



# INLAND WATERWAY SIGNS AND MARKING



Ministry of  
Infrastructure



**Remember: water is a potentially dangerous and treacherous element.**

## ON THE YACHT

- before starting the cruise, get acquainted with the current navigational announcements and local laws,
- if you rent a boat that does not require a license, you should be trained by the shipowner,
- the lack of the requirement to hold a qualification document to operate a yacht does not release you from the obligation to comply with applicable waterway regulations,
- remember to observe fire safety rules. Store fuel in a fire-proof manner and in certified containers. Use gas appliances with valid legalization documents and certificates. In case of yachts with a petrol stationary engine, remember about proper ventilation of the chamber (exhaust fan should be turned on before starting the petrol engine for a period of not less than 4 minutes),
- be extra careful when crossing the navigable route, choose the shortest possible route and follow the priority rules,
- remember that in case you encounter ships whose manoeuvring properties do not allow for immediate stop, before changing your course, make sure that the manoeuvre will not cause the risk of colliding with another vessel,
- in the absence of relevant provisions in the shipping regulations or other applicable regulations, the captain/the head of the vessel should take all measures resulting from the principles of good sailing practice in order to avoid danger,
- a ship sailing downstream has limited manoeuvrability, keep a safe distance,
- unless otherwise provided, small vessels should keep out of the way of other vessels, except for high-speed vessels speed, leaving them enough room to hold their course and to manoeuvre,
- ONLY one person is in command of the vessel, follow the instructions of the captain/helmsman; such person is responsible for the safety of the crew and the vessel,
- before the cruise, check the unit's equipment and overall preparation, technical condition, life-saving measures, safety and fire-fighting equipment, documents of the vessel, get acquainted with the projected route and the applicable regulations,
- get yourself accident insurance (NWW), CASCO of the yacht (damage, sinking, burglary, theft), against third party liability (damage made to the other vessel, bodily injury), read the terms and conditions of the contract and limitations of the insurer's liability,
- sail with an experienced helmsman, if you are one, determine the qualifications and experience of the crew, the ability to provide first aid, conduct training and assign particular tasks (behaviour and staying on the yacht, handling devices e.g. sails), show where the lifebuoy, vests and a first aid kit are stored,
- after every mooring, check the technical condition of the boat,
- use life jackets or buoyancy aid. Personal life-saving equipment should be permanently worn by non-swimmers and children, as well as be used on small keels (significant risk of capsizing), at night and in difficult weather conditions. Please note that they are not allowed below deck,
- charge the phone and protect it from getting wet, the emergency number over water is: **601 100 100** or **112**, install **APLIKACJA RATUNEK** (emergency mobile application) on your mobile phone ([www.ratunek.eu](http://www.ratunek.eu)),
- check the current weather forecast, do not leave the port in unfavourable conditions,
- in the event of a storm, go to the nearest shore, do not stay below deck, wear a life jacket,
- avoid dangerous places (shallows, stones, do not approach hydrotechnical devices such as weirs, follow the signs, observe other vessels, weather conditions, dangling wires and obstacles (bridges, weirs), avoid any danger to the crew, shipwreck or capsizing),
- keep a safe distance from other units,
- after the boat capsizes, do not swim to the shore alone, stay by the hull, call for help,
- do not exceed the allowed number of people, keep order and do not swim after drinking alcohol.

## ON THE KAYAK

- you are responsible for your own safety and health,
- the lack of the requirement to hold a qualification document for water tourism by kayak does not release you from the obligation to comply with applicable waterway regulations,
- be extra careful when crossing the navigable route, choose the shortest possible route and follow the priority rules,
- remember that in case you encounter ships whose manoeuvring properties do not allow for immediate stop, before changing your course, make sure that the manoeuvre will not cause the risk of colliding with another vessel,
- familiarize yourself with the rafting route, adapt it to the skills and abilities of the weakest participant,
- choose the right equipment, adapt clothes to weather conditions, check the weather forecast,
- swim in a life jacket,
- practice: getting on and off and mooring with the bow against the current, rowing and steering techniques, avoiding obstacles, behaviour after capsizing, first aid,
- match crews by combining non-swimmers and inexperienced people with experienced ones, children under 15 with adults who can swim,
- remember about storing the throw line and first aid kit in the last kayak,
- sail in formation at intervals adapted to the nature of the rafting trip, behind the leading experienced canoeist, belaying each other, don't swim alone,
- do not overestimate your strength and skills, bravado and recklessness may result in an accident,
- in a kayak it is not allowed to: crouch, stand, sit on the sides, rock sideways, push other kayaks with paddles, jump into the water,
- do not swim: after drinking alcohol, at night, when the water level is high,
- when swimming on the lake, stick to the shore,
- observe the weather and water level, do not set off in bad conditions (wind, storm),
- set the kayak with the bow facing the wave,
- pay attention to large vessels (ships, sailing and motor boats), keep your distance,
- when capsizing: do not turn the kayak over in deep water, pull it to the shore, save the crew,
- watch the surface of the water, avoid ripples above underwater obstacles and dangerous places (logs, pegs, roots, stones, whirlpools, mills, weirs and other water structures, barrages and thresholds), carry the canoe by land,
- swim under obstacles (bridges, tree branches) leaning forward, hold the oars along the sides of the kayak,
- take care of the environment, camp on campsites, do not litter, keep order, behave politely and quietly, swim and have bonfires in designated places,
- keep your phone in a waterproof case, with a charged battery, save the number to the trip organizer and the rental's owner and know the emergency number,
- take luggage adapted to the length of the trip, season and weather changes,
- be polite to other kayakers, help if necessary, watch out for swimmers and anglers.

## SOUND SIGNALS TO BE USED BY VESSELS

Sound signals other than the ringing of a bell and the three-tone signal shall consist in the emission of one blast or of several successive blasts having the following characteristics:












- Short blast - a blast lasting about one second;
- Long blast - a blast lasting about four seconds.



The interval between two successive blasts shall be about one second except for the signal “series of very short blasts” which shall comprise a series of not less than six blasts, each lasting about a quarter of a second, separated by a silence of the same duration.

„Series of double short blasts” means a signal consisting of at least six double short blasts, separated by a 2-second silence between the blasts.

Bell signals consist of one or more series of bell strikes lasting about 4 seconds each, separated by a 1-second silence between the series.

### A. GENERAL SIGNALS

Signal symbol	Blasts characteristics	Signal meaning
	<b>1 long blast</b>	<b>“Caution”</b>
	<b>1 short blast</b>	<b>“I am altering my course to starboard”</b>
	<b>2 short blasts</b>	<b>“I am altering my course to port”</b>
	<b>3 short blasts</b>	<b>“I am going astern”</b>
	<b>4 short blasts</b>	<b>I am unable to manoeuvre”</b>
	<b>Series of very short blasts</b>	<b>“Imminent danger of collision”</b>
	<b>Repeated long blasts</b>	} <b>“Distress signs”</b>
	<b>Ringing of a bell</b>	
	<b>1 short blast, 1 long blast and 2 short blasts</b>	<b>Stop your vessel immediately</b>
	<b>Series of double short blasts</b>	} <b>Man overboard</b>
	<b>Vessels, other than small craft, proceeding downstream</b>	

1. The main signs (part I) may be supplemented or clarified by auxiliary signs (part II).
2. To make them more visible, boards may be surrounded by a thin white line.
3. The lights of navigation signs are presented by way of the following symbols:
  - fixed light - symbol 
  - flashing light - symbol 

## I. MAIN SIGNS

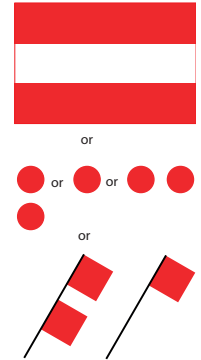
### A. PROHIBITORY SIGNS

#### A.1 No entry (general sign)

or red lights

or red flags

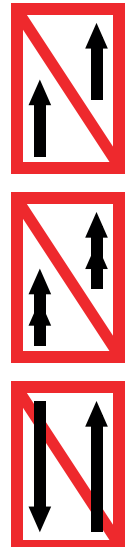
Two boards, two lights or two flags, one above the other, indicate a prolonged prohibition



#### A.2 No overtaking

#### A.3 No overtaking of convoys by convoys

#### A.4 No passing or overtaking



**A.5** No berthing on the side of the waterway on which the sign is placed



**A.5.1** No berthing on the stretch of water whose breadth, measured from the sign, is shown in metres on the sign



**A.6** No anchoring or trailing of anchors, cables or chains on the side of the waterway on which the sign is placed



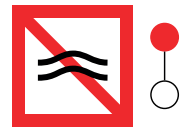
**A.7** No making fast to the bank on the side of the waterway on which the sign is placed



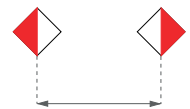
**A.8** No turning



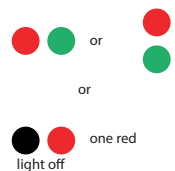
**A.9** Do not create wash likely to cause damage



**A.10** No passing outside the area marked (in openings of bridges or weirs)



**A.11** Entry prohibited, but prepare to get under way



**A.12 Motorized craft prohibited**



**A.13 Sports or pleasure craft prohibited**



**A.14 Water skiing prohibited**



**A.15 Sailing vessels prohibited**



**A.16 All craft other than motorized vessels or sailing craft prohibited**



**A.17 Use of sailboards prohibited**



**A.18 End of zone authorized for high speed navigation of small sport and pleasure craft**



**A.19 No launching or beaching of vessels**



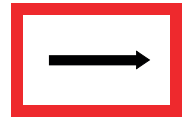
**A.20 Water bikes prohibited**



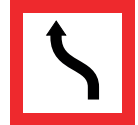


## B. MANDATORY SIGNS

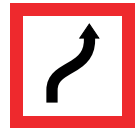
### B.1 MANDATORY SIGNS



B.1a Move to the side of the fairway on your port side



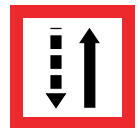
B.2b Move to the side of the fairway on your starboard side



B.3a Keep to the side of the fairway on your port side



B.3b Keep to the side of the fairway on your starboard side



B.4a Cross fairway to port



B.4b Cross fairway to starboard



B.5 Stop as prescribed in the Regulations



**B.6 Do not exceed the speed indicated (in km/h)**



12

**B.7 Give a sound signal**



**B.8 Keep a particularly sharp lookout**



**B.9a Obligation to exercise extreme caution. Do not enter or cross the main waterway until certain that this will not oblige vessels proceeding on it to change their course or speed**



**B.9b Obligation to exercise extreme caution when crossing the main waterway which is allowed only if certain that this will not oblige vessels proceeding on it to change their course or speed**



**B.10 Vessels proceeding on the main waterway must, if necessary, change course and speed to allow vessels to leave harbours or tributary waterways**



**B.11a Obligation to enter into a radiotelephone link**



VHF

**B.11b Obligation to enter into a radiotelephone link on the channel as indicated on the board**



VHF  
11

## C. RESTRICTIVE SIGNS

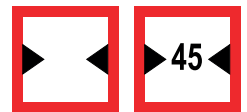
C.1 Depth of water limited



C.2 Headroom limited



C.3 Width of passage or channel limited



Note: Boards C.1, C.2 and C.3 may carry, in addition, figures indicating in metres the depth of water, the headroom and the width of passage or the channel respectively

C.4 There are restrictions on navigation: see the information plate below the sign

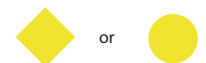


C.5 The channel lies at a distance from the right (left) bank; the figure shown on the sign indicates the distance in metres, measured from the sign, to which vessels should keep

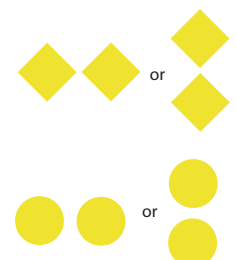


## D. RECOMMENDATORY SIGNS

D.1a Recommended opening in both directions

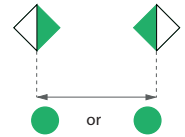


D.1b Only in the direction indicated (passage in the opposite direction prohibited)

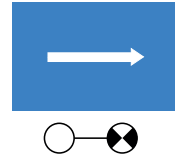


# 10

**D.2** You are recommended to keep within the area indicated

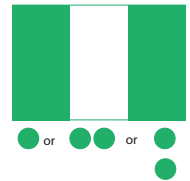


**D.3** You are recommended to proceed in the direction shown by the arrow or in the direction from the fixed light towards the isophase light



## E. INFORMATIVE SIGNS

**E.1** Entry permitted (general sign)



**E.2** Overhead cable crossing (the number specified in the lower right corner indicates the height of the overhead power line above the level of the highest navigable water)



**E.3** Weir



**E.4a** Ferry-boat not moving independently



**E.4b** Ferry-boat moving independently



**E. 5** Berthing (i.e. anchoring or making fast to the bank) permitted on the side of the waterway on which the sign is placed



**E.5.1** Berthing permitted on the stretch of water of the breadth measured from, and shown on the board in metres



**E.5.2** Berthing permitted on the stretch of water bounded by the two distances measured from, and shown on the board in metres



**E.5.3** Maximum number of vessels permitted to berth abreast on the side of the waterway on which the sign is placed



**E.5.4** Berthing area reserved for pushing-navigation vessels that are not required to carry the marking prescribed in article 3.14 on the side of the waterway on which the sign is placed



**E.5.5** Berthing area reserved for pushing-navigation vessels that are required to carry one blue light or one blue cone under article 3.14, paragraph 1, on the side of the waterway on which the sign is placed



**E.5.6** Berthing area reserved for pushing-navigation vessels that are required to carry two blue lights or two blue cones under article 3.14, paragraph 2, on the side of the waterway on which the sign is placed












**E.5.7** Berthing area reserved for pushing-navigation vessels that are required to carry three blue lights or three blue cones under article 3.14, paragraph 3, on the side of the waterway on which the sign is placed



**E.5.8** Berthing area reserved for vessels other than pushing-navigation vessels that are not required to carry the marking prescribed in article 3.14 on the side of the waterway on which the sign is placed



- E.5.9** Berthing area reserved for vessels other than pushing-navigation vessels that are required to carry one blue light or one blue cone under article 3.14, paragraph 1, on the side of the waterway on which the sign is placed 
- E.5.10** Berthing area reserved for vessels other than pushing-navigation vessels that are required to carry two blue lights or two blue cones under article 3.14, paragraph 2, on the side of the waterway on which the sign is placed 
- E.5.11** Berthing area reserved for vessels other than pushing-navigation vessels that are required to carry three blue lights or three blue cones under article 3.14, paragraph 3, on the side of the waterway on which the sign is placed 
- E.5.12** Berthing area reserved for all vessels that are not required to carry the marking prescribed in article 3.14, on the side of the waterway on which the sign is placed 
- E.5.13** Berthing area reserved for all vessels that are required to carry one blue light or one blue cone under article 3.14, paragraph 1, on the side of the waterway on which the sign is placed 
- E.5.14** Berthing area reserved for all vessels that are required to carry two blue lights or two blue cones under article 3.14, paragraph 2 
- E.5.15** Berthing area reserved for all vessels that are required to carry three blue lights or three blue cones under article 3.14, paragraph 3, on the side of the waterway on which the sign is placed 
- E.6** Anchoring or trailing of anchors, cables or chains permitted on the side of the waterway on which the sign is placed 
- E.7** Making fast to the bank permitted on the side of the waterway on which the sign is placed 

E.7.1 Berthing area reserved for loading and unloading vehicles. (Maximum duration of berthing permitted may be added on an information plate below the board)



E.8 Turning area



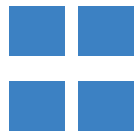
E.9a Crossing with a waterway considered to be a side waterway in relation to the main waterway on which the vessel is proceeding



E.9b Connection with a waterway considered to be a side waterway in relation to the waterway on which the vessel is proceeding



E.10a Crossing with a waterway considered to be the main waterway in relation to the waterway on which the ship is sailing



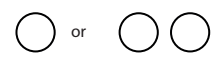
E.10b Connection with a waterway considered to be the main waterway in relation to the waterway on which the vessel is proceeding



E.11 End of a prohibition or obligation applying to traffic in one direction only, or end of a restriction



E.12a Advance signals - one or two fixed white light(s):  
Difficulty ahead - stop if the regulations so require



E.12b Advance signals - one or two flashing white lights:  
Difficulty ahead; You may proceed



**E.13 Drinking-water supply**



**E.14 Telephone**



**E.15 Motorized vessels permitted**



**E.16 Sports or pleasure craft permitted**



**E.17 Water skiing permitted**



**E.18 Sailing vessels permitted**



**E.19 Craft other than motorized vessels or sailing craft permitted**



**E.20 Use of sailboards permitted**





**E.21 Zone authorized for high speed navigation of small sport and pleasure craft**



**E.22 Launching or beaching of small craft permitted**



**E.23 Possibility of obtaining nautical information by radiotelephone on the channel indicated**



**E.24 Water bikes permitted**



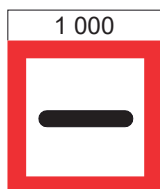
## II. AUXILIARY SIGNS

The main signs (see part I) may be supplemented by the following auxiliary signs:

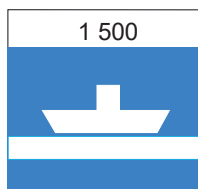
### 1. Panels showing the distance at which the regulation applies or the special feature indicated by the main sign is to be found

Note: The panels are placed above the main sign.

Examples:



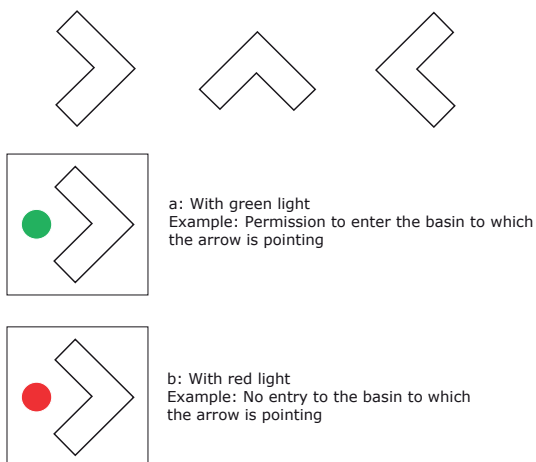
In 1,000 m, stop



In 1,500 m, ferry-boat not moving independently

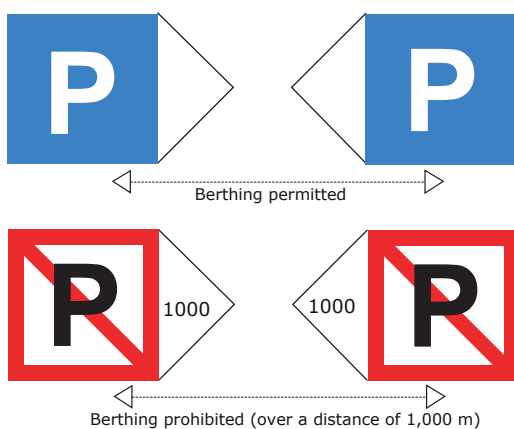
## 2. Additional luminous signal

Luminous white arrow combined with certain lights, with the following meanings:



## 3. Pointers showing the direction of the section to which the main sign applies

Note: The pointers need not necessarily be white and may be placed beside or below the main sign.



## 4. Panels giving explanations or additional information

Note: These panels are placed below the main sign.

Examples:



or



Stop for Customs



Give one long blast

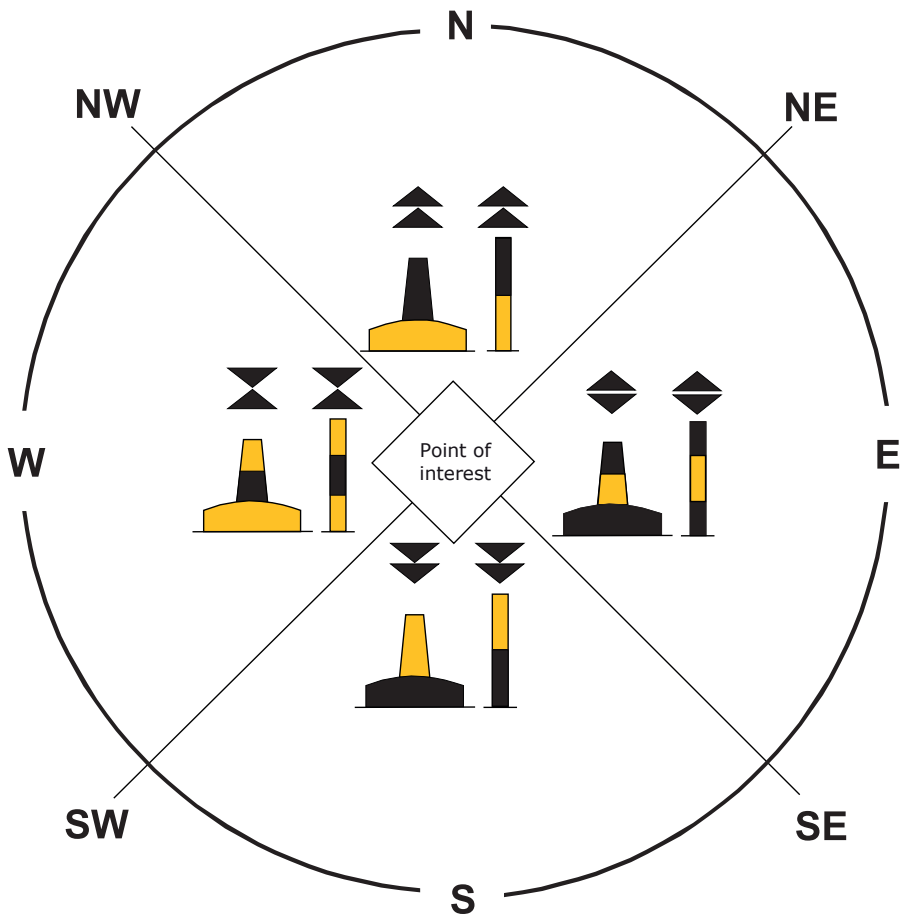
## CARDINAL MARKS

### Definition of cardinal quadrants and marks

Definition of cardinal quadrants and marks The four quadrants (North, East, South and West) are bounded by the true bearings NW NE, NE-SE, SE-SW, SW-NW taken from the point of interest.

A cardinal mark is named after the quadrant in which it is placed.

The name of a cardinal mark indicates that the mark should be passed on the side of the quadrant named.



### North cardinal mark

- Colour - black above yellow
- Form - pillar or spar, with topmark
- Topmark - two black cones, one above the other, points upward
- Light (when fitted) - Colour: white
- Rhythm - continuous quick scintillating or continuous scintillating.

**East cardinal mark**

- Colour – black with a single broad horizontal yellow band
- Form – pillar or spar, with topmark
- Topmark – two black cones, one above the other, base to base
- Light (when fitted) – Colour: white
- Rhythm – group quick scintillating or group scintillating, with a group of three flashes.

**South cardinal mark**

- Colour – yellow above black
- Form – pillar or spar, with topmark
- Topmark – two black cones, one above the other, points downward
- Light (when fitted) – Colour: white
- Rhythm – group quick scintillating or group scintillating, with a group of six flashes followed by a long flash of not less than two seconds duration.

**West cardinal mark**

- Colour – yellow with a single broad horizontal black band
- Form – pillar or spar, with topmark
- Topmark – two black cones, one above the other, point to point
- Light (when fitted) – Colour: white
- Rhythm – group quick scintillating or group scintillating, with a group of nine flashes.

**Publisher:**

Ministry of Infrastructure  
ul. Chałubińskiego 4/6  
00-928 Warszawa

Department of Water Management and Inland Navigation  
ul. Nowy Świat 6/12  
00-400 Warszawa

**Project, type-setting, compilation:**

Euro Pilot Sp. o.o.  
ul. Konarskiego 3, 01-355 Warszawa  
[www.europilot.com.pl](http://www.europilot.com.pl)

Warsaw, 2022

This publication has been financed from the funds of the Inland Navigation Fund under the Inland Navigation Promotion Plan for 2022.



**KANAŁ TAŁCKI 1600m**

|

1,5  
▲

zabroniony  
ruch pod  
żaglami

6

**Ministry of Infrastructure  
ul. Chałubińskiego 4/6  
00-928 Warszawa**

**Department of Water Management and Inland Navigation  
ul. Nowy Świat 6/12  
00-400 Warszawa**