

Be bright, be safe at night

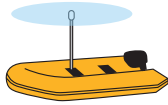


Powered vessels underway

Up to 7m long

If the vessel's maximum speed is 7 knots, it must have an all round white light, and, if possible, separate and/or combined sidelights.

If the vessel can travel at a speed faster than 7 knots, the same rules as for powered vessels up to 12m long apply.



Up to 12m long

Must have separate or combined sidelights with either:

- A masthead light and a sternlight
- An all round white light.

The masthead or all round white light must be a minimum of 1m above the sidelights.



Between 12 and 50m long

Must have a masthead light a minimum of 2.5m above the gunwale and either:

- Separate sidelights and a sternlight
- Combined sidelights and a sternlight.

Combined sidelights must be a minimum of 1m below the masthead light.



Sailing vessels underway

Sailing vessels using an engine must follow the same rules as powered vessels.

Up to 7m long

Must display sidelights and a sternlight, if possible.

If it's not possible to attach lights to the vessel – for example, on a small dinghy, use your torch.

Shining your torch on your sails or deck, can help other vessels see you, and could help prevent a collision.



Between 7 to 20m long

Must display either:

- A combined lantern (with sidelights and a sternlight) at or near the top of the mast.
- Separate sidelights and a sternlight.



NOTE: It's recommended that you do not use a combined (tricoloured) lantern where there are lots of lights on the shore, eg on Sydney Harbour. In these areas, use deck level sidelights and sternlight to make your vessel more visible.

Over 20m long

Must display sidelights and a sternlight.

Must not carry a combined lantern.



Optional lights

A sailing vessel of any length with sidelights and a sternlight (but not a combined lantern) may also carry 2 all round lights in a vertical line at or near the top of the mast. The upper light should be red and the lower light should be green.



Rowing/Paddle vessels

Paddlecraft and rowing vessels must carry a torch or lantern displaying a white light. The light must be ready to display in time to prevent a collision.

This includes rowing shells and rowing boats, kayaks, canoes and surf skis, and powerboats and sailing boats being rowed.

If you're using a paddlecraft, it's recommended that you wear a head torch.

Over 4m long

It's recommended that paddlecraft and rowing vessels over 4m long also display:

- Two all round white lights, one at each end of the vessel.

The lights can be continuous or a combination of continuous and flashing.

These recommended additional lights are set out in the 'Code of Conduct for Rowing' at nsw.gov.au/boating-and-marine

Lights to display at anchor

When at anchor, all vessels up to 50m long must display an all round white light in a place where it can best be seen.

When at anchor in a busy area, keep a proper lookout and display other lights, such as deck lights, or cabin lights – to make sure you're seen.



Be aware that if your vessel displays sidelights when underway, you must switch those lights off when your vessel is at anchor.

NOTE: There are many other combinations of lights used on vessels. The lights shown relate to the activity the vessel is engaged in, ie fishing, dredging, not under command.

A simple rule of thumb for a small power boat is to stay clear of any vessels exhibiting additional lights.

**You're the skipper
You're responsible!**

For more information:
nsw.gov.au/boating-and-marine
13 12 36

Be bright – be safe at night

The navigation lights you display on your vessel, help keep everyone safe on the water. Vessels that operate from sunset to sunrise, whether at anchor or underway, must carry and exhibit the correct lights.

Boating at night – go slow, be seen, keep a lookout and be bright.



Go slow

When fog, glare, smoke or darkness restrict your visibility, you must slow down to a safe speed.

A safe speed is one at which you can stop and avoid a collision, considering the circumstances and conditions at the time.

Remember – the faster you go, the faster you approach hazards. Hitting a hazard at speed can have a greater impact on you, your passengers and your boat.

Be seen

You may be able to see others, but can they see you? At night, every type of craft on the water needs lights in order to be seen.

Whether you are paddling, rowing, sailing or motoring, everyone needs to be able to recognise where you are and what you are doing.

Make sure you have the right lights for your vessel and that they work properly. Use them as soon as the sun goes down or when visibility is poor.

Your lights should be mounted in a position that gives you optimum night vision and allows others to see you from every direction.

Carry a working waterproof floating torch. It may help others see you if you shine your torch on your sails or superstructure. Make sure you don’t adversely affect your night vision, or the vision of other boat skippers.

If you anchor at night, show an all round white light where it can best be seen.

Remember – penalties apply for not showing appropriate lights when required.

Keep a lookout

As the skipper, you must keep a proper lookout - by sight and hearing - at all times. This helps you judge your situation and the risk of collision.

If it is a large ship, the lights might be high and you may not realise that you are looking at the sides of a dark hull.

If you have the slightest doubt, stop, ensure you are lit and look all around, including behind you.

Lookout at night

- Is that a vessel(s)?
- How big is it?
- What direction is it travelling?
- How fast is it moving?
- How far away is it?
- Does it have priority?
- What is our relative position?

Know your waterway

Navigation marks help you safely navigate a waterway. They show you how to travel through a channel or enter a port, and how to avoid hazards.

Each type of mark has a unique combination of colour, shape, topmark and light. Use these navigation marks in combination with your maps and charts and local knowledge of the area to navigate safely.

For more information on the navigation marks, lights and sounds, visit [nsw.gov.au](https://www.nsw.gov.au/boating-and-marine) or [nsw.gov.au/boating-and-marine](https://www.nsw.gov.au/boating-and-marine)



Navigation lights

The navigation lights you display on your vessel, show what size and type of vessel you’re in, whether you’re at anchor or underway, and your direction of travel.

All round white light:

A white light displaying an unbroken light over an arc of the horizon of 360 degrees. This light should not be obstructed by any part of the vessel or person. Minimum range of visibility: 2nm.

Masthead light:

A white light placed over the centreline (bow to stern) of a vessel, displaying an unbroken light over an arc of the horizon of 225 degrees. It is fixed to display from anywhere ahead, to just behind the beam of the vessel.

Minimum range of visibility:

- Vessels up to 12m long: 2nm
- Vessels between 12 and 20m long: 3nm.

Sidelights: Green light on the starboard (right) side, and a red light on the port (left) side of a vessel. Each displays an unbroken light over an arc of the horizon of 112.5 degrees. Each is fixed to display from ahead, to just behind the beam of the vessel on its respective side.

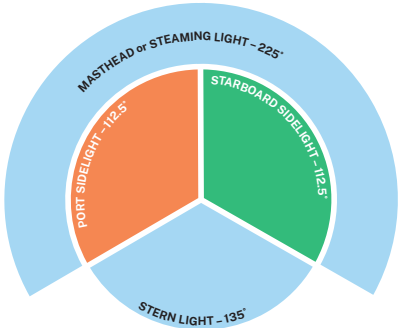
On vessels up to 20m long, the sidelights may be combined in one light unit, carried on the centreline (bow to stern) of the vessel.

Minimum range of visibility:

- Vessels up to 12m long: 1nm
- Vessels between 12 and 20m long: 2nm.

Sternlight: A white light placed near the stern, displaying an unbroken light over an arc of the horizon of 135 degrees. It is fixed to display from behind the vessel.

Minimum range of visibility: 2nm.



Placement of lights



Navigation lights should be installed correctly, so they display the appropriate arc of light and the minimum range of visibility. They should not be obscured by the vessel’s superstructure – such as the cabin – or occupants, or interfered with by deck lights. This reduces the vessel’s visibility and is dangerous.

It’s recommended that lights are fitted by the vessel’s manufacturer, or an authorised person. Smaller vessels have a number of options, including bracketed or combination suction-capped lights. These are available from marine dealers.

Masthead

The masthead and/or all round white light must be fitted (if practical) on the centreline (bow to stern) of the vessel.