

Summary of simplifications in the 2022 Test Rule 18

This is a summary of the simplifications in the **2022 Test Rule 18**. This summary represents the essence of the simplifications; it does not represent a thorough analysis of the rules.

- 1) “Mark-room” is now a boat’s “proper course” to and around or past the mark, whether the boat is a keep-clear boat or a right-of-way boat. No more distinction between a “seamanlike” and a “tactical” rounding. See the definition Mark-Room.
- 2) Now a right-of-way boat that must gybe in order to sail her proper course at a leeward mark cannot sail farther from the mark than her proper course, even when the mark is a gate mark. See rule 18.4.

The result of simplifications 1 and 2 is that at a leeward mark when two or more boats are overlapped, an inside boat entitled to mark-room can sail her proper course to and around or past the mark without risk of penalty, whether she is the keep-clear boat or the right-of-way boat, whether the mark is a single mark or a gate mark, and whether or not rule 17 applies.

This removes all the “it depends” from the question: “how much room can I take, or how much room do I have to give, at a leeward mark?” The answer now is: an inside boat can sail her proper course, and an outside boat has to give an inside boat room to sail her proper course.

- 3) Two complex rules in 18.2 have been removed, specifically rules 18.2(c)(2) and 18.2(f).
- 4) New rule 18.2(a) addresses the most common situations as boats approach a mark (boats are either overlapped or they are not when the first of two boats reaches the zone). The format is simpler as well.
- 5) Rule 18.3 has a new format that should make it easier to read and understand.
- 6) New rule 18.1(b) states a clear cut-off for when rule 18 no longer applies. Essentially, rule 18 turns off when the boat entitled to mark-room has left the mark astern and is on a course to begin sailing the next leg, which is a clear and quantifiable moment that sailors can generally see.
- 7) The vague phrase “from the time boats are approaching them to *start* until they have passed them” has been removed from the preamble to Part 2, Section C. Now windward boats are simply never entitled to room to pass to leeward of a race committee vessel when it is a starting mark.
- 8) Between the new definition Mark-Room, the preamble to Section C and rule 18, the **2022 Test Rule 18** has removed 108 words from the rule book; a 20% reduction of words in those three rules.