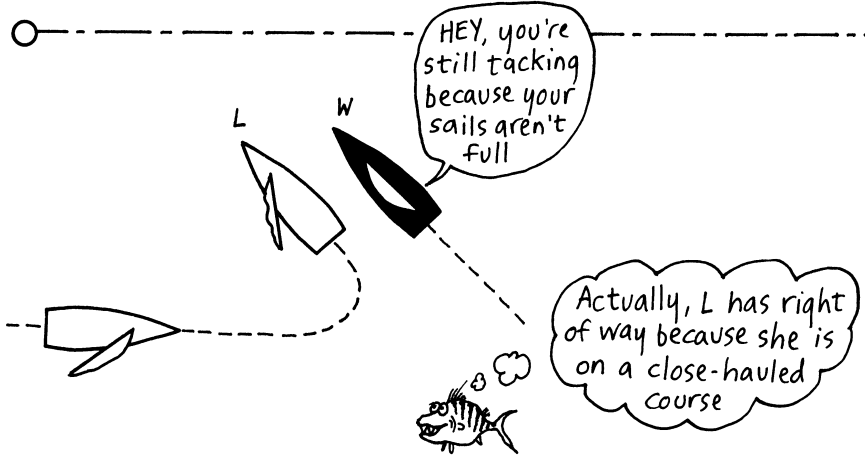


RULE 13 - WHILE TACKING

After a boat passes head to wind, she shall *keep clear* of other boats until she is on a close-hauled course. During that time rules 10, 11 and 12 do not apply. If two boats are subject to this rule at the same time, the one on the other's port side or the one astern shall *keep clear*.

Remember that under the definition *Tack*, *Starboard* or *Port*, you are always



on one *tack* or the other. So if you are on *starboard tack* and turn your boat towards the wind, the moment your boat passes head to wind you are instantly on *port tack*.

Rule 13 provides a transitional rule that applies when a boat is changing *tacks* by tacking. “Tacking” is the maneuver by which a boat changes *tacks* with the bow passing head to wind. Generally that involves an approximately 90 degree turn from a close-hauled course on one *tack* to a close-hauled course on the other *tack*.

Rule 13 simply says that while you are tacking, you must *keep clear* of other boats from the moment you pass head to wind until you are on a close-hauled course (on *either tack*). A “close-hauled course” is the course a boat will sail when racing upwind and sailing as close to the wind as she can. Notice that to be on a close-hauled “course,” the sails don’t need to be full nor does the boat need any headway (see Case 17). Note that once you pass head to wind, rule 13 turns off rules 10, 11 and 12. Therefore, after you pass head to wind and before you’re on a close-hauled course, if another boat (that is not also subject to rule 13) hits you or has to change her course to avoid you, you have not *kept clear* and have broken rule 13.

In the rare instance where two boats are tacking near each other and both are past head to wind but neither is close-hauled yet, the one on the other’s port side must *keep clear*; or put another way, the boat on the right has the right of way. The same applies if the boats are not *overlapped*; the boat behind must *keep clear*.

“Gybing” is the maneuver by which a boat changes *tacks* with the bow turning away from the wind. For instance, when sailing downwind on *port tack*, the moment the foot of your mainsail crosses the centerline and can stay on the new side with no human force applied, you are on *starboard tack* (see the definition *Leeward* and *Windward* for a complete discussion on determining a boat’s *tack* when sailing directly downwind or by the lee). Because the act of “gybing” is generally so momentary, there is no special transitional rule for “gybing” except in match racing (see Appendix C, rule C2.6).



“When I tack or gybe into a right-of-way position, do I have to give other boats room to keep clear of me?”

Absolutely yes. For a full explanation of the obligations of boats that acquire right of way, see the discussion of rule 15 (Acquiring Right of Way).



“Will you be discussing how the rules work in Slam Dunks?”

You bet. That explanation occurs at the end of the discussion of rule 17 (On the Same Tack; Proper Course).