

# THE MOST IMPORTANT SAILING RULES

This leaflet provides a simplified overview of the sailing rules on the water. A complete overview is available at [www.visuris.be/scheepvaartreglementering](http://www.visuris.be/scheepvaartreglementering). Skippers must also comply with any temporary regulations in force through a shipping notice, see [www.visuris.be/scheepvaartberichten](http://www.visuris.be/scheepvaartberichten).



## PRIORITY RULES

### 1<sup>ST</sup> GENERAL RIGHT OF WAY RULE

The vessel that keeps to the starboard bank has right of way (unless a barge asks the oncoming vessel to make an exception by displaying a blue sign with white border). You should therefore keep as far to the right or starboard as possible.

- **Starboard:** is the right side of a vessel when looking towards the bow.
- **Port:** is the left side of a vessel when looking towards the bow.

### 2<sup>ND</sup> GENERAL RIGHT OF WAY RULE

Large vessels (> 20 m) and commercial vessels have priority over small vessels.

THERE ARE THREE OTHER CATEGORIES /SITUATIONS:

#### 1 Situation where vessels are approaching head on/on a collision course:

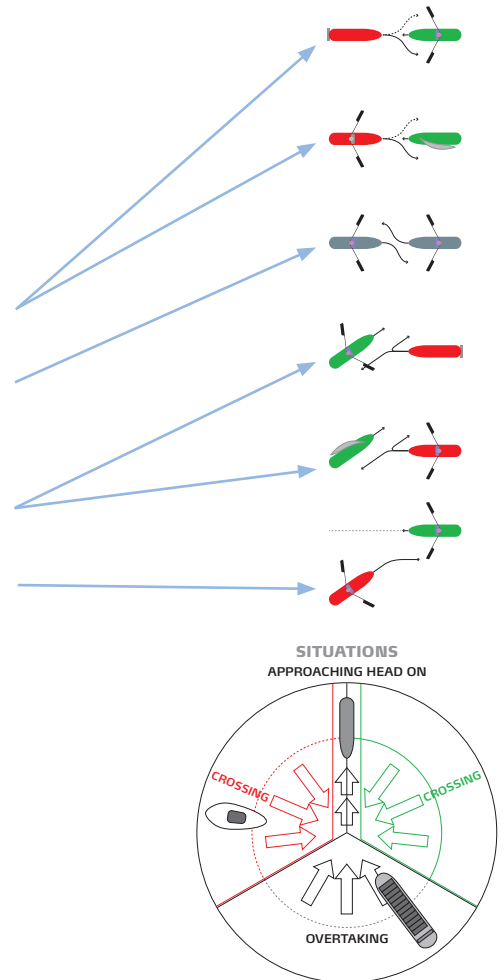
- motorised vessels give way to manually propelled vessels and the latter give way to sailing vessels;
- motorised vessels and manually propelled vessels both go to starboard.

#### 2 Crossing situation:

- motorised vessels give way to manually propelled vessels and the latter give way to sailing vessels;
- motorised vessels and manually propelled vessels coming from the right have right of way.

#### 3 Overtaking situation






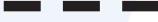
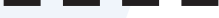
The overtaker (the vessel passing the other) must always give way. In respect of large vessels, small vessels must cooperate, for example, by slowing down.



## SOUND SIGNALS

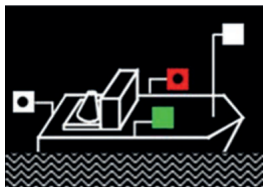
### GENERAL SIGNALS

Preferably use your radio. Pleasure craft may use the following signals if necessary.

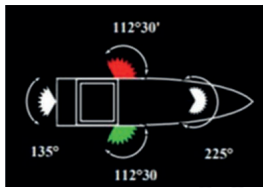
	Attention (a warning).		Imminent danger of collision.
	I'm going to starboard.		I am in need of assistance.
	I'm going to port.		
	I am reversing.		
	I cannot manoeuvre.		

## OPTICAL SIGNALS ON VESSELS

The general light configuration comprises four navigation lights: the stern light, the masthead light, the starboard light and the port light. These are only visible from certain sectors. From the various combinations, you can work out in which direction a vessel is sailing in relation to your own vessel.



General presentation

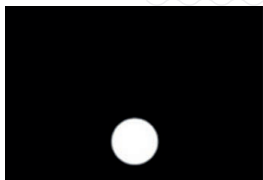


Sectors viewed from above

Visible lights from each sector



Fore



Aft



Starboard side



Port side

## THE MAIN TRAFFIC SIGNS

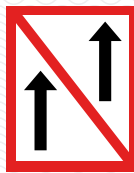
### PROHIBITION SIGNS



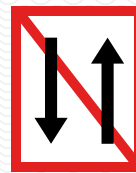
Sailing onwards prohibited.



Decommissioned part of the waterway.



No overtaking.



Prohibited to approach on opposing course.



Mooring prohibited.



Anchoring or towing anchors, cables and chains prohibited.



Mooring prohibited on the banks of the waterway.



Causing problematic water movements prohibited.



Sailing outside a specified boundary prohibited.



End of permitted water-skiing zone.



Prohibited for manually powered vessels.



End of permitted high-speed boating zone



Launching or hauling a vessel out of the water prohibited.

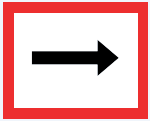


End of permitted zone for jet boats (powerboats)

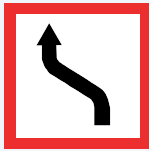


Sports and pleasure craft prohibited.

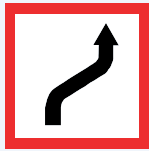
## MANDATORY SIGNS



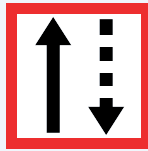
Required to sail in the direction indicated by the arrow.



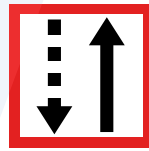
Required to go to the port side of the navigation channel.



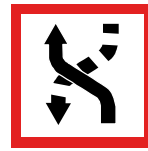
Required to go to the starboard side of the navigation channel.



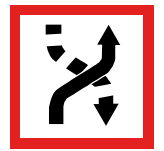
Required to maintain a course on the port side of the navigation channel.



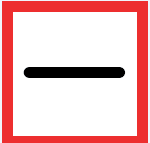
Required to maintain a course on the starboard side of the navigation channel.



Must cross the channel to port.



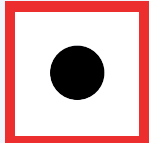
Must cross the channel to starboard.



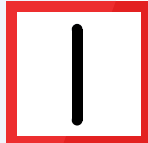
Obligation to stop in front of the sign under the circumstances described in the regulations.



Obligation to limit the vessel speed as indicated.



Obligation to give a sound signal.



Particular attention must be paid.



VHF radio must be used.

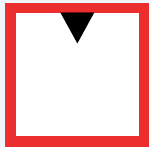


Radio must be used on the indicated channel.

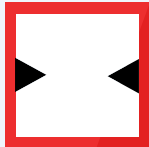
## RESTRICTION SIGNS



Depth of water limited.



The height of passage is limited.



The width of the navigation channel or passage is limited.



The navigation channel is located at a certain distance from the right or left bank.

## ADVISORY SIGNS



or



In both directions: passage from the opposite direction is permitted (yellow sign or yellow light).



or



In one direction: passage from the opposite direction is forbidden (yellow signs or yellow lights).

# SAILING RULES

## DESIGNATION SIGNS



Passage allowed.



High-voltage line.



Ferry with fixed tether.



Ferry without fixed tether.



Permission to berth.



Permission to anchor.



Permission to moor.



The channel followed is the main channel in relation to the channel that opens into it.



End of a prohibition, a one-direction sailing order or the end of a restriction.



Drinking water.



Start of the permitted water-skiing zone.



Manually powered vessels permitted.



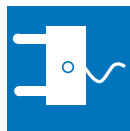
Start of the permitted high-speed boating zone.



Permitted area for launching or hauling vessels out of the water.



Start of the permitted zone for jet boats (powerboats).



Electricity.



Environmental station.



Marina.

## DESIGNATION SIGNS



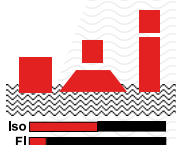
No through passage permitted.



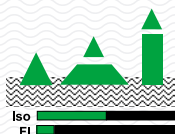
Enter now (lock), through passage permitted.

# BUOYS AND BEACONS

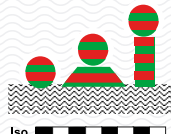
## LATERAL MARKING



Right side of the navigation channel from upstream to downstream.

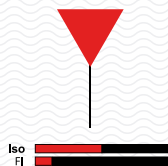


Left side of the navigation channel from upstream to downstream.

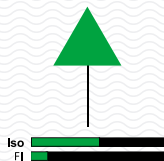


Fork in the navigation channel.

## MARKINGS INDICATING DANGEROUS POINTS AND OBSTACLES



Right side from upstream to downstream.

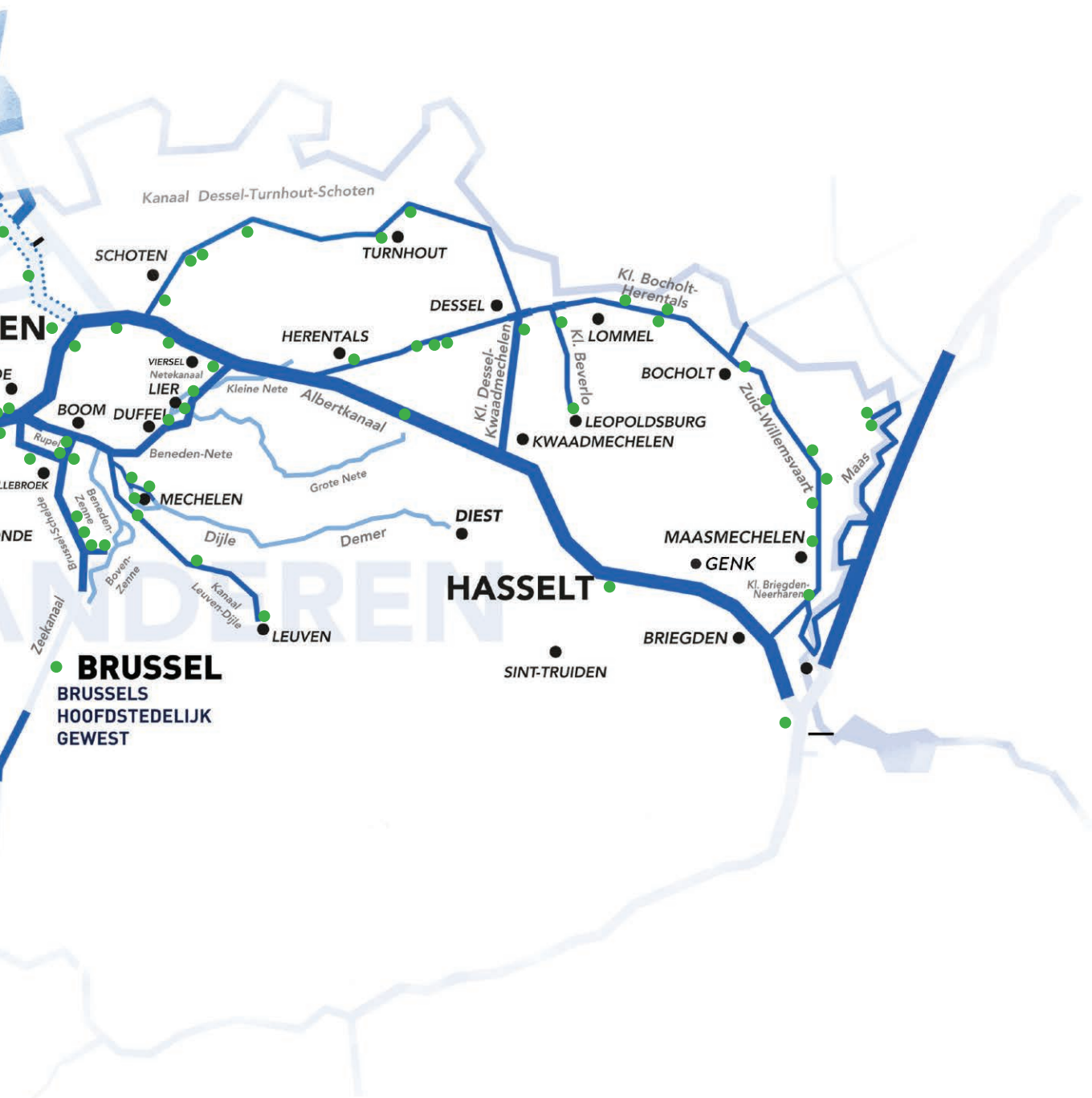


Left side from upstream to downstream.





Marinas/mooring places



# VISURIS

## DISCOVER THE ADVANTAGES FOR PLEASURE CRAFT

- Are you looking for the technical regulations for your vessel, or do you want to know more about the waterway permit? VisuRIS offers a useful leaflet outlining all relevant rules for pleasure craft.
- Plan your route in advance and enjoy a carefree trip! You can map out your route free of charge at [www.visuris.be](http://www.visuris.be). Enter where you wish to depart from and when, and where you would like to stop off on the way. This enables VisuRIS to take account of the current operating times of the locks and bridges, and even the expected traffic conditions on the waterways. You can also enter the dimensions of your vessel, enabling these to also be taken into account. Using that information, VisuRIS will provide you with a fully planned route, with all the information you will require or may find useful during your journey, such as the VHF channels and telephone numbers of the locks and movable bridges, the location of and information about marinas and places to moor.
- If you have noticed any incorrect information, don't hesitate to report this to us using the form at [www.visuris.be/contact](http://www.visuris.be/contact).
- For urgent matters, call the RIS centre 24/7 on one of the following telephone numbers: **0800 30 440** or **+32(0)78 055 440**.