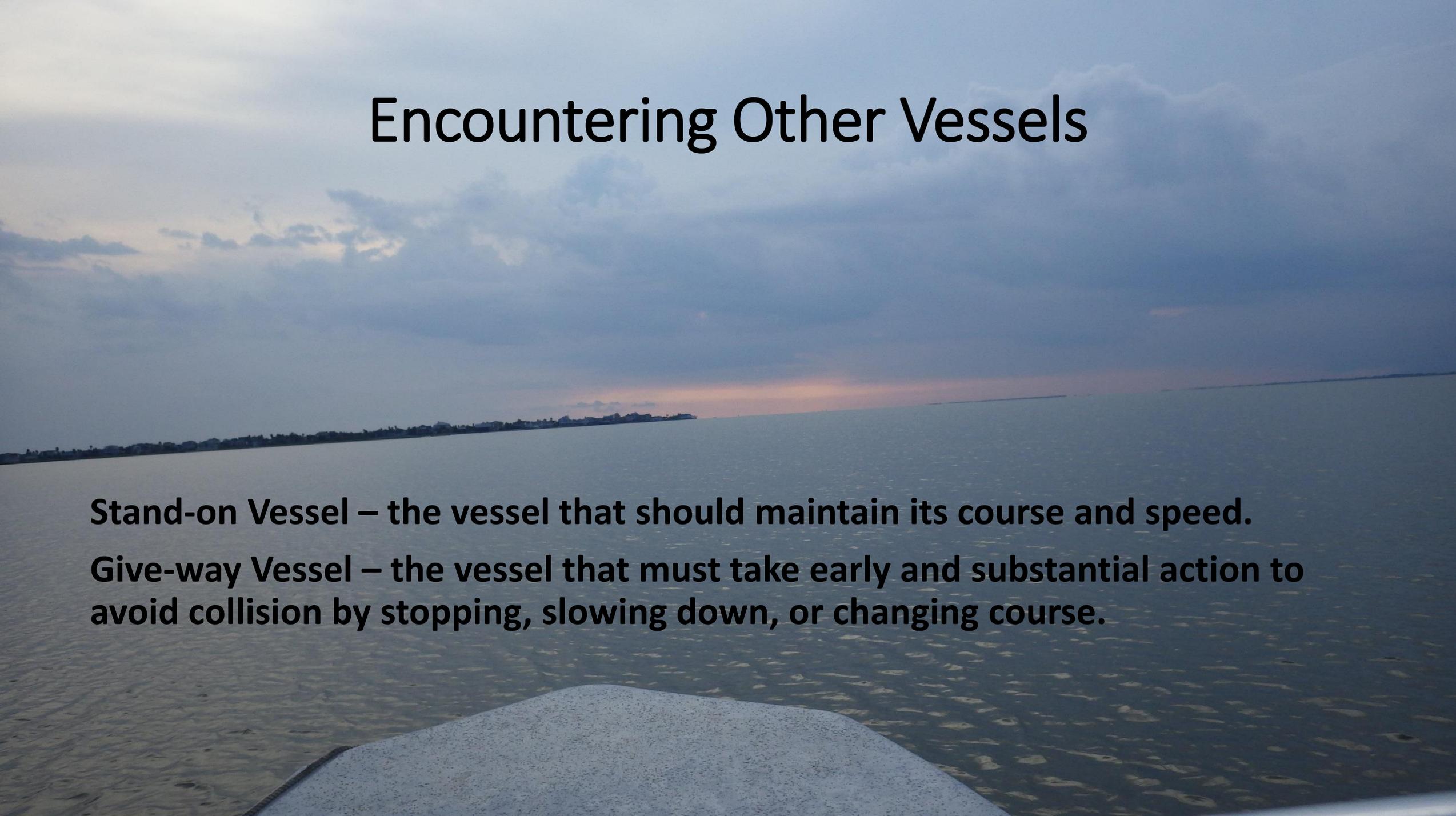
B. Controlled area – speed limit, no fishing, no anchoring, “slow, no wake”

C. Danger area – warns of rocks, shoals, construction, dams, or stumps. Proceed with caution.

D. Exclusion – indicates areas such as swimming areas, dams, and spillways which are off-limits to all vessels



Encountering Other Vessels

The background image shows a vast body of water, likely a lake or a wide river, under a sky filled with soft, grey clouds. The horizon is low, with a faint silhouette of a distant shoreline or cityscape. The water's surface is textured with small, shimmering ripples. The overall lighting is dim, suggesting twilight.

Stand-on Vessel – the vessel that should maintain its course and speed.

Give-way Vessel – the vessel that must take early and substantial action to avoid collision by stopping, slowing down, or changing course.



Meeting head-on
Power vs. Power

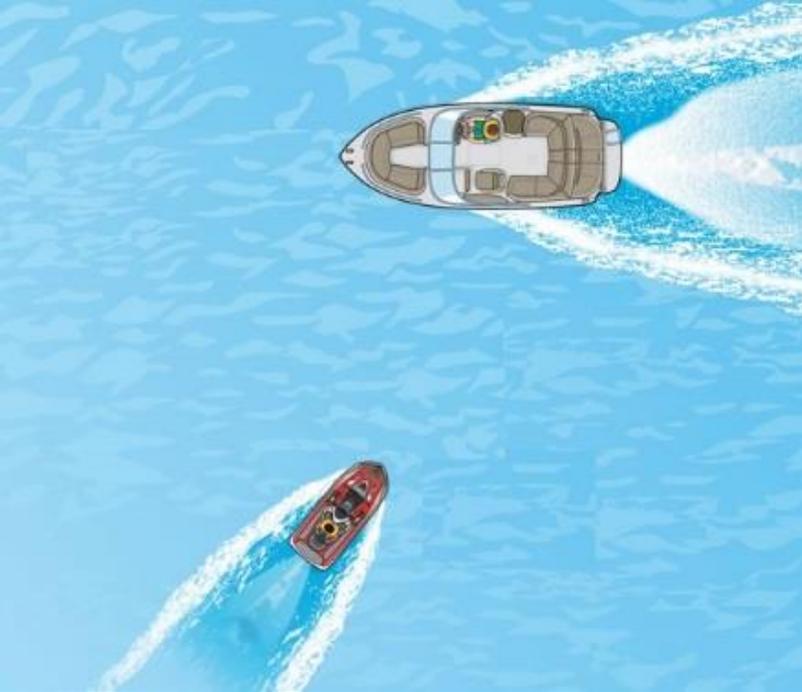
Which one is the stand-on vessel?



Meeting head-on
Power vs. Sail

Which one is the stand-on vessel?





Crossing Situations
Power vs. Power

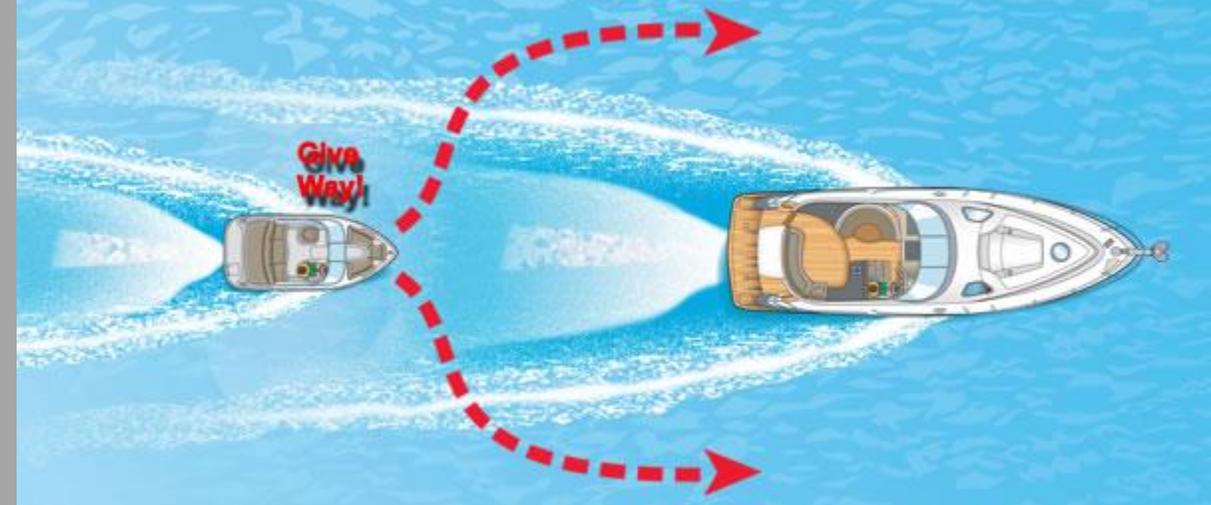
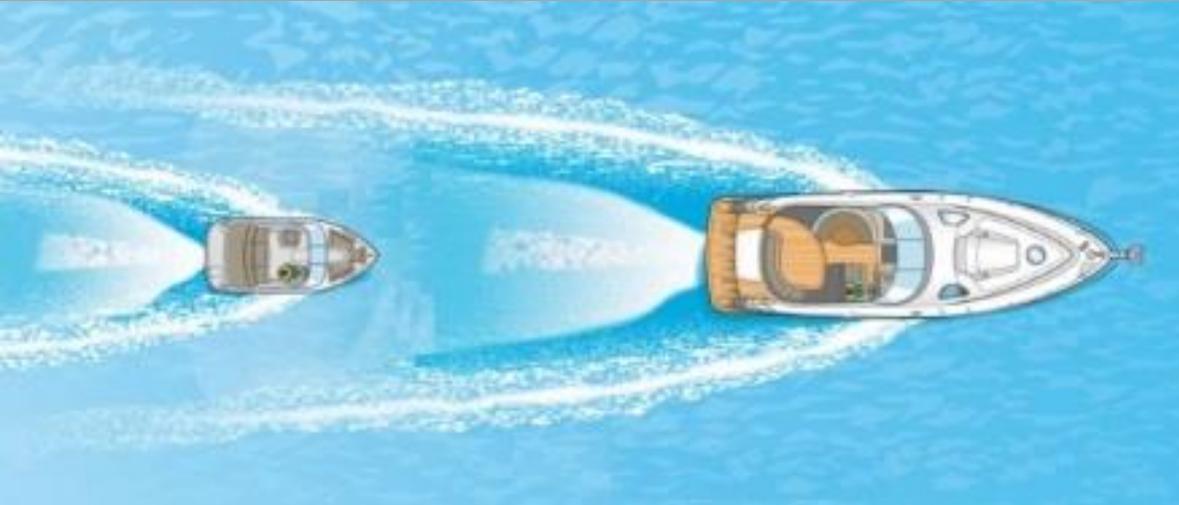
Which one is the stand-on vessel?



Crossing Situations
Power vs. Sail

Which one is the stand-on vessel?





Overtaking
Power vs. Power

Which one is the give-way vessel?



Overtaking
Power vs. Sail

Which one is the give-way vessel?



Boat Horn Signals

Horn signals are not commonly used in recreational boating; however, they should be used when the intention of the other boater is unclear.

In the previous situations:

Meeting “head on” – each boat would give a short 1 second blast and give way

Passing port to port - each boat would give a short 1 second blast

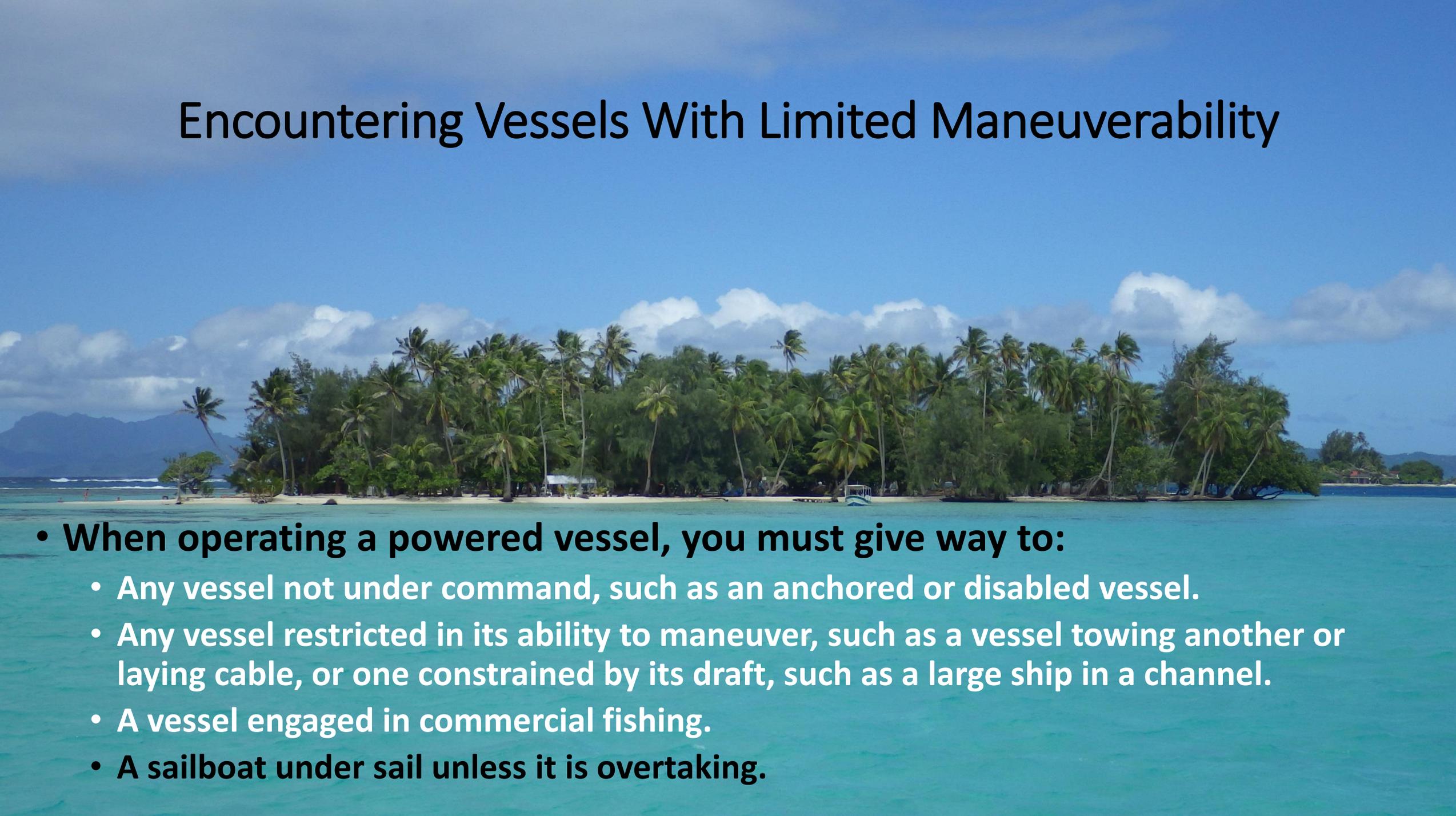
Passing starboard to starboard - each boat would give two short 1 second blasts

Overtaking another vessel – passing on starboard would be a short 1 second blast, two if passing on the port

You may also want to add a wave if you use your horn to avoid getting a “salute” in return.



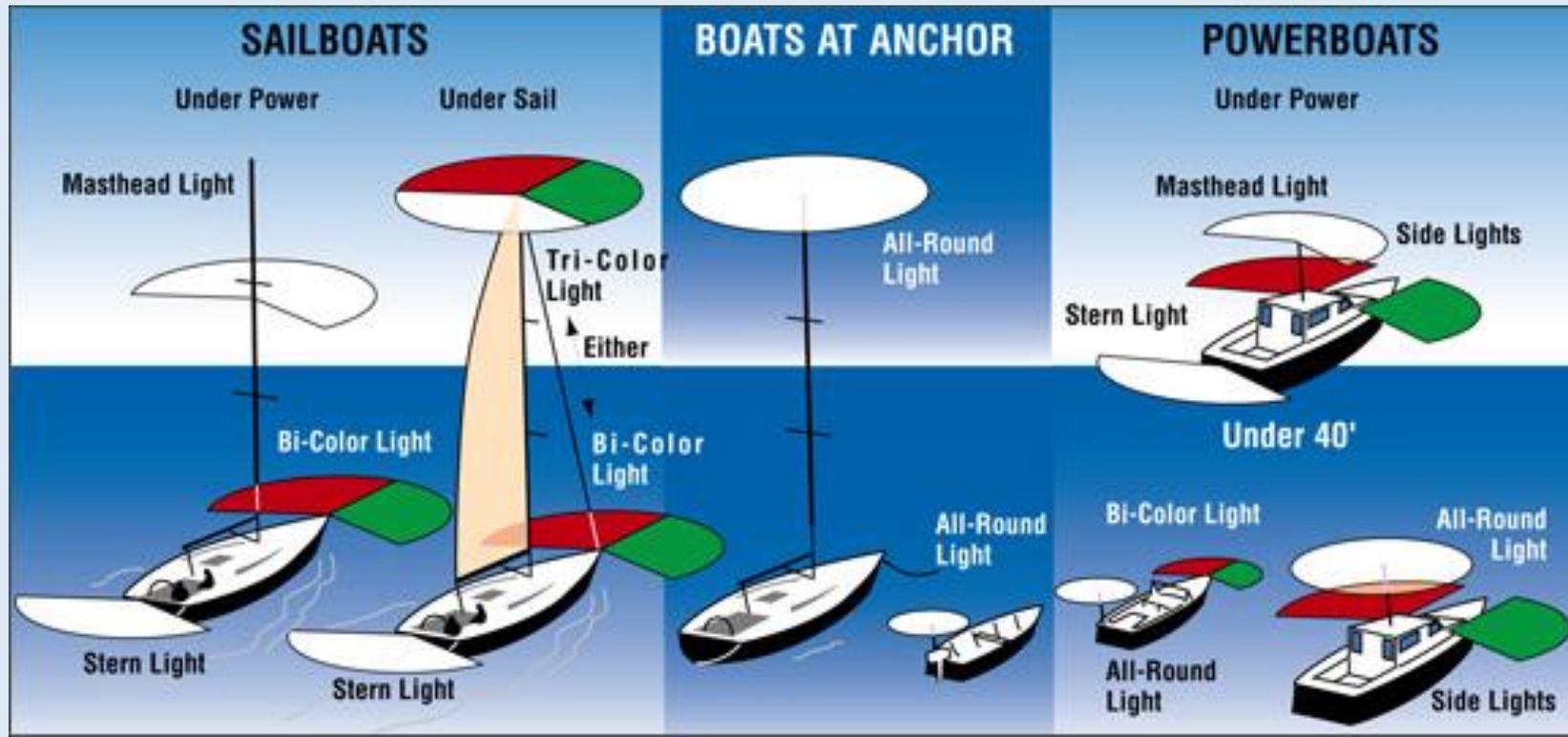
Encountering Vessels With Limited Maneuverability



- **When operating a powered vessel, you must give way to:**
 - Any vessel not under command, such as an anchored or disabled vessel.
 - Any vessel restricted in its ability to maneuver, such as a vessel towing another or laying cable, or one constrained by its draft, such as a large ship in a channel.
 - A vessel engaged in commercial fishing.
 - A sailboat under sail unless it is overtaking.

Navigation Lights (sunset to sunrise)

- Sidelights – Red (port) and green (starboard) lights on the bow to form an arc of 225° (112.5° for each) as seen from ahead
- Sternlight – a white light placed at the stern forming an arc of 135° (67.5° for each side) as seen from behind
- Masthead light – a white light mounted higher than sidelights to form an arc of 225° (112.5° for each) as seen from ahead
- All-around white light – may combine sternlight and masthead lights into a single 360° light



Law Enforcement On The Water



Seagrass Protection

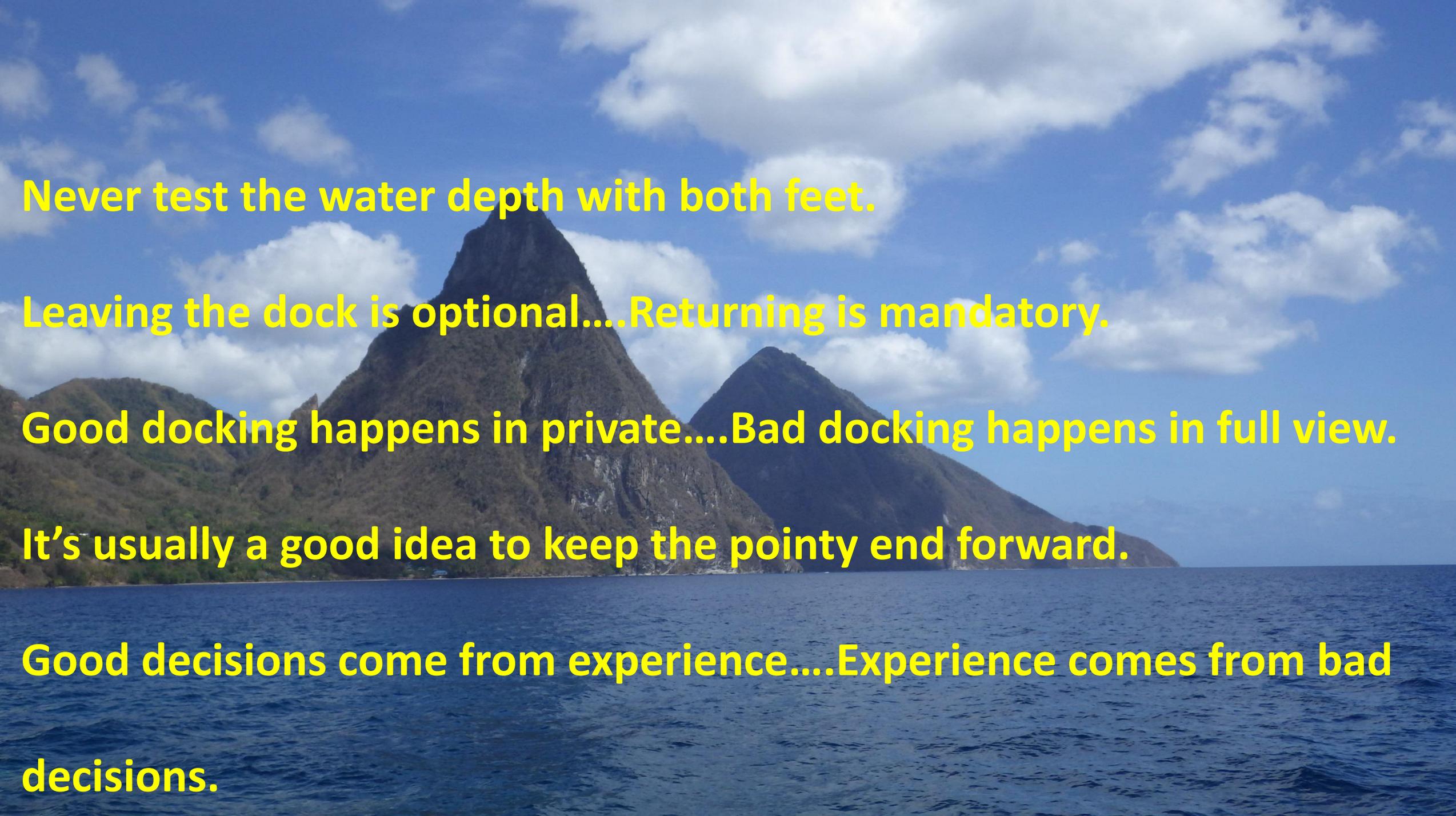


Lift, drift, pole, or troll



Invasive Aquatic Plants and Animals





Never test the water depth with both feet.

Leaving the dock is optional....Returning is mandatory.

Good docking happens in private....Bad docking happens in full view.

It's usually a good idea to keep the pointy end forward.

Good decisions come from experience....Experience comes from bad decisions.

**Any
Questions?
Let's go
home!**

