



The Rule is followed by an explanation

Rule 2 Responsibilities

Responsibility

- (a) Nothing in these rules shall exonerate any vessel, or the owner, master or crew thereof, from the consequences of any neglect to comply with these rules or of the neglect of any precautions which may be required by the ordinary practice of seamen, or by the special circumstances of the case.
- (b) In construing and complying with these rules due regard shall be had to all dangers of navigation and collision and to any special circumstances, including the limitations of the vessels involved, which may make a departure from these rules necessary to avoid immediate danger.

Rule 2 Explanation

Dangers of navigation and collision.

A departure from the Rules may be required due to dangers of navigation or to dangers of collision. For instance, a power-driven vessel meeting another power-driven vessel end on may be unable to alter her course to starboard, as directed by Rule 14, owing to the presence of shallow water close by to starboard or to the fact that a third vessel is overtaking her on her starboard side.

Special circumstances and immediate danger.

This Rule does not give any vessel the right to take action contrary to the Regulations whenever it is considered to be advantageous to do so. A departure is only permitted when there are special circumstances and there is immediate danger. Both conditions must apply. The departure must be of such a nature as to avoid the danger which threatens.

Duty to depart if necessary.

If a departure from the Rules is necessary to avoid immediate danger a vessel would not only be justified in departing from them but may be expected to do so.

Remember it is your responsibility is not only to follow the COLREGs – you are also responsible for doing everything necessary to avoid the risk of collision and the dangers of navigation.





Rule 2(a) requires you to follow both the rules and ‘the ordinary practice of seamen’. This means that you must always use common sense.

Rule 2(b) Only allows you to depart from the rules if that is the only way to avoid an immediate danger. But, in almost every situation, it is the proper application of the rules that will keep you out of that danger.

Rule 2(b) is never a justification for not following the rules properly.

Rule 2 allows no excuses.

Always question yourself:

How does Rule 2 apply to this situation?

What does Rule 2 require me to do?

