

Rule 18 - Mark Room

Is the rule that sea-lawyers love:

*Two rules (5 lines) in “Simplified Sailing Rules for R/C Sailboats”

*Two pages in the “Racing Rules of Sailing” book

*Ten pages in the AMYA Rules Tutorial

*Dozens of pages in the column “Let’s Race with the Rules” in “Model Yachting”

*Hundreds of pages in the International Sailing Federation “Case Book – Interpretation of the Racing Rules of Sailing”

At Marks and Obstructions

These rules apply to all marks except the starting marks, or when boats are on opposite tacks on a beat to windward.

Rule 18.2 – Inside the zone

The Zone is an area within four boat lengths of a mark.

Mark Room is room to sail to the mark, round it, and sail to the next mark.

Rights to Mark Room are frozen when the first of the two boats enter the zone.

A boat has the right to mark room if:

At that time she was overlapped inside the other boat

Or at that time she was clear ahead of the other boat.

Rule 18.3 – Tacking near a Mark

Don't tack in the zone if you will cause another boat to maneuver to avoid you.

Ask for Mark Room

It is a good idea (but not required) to ask for mark room as you enter the zone if you think you qualify and might need it.

Don't Ask For Mark Room

*At the start line

*At the windward mark if you are on port and the other boat is on starboard (Rule 10 applies)

*If you did not qualify for it as the first boat (you or the other one) entered the zone, i. e.:

a. you were not overlapped and inside, or

b. you were not clear ahead.

*After you have tacked in the zone

Give Mark Room

*When you are in doubt about whether it is required. (It will cost you less than a penalty turn.)

*Even when it is not required, then protest (If you can remember the relative positions 4 boat lengths back – see “Ask” above.)

