

# COLREGs International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (IRPCS) Practice Test (Sample)

## Study Guide



**Everything you need from our exam experts!**

**This is a sample study guide. To access the full version with hundreds of questions,**

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# Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

- Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,
- Improve accuracy and speed,
- Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and
- Approach the exam with greater confidence.

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

Remember: successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

# How to Use This Guide

**This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here's how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:**

## 1. Start with a Diagnostic Review

**Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Don't worry about getting everything right, your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.**

## 2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions

**Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 - 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations, and take breaks to retain information better.**

## 3. Learn from the Explanations

**After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.**

## 4. Track Your Progress

**Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.**

## 5. Simulate the Real Exam

**Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.**

## 6. Repeat and Review

**Don't just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning.**

## 7. Use Other Tools

**Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.**

**There's no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly — adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!**

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## **Questions**

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- 1. What should a vessel do to avoid impeding the passage of a vessel constrained by her draught?**
  - A. Speed up and pass quickly**
  - B. Change course frequently**
  - C. Avoid impeding her navigation**
  - D. Wait until the vessel passes**
  
- 2. Which chapter of the COLREGs contains the general rules?**
  - A. Part C**
  - B. Part A**
  - C. Part D**
  - D. Part B**
  
- 3. What does Rule 11 describe?**
  - A. The application of the rules in different situations.**
  - B. Requirements for safe navigation during the day.**
  - C. Special rules for large vessels.**
  - D. Prohibited actions for vessels under sail.**
  
- 4. Which equipment is essential for early warning of risk of collision?**
  - A. Navigational charts**
  - B. A radar system if fitted**
  - C. Only visual aids**
  - D. Automatic identification systems**
  
- 5. What does Rule 17 entail regarding the actions of vessels?**
  - A. Prevention of collisions with stationary objects only**
  - B. Conduct specific maneuvers to avoid collisions**
  - C. Informing other vessels of one's positioning**
  - D. Only applicable to sailing vessels**

**6. What characterizes the majority of vessel interactions as defined by the regulations?**

- A. Each vessel can act as they wish**
- B. Vessels must adhere to a set of right-of-way principles**
- C. Every vessel is considered equally responsible**
- D. Only larger vessels have the right-of-way**

**7. Which term refers to vessels employed for essential maneuvers that restrict their ability to navigate?**

- A. NUC (Not Under Command)**
- B. RAM (Restricted Ability to Maneuver)**
- C. Sailing vessels**
- D. Fishing vessels only**

**8. What do the rules of the COLREGs help vessels achieve at sea?**

- A. Safe navigation and collision avoidance**
- B. Efficient trading routes**
- C. Faster transit times**
- D. Reduced fuel consumption**

**9. What light configuration should a power-driven vessel exhibit when anchored?**

- A. An all-round white light**
- B. Two red lights vertically**
- C. One green and one white light**
- D. A white light at the bow and a red light at the stern**

**10. Which section of the COLREGs covers the rules for 'Conduct of Vessels in Sight of One Another'?**

- A. Part A**
- B. Part B Section 1**
- C. Part B Section 2**
- D. Part C**

## **Answers**

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1. C
2. B
3. A
4. B
5. B
6. B
7. B
8. A
9. A
10. C

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## **Explanations**

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**1. What should a vessel do to avoid impeding the passage of a vessel constrained by her draught?**

- A. Speed up and pass quickly**
- B. Change course frequently**
- C. Avoid impeding her navigation**
- D. Wait until the vessel passes**

A vessel should avoid impeding the navigation of a vessel constrained by her draught because such vessels are limited in their ability to maneuver due to their deep draft. This principle is rooted in the COLREGs, particularly Rule 18, which outlines the responsibilities of vessels when they are in the vicinity of others. A vessel that is constrained by her draught needs to navigate more carefully, particularly in shallow waters, and any actions that hinder this could lead to dangerous situations. By avoiding impeding the navigation, the vessel ensures that it does not interfere with the constrained vessel's ability to navigate safely. This is a fundamental aspect of maintaining safe and effective maritime traffic, as well as demonstrating a courteous approach to navigation among vessels of varying capabilities. Other options may suggest actions that could unintentionally create hazards. For instance, speeding up and passing quickly may increase risk by not allowing sufficient time for safe passage. Changing course frequently could confuse the other vessel and potentially lead to collisions. Waiting for the vessel to pass, while potentially safe, may not always be practical or necessary, depending on the situation. Therefore, the emphasis on avoiding any action that would impede navigation is paramount in ensuring safety at sea.

**2. Which chapter of the COLREGs contains the general rules?**

- A. Part C**
- B. Part A**
- C. Part D**
- D. Part B**

The general rules of the COLREGs are indeed found in Part A. This section establishes the fundamental principles that govern vessel navigation and apply universally to all mariners. These general rules set out critical guidelines, such as the responsibilities of vessels in various situations, whether they are under sail or power, and detail how they should interact to avoid collisions. Part A specifically addresses the duties of all vessels, ensuring that the mariners adhere to safe practices right from the outset of their encounters at sea. This lays the groundwork for the more detailed rules found in the subsequent parts, which cover specific navigation situations, such as crossing, overtaking, and being at anchor, thereby highlighting the importance of understanding Part A as foundational guidance for safe maritime operations.

### 3. What does Rule 11 describe?

- A. The application of the rules in different situations.**
- B. Requirements for safe navigation during the day.**
- C. Special rules for large vessels.**
- D. Prohibited actions for vessels under sail.**

Rule 11 of the COLREGs pertains to the application of the regulations in various situations, particularly focusing on how the rules apply to different types of vessels and their navigational situations. This rule helps clarify the intent of the regulations, ensuring that mariners understand that the rules can vary depending on circumstances such as the presence of other vessels, navigational hazards, and specific types of movements involved. The focus on the application means that it provides a foundational understanding necessary for safe and effective navigation, allowing vessels to correctly interpret which rules are relevant in which contexts. This is critical for preventing collisions at sea, as different scenarios can influence how vessels should operate in relation to one another. The other options, while they may address important aspects of maritime navigation, do not reflect the specific content of Rule 11. The requirements for safe navigation during the day, special rules for large vessels, and prohibited actions for vessels under sail are not encapsulated in Rule 11 but rather addressed in other areas of the COLREGs.

### 4. Which equipment is essential for early warning of risk of collision?

- A. Navigational charts**
- B. A radar system if fitted**
- C. Only visual aids**
- D. Automatic identification systems**

A radar system is crucial for early warning of the risk of collision because it provides the ability to detect other vessels and land obstacles at significant distances, regardless of visibility conditions. Radar operates effectively in situations like fog, heavy rain, or darkness, where visual aids alone may fail to provide adequate warning of nearby dangers. It allows mariners to assess the speed and direction of other vessels, enabling timely decision-making to avoid potential collisions. While navigational charts, visual aids, and automatic identification systems (AIS) are valuable tools for navigation and boat tracking, they each have limitations. Navigational charts provide critical information but do not offer real-time updates about other vessels. Visual aids rely on clear sight conditions, which may not always be present. AIS enhances situational awareness by giving information about other vessels but may not always be available for smaller or non-AIS equipped vessels. Thus, a radar system stands out as the essential equipment for detecting and warning of collision risks efficiently.

## 5. What does Rule 17 entail regarding the actions of vessels?

- A. Prevention of collisions with stationary objects only
- B. Conduct specific maneuvers to avoid collisions**
- C. Informing other vessels of one's positioning
- D. Only applicable to sailing vessels

Rule 17 of the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (COLREGs) specifically addresses the conduct of vessels to avoid collisions. This rule outlines the actions required when vessels are in a situation where collision risk exists, emphasizing the responsibility to take appropriate action to steer clear of potentially dangerous situations. The essence of Rule 17 is that vessels must maneuver in a way that promotes safe navigation and minimizes collision risk. This means that when a vessel is approaching another vessel, it must take precautionary measures, such as altering course or speed, to ensure safe passage. Thus, conduct specific maneuvers to avoid collisions is integral to navigating safely at sea. The other options relating to the prevention of collisions with stationary objects, informing other vessels of one's positioning, or limiting the applicability of the rule to only sailing vessels do not encompass the broader requirement of vessels to actively navigate and adjust their courses to prevent collisions effectively. Rule 17 applies universally to all vessels, reinforcing the shared responsibility to navigate safely in the presence of other vessels.

## 6. What characterizes the majority of vessel interactions as defined by the regulations?

- A. Each vessel can act as they wish
- B. Vessels must adhere to a set of right-of-way principles**
- C. Every vessel is considered equally responsible
- D. Only larger vessels have the right-of-way

Vessel interactions are largely governed by a set of right-of-way principles outlined in the COLREGs. These principles help to establish clear guidelines on how vessels should operate in relation to one another to prevent collisions. The regulations categorize vessels into different types based on their capabilities, size, and purpose, determining which vessels have the right-of-way in various circumstances. For instance, certain vessels, like power-driven vessels under sail, are required to give way to sailing vessels that are under sail only. Additionally, vessels approaching head-on, crossing paths, or overtaking have specific rules that dictate which vessel must yield. These established rules promote safe navigation and help to ensure that all maritime operators are aware of their responsibilities when interacting with others on the water. The correct answer emphasizes that adherence to these right-of-way principles is fundamental in navigating safely and avoiding collisions at sea. It underscores the importance of regulatory compliance in maritime operations.

**7. Which term refers to vessels employed for essential maneuvers that restrict their ability to navigate?**

- A. NUC (Not Under Command)**
- B. RAM (Restricted Ability to Maneuver)**
- C. Sailing vessels**
- D. Fishing vessels only**

The correct term that refers to vessels employed for essential maneuvers that restrict their ability to navigate is "Restricted Ability to Maneuver," commonly abbreviated as RAM. This classification is specifically designed to encompass a variety of situations where a vessel's maneuverability is compromised due to specific operations, such as dredging, underwater work, or towing. When a vessel is defined under this term, it is recognized under the COLREGs as having limitations that could affect its ability to change course or speed, which necessitates greater caution from other vessels in the vicinity. Understanding this classification is vital for navigators to ensure safe passage and to avoid collisions, as it requires the surrounding vessels to give way under Article 18 of the COLREGs. In contrast, "Not Under Command," pertains to vessels that cannot maneuver due to circumstances such as equipment failure or crew incapacitation, while "Sailing vessels" and "Fishing vessels only" do not inherently imply restricted ability to maneuver unless they are engaged in specific activities that affect their navigation. Thus, RAM is the most precise term that captures the essence of the question.

**8. What do the rules of the COLREGs help vessels achieve at sea?**

- A. Safe navigation and collision avoidance**
- B. Efficient trading routes**
- C. Faster transit times**
- D. Reduced fuel consumption**

The rules of the COLREGs (International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea) primarily focus on promoting safe navigation and preventing collisions between vessels. These regulations establish a framework for mariners to follow, detailing responsibilities and actions to take when encountering other vessels. By providing clear guidelines on right-of-way, signaling, and maneuvering, the COLREGs help to create predictability in the behavior of vessels, which is crucial for maintaining safety on the water. While the other options may have benefits associated with maritime operations—such as efficiency in trading routes, speed, and fuel economy—they are not the main goal of the COLREGs. The primary purpose is to ensure safety on the seas, preventing accidents and protecting lives and property. In summary, option A directly aligns with the main objectives of the COLREGs, making it the correct answer.

**9. What light configuration should a power-driven vessel exhibit when anchored?**

- A. An all-round white light**
- B. Two red lights vertically**
- C. One green and one white light**
- D. A white light at the bow and a red light at the stern**

A power-driven vessel that is anchored is required to exhibit an all-round white light. This specific light configuration serves a crucial purpose in ensuring the vessel's visibility to other mariners, particularly during nighttime or in conditions of reduced visibility. The all-round white light must be shown from where it can be seen all around, helping other vessels to determine the position and status of the anchored vessel. The other options provided do not align with the requirements set forth in the COLREGs. For example, two red lights vertically indicate a vessel that is constrained by its draft, not one that is simply anchored. Similarly, a combination of a green and a white light would be inappropriate, as the green light signifies a sailing vessel's starboard side while under way, not a vessel at anchor. Finally, having a white light at the bow and a red light at the stern does not fulfill the standard for an anchored vessel, as it does not provide the all-round visibility needed for safety. Thus, the all-round white light configuration is essential for alerting nearby vessels to the stationary status of the power-driven vessel.

**10. Which section of the COLREGs covers the rules for 'Conduct of Vessels in Sight of One Another'?**

- A. Part A**
- B. Part B Section 1**
- C. Part B Section 2**
- D. Part C**

The rules concerning the "Conduct of Vessels in Sight of One Another" are detailed in Part B Section 2 of the COLREGs. This section lays out the specific guidelines that govern how vessels are to navigate when they can see each other, ensuring that appropriate measures are taken to prevent collisions. Part B Section 1 primarily focuses on the conduct of vessels in restricted visibility, which does not pertain specifically to situations where vessels are sighting one another. Part A deals with general rules and definitions but does not provide the specific conduct requirements for vessels in sight. Part C contains rules applicable to vessels engaged in different operations, such as fishing or pilot vessels, and thus does not address the sailing conduct in sight of one another. Therefore, Part B Section 2 is the relevant section that delineates how vessels should behave and react when they are within sight, emphasizing the importance of vigilance and established navigation protocols to avoid collision.

# Next Steps

**Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.**

**As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.**

**If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at [hello@examzify.com](mailto:hello@examzify.com).**

**Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:**

**<https://coloregsirpcs.examzify.com>**

**We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!**

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