



Sound Signals I: Manoeuvring & Warning

The whistle signals you give in sight of one another — altering course, overtaking in a narrow channel, blind bends, and the doubt signal that wins marks.

R · 32 Definitions

- Short blast = about **1 second**
- Prolonged blast = **4 to 6 seconds**
- "Whistle" = any appliance making the prescribed blasts

R · 33 Equipment carried

- 12 m+: whistle and bell; 100 m+: also a gong
- <12 m: some other efficient sound signal if no whistle/bell
- Gong tone must not be confused with the bell

R · 34a Altering course

- **One short** = "I am altering to starboard"
- **Two short** = "I am altering to port"
- **Three short** = "I am operating astern propulsion"

R · 34b Matching light signals

- May supplement the whistle with an all-round **white** light
- 1 / 2 / 3 flashes mirror the manoeuvring blasts
- Flash ~1 s, gap ~1 s, 10 s+ between signals

R · 34c Overtaking in a channel

- **Two prolonged + one short** = "I intend to pass your starboard"
- **Two prolonged + two short** = "I intend to pass your port"
- Overtaken vessel agrees: **prolonged-short-prolonged-short**

R · 34d Doubt / wake-up

- In doubt of the other's intention or action
- Sound **at least five short** and rapid blasts
- May back it with five+ rapid flashes of an all-round white

R · 34e Blind bend

- Nearing a bend where vessels may be hidden
- Sound **one prolonged** blast
- Answered by **one prolonged** from a vessel approaching

R · 34f Multiple whistles

- Whistles >100 m apart: use **one whistle only**
- Avoids a confusing double signal
- Detailed siting is in **Annex III**

TRAP Easy marks to lose

- These apply **in sight** — fog uses Rule 35
- One/two short = an **action now**, not intention (except overtaking)
- Five+ short = **doubt**, not "agreed" or "danger"

ORAL What the examiner wants

- "One short — starboard; two — port; three — going astern"
- "Five or more — I don't understand your intentions"
- Overtaking & bend signals use **prolonged** blasts — say so

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