

Racing Rules of Sailing: Room to Tack at Obstruction

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Room to Tack at Obstruction: Definition

20 ROOM TO TACK AT AN OBSTRUCTION

20.1 Hailing and Responding

When approaching an obstruction, a boat sailing close-hauled or above may hail for room to tack and avoid another boat on the same tack. After a boat hails,

- (a) she shall give the hailed boat time to respond;
- (b) the hailed boat shall respond either by tacking as soon as possible, or by immediately replying 'You tack' and then giving the hailing boat *room* to tack and avoid her; and
- (c) when the hailed boat responds, the hailing boat shall tack as soon as possible.

20.2 Exoneration

When a boat is taking *room to which she is entitled under rule 20.1(b)*, she shall be exonerated if she breaks a rule of Section A or rule 15 or 16.

20.3 When Not to Hail

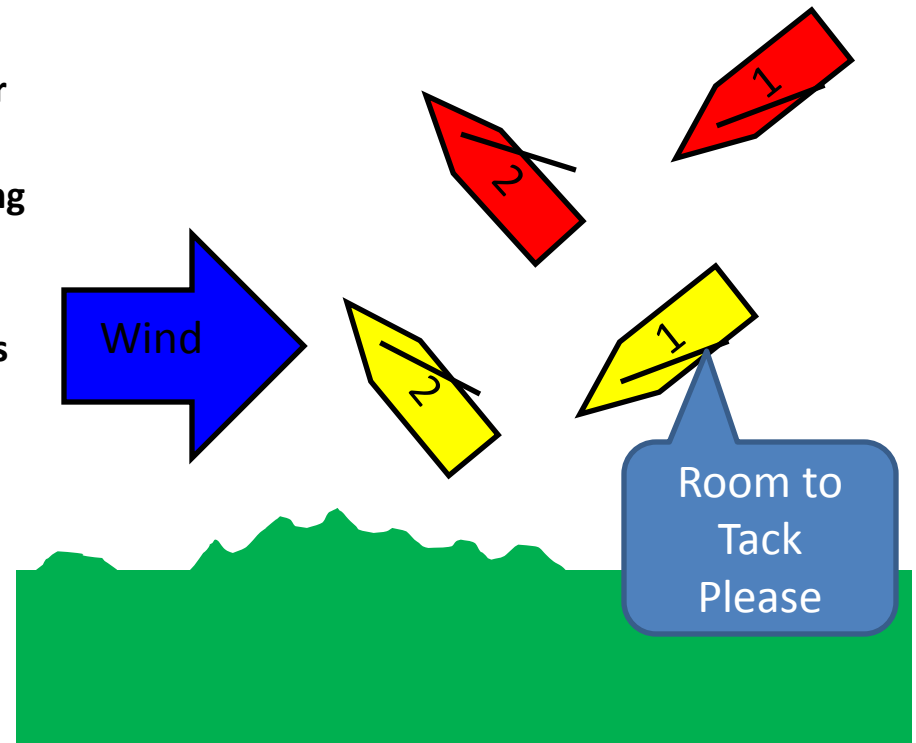
A boat shall not hail unless safety requires her to make a substantial course change to avoid the *obstruction*. Also, she shall not hail if the obstruction is a mark that the hailed boat is fetching.

Complete Racing Rules of Sailing 2009-2012

<http://www.sailing.org/20348.php>

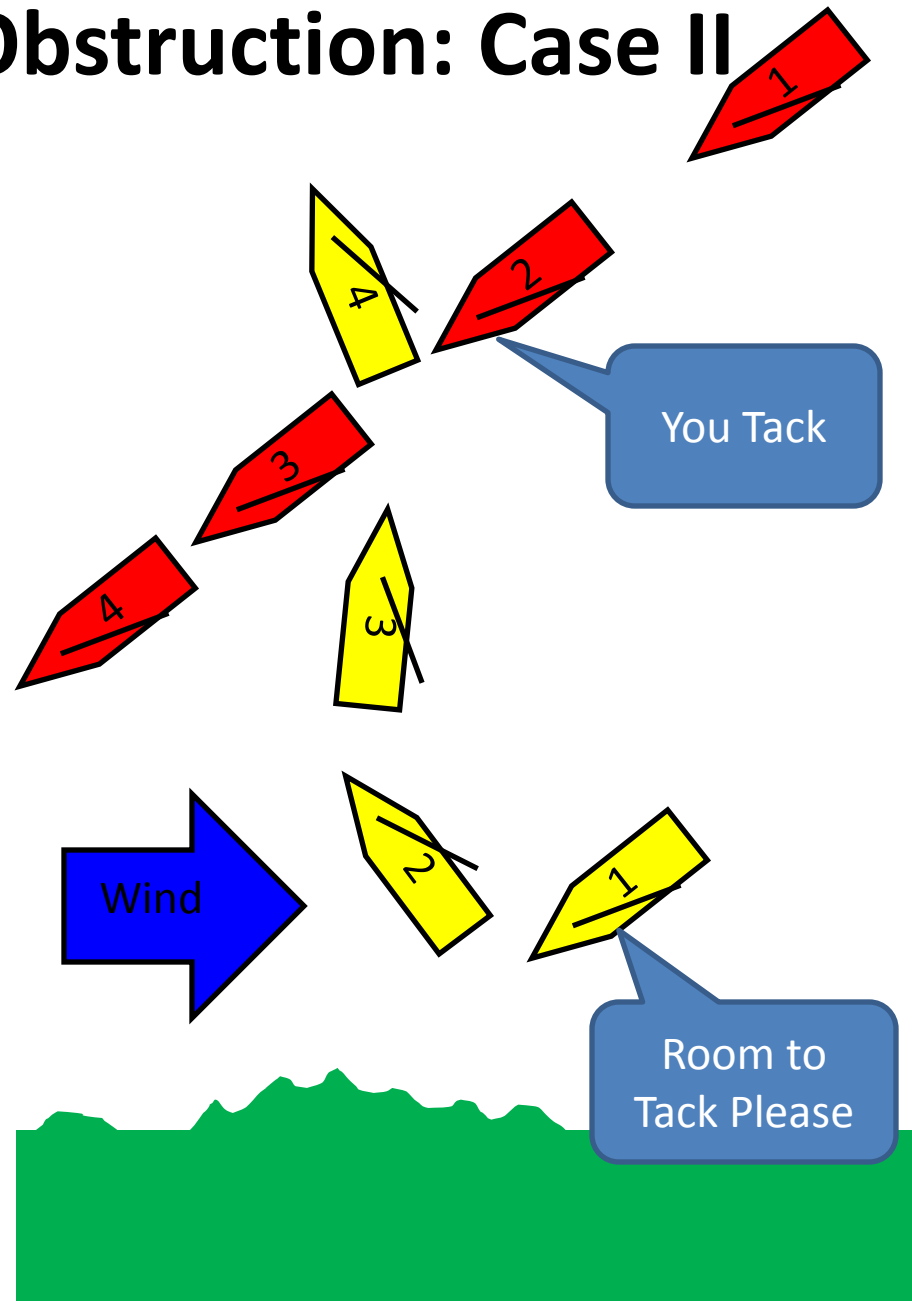
Room to Tack at Obstruction: Case I

- Yellow needs to change course to avoid an obstruction (here the shore). Note that an obstruction can be shallow water or underwater weeds. An obstruction can also be a right-of-way boat.
- If yellow were to tack at Position 1 on top of Red, she would interfere with red and that would normally break Rule 13 (no rights while tacking).
- So here it is appropriate for Yellow to call for “Room to Tack” to Red.
- Red ***MUST*** respond by tacking out of the way or by calling “You Tack”.
- Here Red has opted to tack out of the way allowing Yellow Room to Tack. The “You Tack” option is discussed on the next slide.
- Yellow must tack as soon as possible after Red has created room and may not sail on, even if a favorable wind shift occurs and yellow would rather stay on the starboard tack.
- Note that Red may need to hail any boats preventing her from tacking, so Yellow needs to call early enough for the chain reaction to take place.



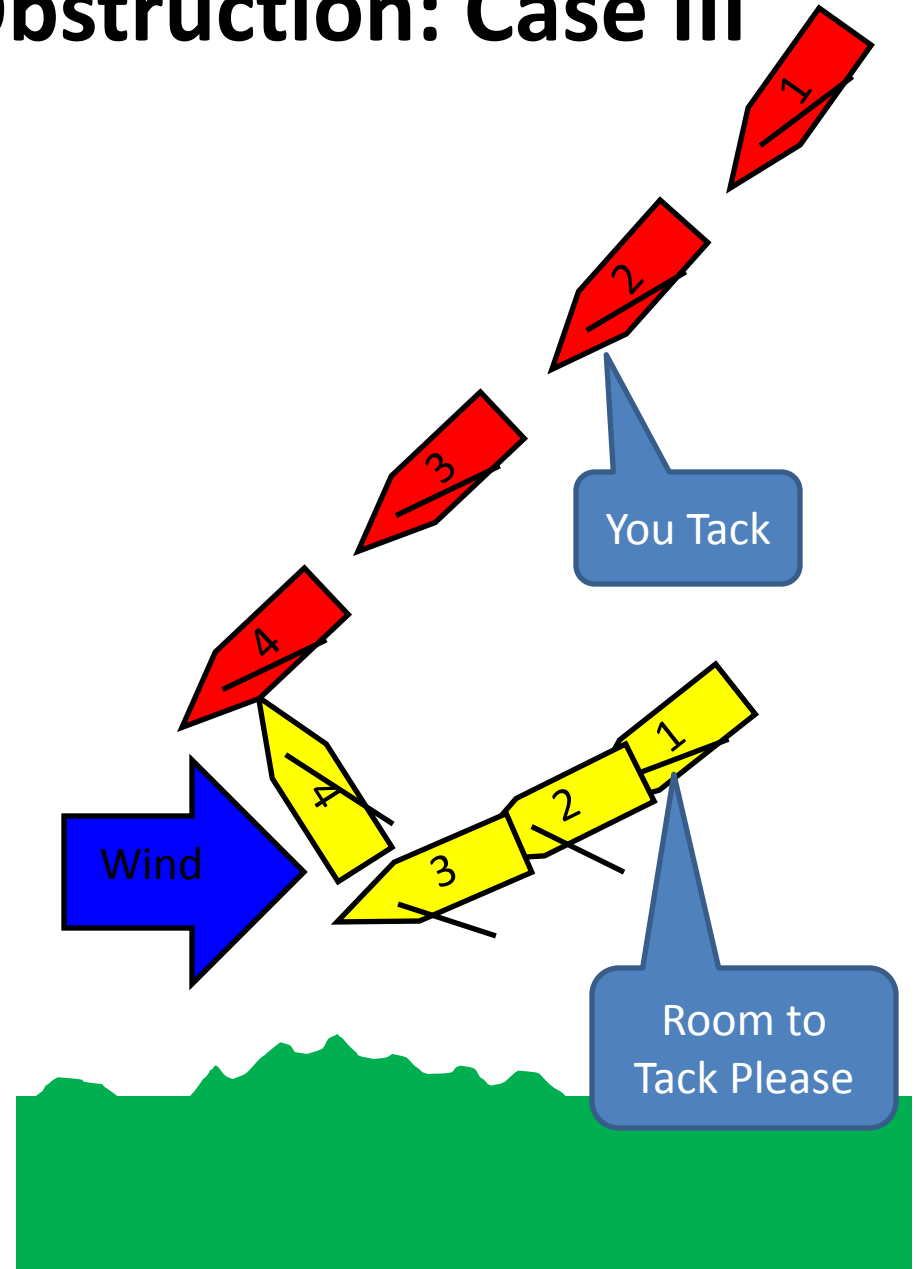
Room to Tack at Obstruction: Case II

- Here Yellow calls for “Room to Tack”
- Red must tack or reply with “You Tack”.
- Here Red replies “You Tack”. With that response, Red is now responsible to make sure Yellow has room to **complete a tack** and then Yellow must have enough **room to avoid Red** after the tack (by some seaman like maneuver).
- Note that Yellow does not get the right of way just because Red called “You Tack”. Yellow JUST gets room to be able to complete a tack and then enough room to find a seaman like way to get by Red without hitting her.
- Red is already giving Yellow room to tack by staying on her course (since they are pretty far apart).
- Red is giving Yellow room to keep clear after the tack since Yellow can easily duck Red’s stern.
- Thus, here Red has fully complied by staying on course and simply replying “You Tack”, because there was sufficient room between the two boats.
- Note Red remains the right of way boat throughout the maneuver. But with a obligation to allow Yellow room to tack and room to avoid after.



Room to Tack at Obstruction: Case III

- Yellow hails for “Room to Tack”
- Red replies “You Tack”.
- Red thinks yellow has enough room to complete a tack and then avoid Red and so Red stays on course. Red may think yellow will pass in front here after the tack.
- Yellow is moving slower than Red anticipated and then hits red just after the tack.
- After the tack, Yellow had no room to keep clear of Red by either sailing in front or behind.
- A Protest committee would likely find Red at fault! Red should have tacked out of the way here unless he was sure yellow would have room after the tack to swing in behind him (or was willing to slow up and let Yellow pass in front).



Room to Tack at Obstruction: Case IV

- Red is a starboard right-of-way boat and is an obstruction for Yellow (and Green).
- Yellow hails to Green for “Room to Tack”
- Green must tack to allow Yellow to also tack to avoid Red, or Green must hail back “You Tack” and then allow Yellow to Tack and allow room for Yellow to avoid Red and Green.
- Yellow has another option here. Yellow can duck Red’s stern. However, if Yellow does this, Yellow MUST allow Green room to do so as well.
- It is Yellow’s decision as to whether to call for room and then tack to avoid Red, or to duck Red and allow room for Green to do so if Green chooses.
- Yellow might choose to duck, and green might choose to tack. In that case, yellow can duck Red tightly.
- If Yellow calls for room to tack and Green responds, Yellow MUST then tack as soon as possible. It would be a foul to call for room and then duck Red’s stern (unless Green did not respond to the “Room to Tack” hail).

