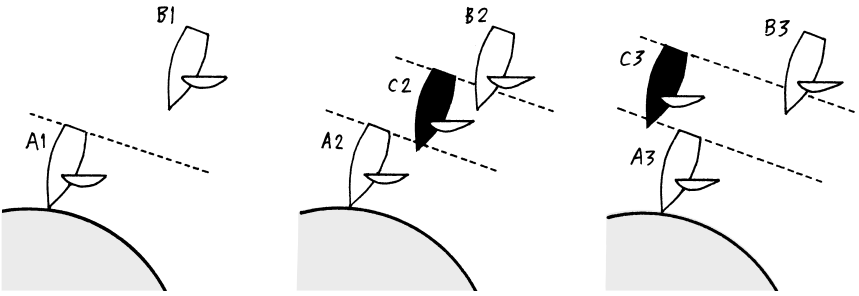


CLEAR ASTERN AND CLEAR AHEAD; OVERLAP

One boat is *clear astern* of another when her hull and equipment in normal position are behind a line abeam from the aftermost point of the other boat's hull and equipment in normal position. The other boat is *clear ahead*. They *overlap* when neither is *clear astern*. However, they also *overlap* when a boat between them *overlaps* both. These terms always apply to boats on the same *tack*. They apply to boats on opposite *tacks* only when rule 18 applies between them or when both boats are sailing more than ninety degrees from the true wind.



In position 1, A and B are not overlapped; A is clear ahead and B is clear astern.

In position 2, C is in between A and B and overlapped with both of them; therefore B is overlapped with A.

In position 3, C is not in between A and B; therefore B is overlapped with C, C is overlapped with A, and A and B are not overlapped.

Putting aside for a moment what *tack* the boats are on, let's look at two boats sailing near each other. To figure out if they are *overlapped*, take one of the boats and draw a line down her centerline. Then find the aftermost point of her hull or equipment in **normal position**. Draw another line perpendicular to the centerline and through the aftermost point. If the other boat's hull and equipment in **normal position** are completely behind that line, she is "*clear astern*" and the other boat is "*clear ahead*." If she is across that line at all, then neither boat is *clear astern* of the other; therefore they are "*overlapped*."

Now let's say one of the boats was *clear ahead* of the other boat by five feet. Put a third boat in between the two. If the boat that was *clear astern* now *overlaps* this middle boat and the middle boat *overlaps* the boat that was *clear ahead*, the definition says that now each boat is *overlapped* with each other including the boats that were originally *clear astern* and *clear ahead* of each other.

One point worth discussing is determining "the aftermost point of the hull and equipment in normal position." It literally means the point on the boat that is the farthest aft; i.e., the point that would hit a wall first if the boat were backed into one.

Notice also the term "normal position." "Normal position" is generally interpreted as the position where your equipment is normally located in the existing wind and sea conditions. If your auxiliary engine is tilted up, then in all likelihood the propeller is the aftermost point; and if you've been sailing the race with it up, you can't come into a *mark* and quickly swing the engine down just to break an *overlap* by making your boat shorter.

Finally, notice that the terms "clear astern," "clear ahead" and "overlap" do not apply to boats on opposite *tacks* unless either rule 18 (Mark-Room) applies between them (which is when one of the boats is in the *zone* at a *mark*), or unless both of the boats are sailing below a beam reach (90 degrees to the true wind), as they would be doing on a downwind leg. So two boats side by side on opposite *tacks* inside the *zone* at a leeward *mark* are considered to be *overlapped*.