



USCG OUPV / Master Captain Licence

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1. What is the arc of visibility for sidelights?

- A. 180 degrees
- B. 112.5 degrees
- C. 135 degrees
- D. 360 degrees

2. What shape does a vessel at anchor display by day?

- A. A cone, point upward
- B. A black ball
- C. A cylinder
- D. A diamond shape

3. A prolonged blast is defined as a blast of how many seconds?

- A. 4 to 6 seconds
- B. 2 to 4 seconds
- C. 1 to 2 seconds
- D. 6 to 8 seconds

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4. In a crossing situation, which vessel is the give-way vessel?

- A. The vessel that has the other on its own starboard side
- B. The vessel that has the other on its own port side
- C. The vessel that is overtaking
- D. The smaller vessel



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5. In the IALA-B buoyage system (used in the Americas), a red buoy with the letter 'R' or even number marks:

- A. The starboard side of the channel (returning from sea)
- B. The port side of the channel (returning from sea)
- C. A hazard in the center
- D. A safe water mark

6. What type of life jacket is approved for use offshore on US commercial vessels?

- A. Type I — Offshore Life Jacket (provides 22 lbs buoyancy; will turn unconscious person face-up)
- B. Type II — Near-Shore Buoyant Vest
- C. Type III — Flotation Aid (not designed to turn unconscious person face-up)
- D. Type IV — Throwable device

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7. A power-driven vessel underway less than 50 meters in length must exhibit how many masthead lights?

- A. One masthead light
- B. Two masthead lights
- C. No masthead lights
- D. Three masthead lights

8. A vessel not under command shows which shapes by day?

- A. Three balls in a vertical line
- B. A cone and a ball
- C. Two balls in a vertical line
- D. A cylinder and a diamond

9. What is the whistle signal for a power-driven vessel underway in or near restricted visibility?

- A. Two short blasts every 2 minutes
- B. One prolonged blast every 2 minutes
- C. One short and one prolonged blast every 2 minutes
- D. Two prolonged blasts every 2 minutes

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10. What is an overtaking vessel?

- A. Any vessel with a relative bearing greater than 22.5 degrees ahead of the beam
- B. Any vessel coming up on another from a direction more than 22.5 degrees abaft the other vessel's beam
- C. Any vessel moving faster than another
- D. Any vessel that sounds a passing signal

11. What is the color of safe water marks in IALA-B?

- A. Red and black horizontal bands
- B. Red and white vertical stripes
- C. Green with white bands
- D. Yellow with black stripes

12. What is a cleat hitch used for?

- A. Joining two ropes of different sizes
- B. Securing a line to a cleat
- C. Creating a fixed loop at the end of a line
- D. Stopping a line from running through a block

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13. A sailing vessel underway must show which lights?

- A. Masthead light and sidelights only
- B. Sidelights, stern light, and masthead light
- C. Masthead light and stern light only
- D. Sidelights and stern light

14. What shape does a vessel constrained by her draft show by day?

- A. A cylinder
- B. A cone
- C. A diamond
- D. Two balls

15. What signal does a vessel at anchor sound in restricted visibility?

- A. One prolonged blast every 2 minutes
- B. Two prolonged blasts every 2 minutes
- C. Rapid ringing of a bell for about 5 seconds every minute
- D. Three blasts in succession every 2 minutes



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16. What is the order of precedence for vessels that must be given way to (from most privileged to least)?

- A. NUC, Fishing, Sailboat, RAM, CBD, Power-driven
- B. RAM, NUC, CBD, Fishing, Sailing, Power-driven
- C. NUC, CBD, RAM, Fishing (commercial), Sailing, Power-driven
- D. Sailing, Fishing, NUC, RAM, CBD, Power-driven

17. The variation on a nautical chart represents:

- A. The difference between true north and magnetic north at that location
- B. The error of the ship's compass due to onboard iron
- C. The angle between compass north and magnetic north
- D. The difference between magnetic north and compass north

18. What knot creates a fixed loop at the end of a line that will not slip?

- A. Cleat hitch
- B. Clove hitch
- C. Bowline
- D. Figure-eight knot

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19. A vessel not under command shows which lights?

- A. Two red lights in a horizontal line
- B. Two red lights in a vertical line
- C. One red and one white light in a vertical line
- D. One all-round red light only

20. A vessel aground shows which shapes by day?

- A. Two diamonds in a vertical line
- B. Three balls in a vertical line
- C. One ball and one diamond
- D. A cylinder and a diamond



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21. What signal indicates 'I am altering my course to starboard'?

- A. One short blast
- B. Two short blasts
- C. Three short blasts
- D. One prolonged and one short blast

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22. When must every vessel take action to avoid collision regardless of right-of-way?

- A. When collision cannot be avoided by the give-way vessel alone
- B. Only when directed by VTS
- C. Only in restricted visibility
- D. Only when overtaking

23. What does 'True Virgins Make Dull Company' help you remember?

- A. The order of correcting a compass: True, Variation, Magnetic, Deviation, Compass
- B. The order of the IALA buoy system
- C. The priority order of vessels under Rule 18
- D. The phonetic alphabet sequence

24. What is the recognized international distress signal for a vessel in distress?

- A. Mayday repeated three times on Channel 16 VHF
- B. One short blast of the horn
- C. Waving a red flag
- D. Displaying a white flag

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25. What lights does a vessel constrained by her draft display?

- A. Three all-round red lights in a vertical line
- B. Two all-round red lights in a vertical line
- C. One all-round red and one white light
- D. Two all-round white lights in a vertical line



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26. A vessel restricted in ability to maneuver (RAM) shows which shapes by day?

- A. Two balls in a vertical line
- B. A cylinder alone
- C. Ball, diamond, ball (top to bottom) in a vertical line
- D. Three diamonds in a vertical line

27. Three short blasts on the whistle means what?

- A. I am altering to starboard
- B. My engines are going astern
- C. I intend to overtake on your starboard side
- D. Stand by

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28. A sailing vessel approaches a power-driven vessel in a crossing situation. Who gives way?

- A. The sailing vessel, because it has better maneuverability
- B. The power-driven vessel, because sailing vessels have priority over power-driven vessels
- C. The larger vessel
- D. Neither vessel needs to alter course

29. What is a nautical mile defined as?

- A. 1,852 meters or exactly one minute of latitude
- B. One minute of longitude at the equator
- C. 1,760 yards or 5,280 feet
- D. One minute of latitude = 1,852 meters (approximately)

30. A man overboard (MOB) maneuver — what is the FIRST action to take?

- A. Reduce speed to slow
- B. Throw a life ring and maintain visual contact with the person in the water
- C. Call the Coast Guard immediately
- D. Stop the engines



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Answer Key & Explanations

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1. C — 135 degrees

Sidelights (red to port, green to starboard) each cover 112.5 degrees from dead ahead.

2. C — A cylinder

A vessel at anchor displays a black ball shape by day (Rule 30(a)).

3. B — 2 to 4 seconds

A prolonged blast is 4 to 6 seconds (Rule 32(b)).

4. B — The vessel that has the other on its own port side

In a crossing situation, the vessel that has the other on her starboard side is the give-way vessel (Rule 15).

5. B — The port side of the channel (returning from sea)

In IALA-B, red buoys mark the starboard (right) side of the channel when returning from sea — 'Red Right Returning'.

6. B — Type II — Near-Shore Buoyant Vest

Type I PFDs are required for offshore commercial use and are designed to turn an unconscious person face up in the water.

7. B — Two masthead lights

A power-driven vessel under 50m may show one masthead light (Rule 23(a)).

8. D — A cylinder and a diamond

A vessel not under command shows two black balls in a vertical line by day (Rule 27(a)).

9. C — One short and one prolonged blast every 2 minutes

A power-driven vessel making way in restricted visibility sounds one prolonged blast every 2 minutes (Rule 35(a)).

10. C — Any vessel moving faster than another

An overtaking vessel is one approaching from more than 22.5 degrees abaft the beam of the vessel being overtaken (Rule 13).

11. C — Green with white bands

Safe water marks (mid-channel marks) in IALA-B have red and white vertical stripes.

12. C — Creating a fixed loop at the end of a line

A cleat hitch secures a line to a cleat, used for mooring lines and similar applications.

13. D — Sidelights and stern light

A sailing vessel shows sidelights and a stern light (Rule 25). No masthead light when under sail only.



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14. B — A cone

A vessel constrained by draft displays a cylinder by day (Rule 28).

15. D — Three blasts in succession every 2 minutes

A vessel at anchor rings a bell rapidly for 5 seconds every minute (Rule 35(g)).

16. D — Sailing, Fishing, NUC, RAM, CBD, Power-driven

The hierarchy under Rule 18 from most privileged: NUC (not under command), CBD (constrained by draft), RAM (restricted ability to maneuver), vessels engaged in fishing, sailing vessels, power-driven vessels.

17. D — The difference between magnetic north and compass north

Variation (or magnetic declination) is the angle between true north and magnetic north at a given location and time.

18. D — Figure-eight knot

The bowline creates a fixed, non-slipping loop at the end of a line — one of the most important knots in seamanship.

19. C — One red and one white light in a vertical line

A vessel not under command shows two all-round red lights in a vertical line (Rule 27(a)).

20. C — One ball and one diamond

A vessel aground shows three balls in a vertical line by day (Rule 30(d)).

21. B — Two short blasts

One short blast means 'I am altering my course to starboard' (Rule 34(a)).

22. B — Only when directed by VTS

Rule 17(b) states that when collision cannot be avoided by the give-way vessel's action alone, the stand-on vessel must also take action.

23. B — The order of the IALA buoy system

The mnemonic helps remember the order: True-Variation-Magnetic-Deviation-Compass for converting compass courses.

24. B — One short blast of the horn

The internationally recognized verbal distress call is 'MAYDAY MAYDAY MAYDAY' on VHF Channel 16 (also DSC on Ch 70).

25. B — Two all-round red lights in a vertical line

A vessel constrained by draft shows three all-round red lights in a vertical line (Rule 28).

26. D — Three diamonds in a vertical line

A RAM vessel shows ball-diamond-ball (top to bottom) in a vertical line by day (Rule 27(b)).

27. C — I intend to overtake on your starboard side

Three short blasts means 'My engines are going astern' (Rule 34(a)).

28. C — The larger vessel

Under Rule 18, a power-driven vessel must keep out of the way of a sailing vessel (unless the sailing vessel is overtaking).



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29. C — 1,760 yards or 5,280 feet

A nautical mile equals one minute of latitude (arc) = 1,852 meters exactly by international definition.

30. C — Call the Coast Guard immediately

The immediate first action is to throw a life preserver (PFD/ring buoy) to the MOB and assign someone to point at them and maintain visual contact continuously.



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