

On watch duties

- ☐ Helm/Steer to stay on the intended course and proceed at a safe speed as per [ColRegs](#)
- ☐ Hand steer in areas of high traffic density, in conditions of restricted visibility and in all hazardous navigational situations
- ☐ At sufficient frequent intervals during the watch check the vessel's position, course and speed using all appropriate navigational aids (e.g. compass, gps / chart plotter, echosounder, visual and radar fixes). Position needs to be fixed often enough as to not come into danger between fixes. This depends on the boat speed, proximity to navigational hazard, weather conditions, and tidal set experienced
- ☐ Take fixes at frequent intervals during coastal passage. These fixes shall be carried out by more than one method whenever circumstances allow. The largest scale chart on board, suitable for the area and corrected with the latest available information shall be used
- ☐ Monitor performance of the autopilot (visual check), and radar (using Performance Monitor if not automatic)
- ☐ Keep proper lookout at all times:
 - frequently scan the entire horizon
 - closely observe movement and bearings of all approaching vessels to avoid collision
 - identify ships and shore lights
 - make frequent Radar and AIS checks especially in areas of high traffic density and restricted visibility
- ☐ Maintain a continuous radio watch (GMDSS), e.g. write down any distress and safety/weather info
- ☐ Exhibit navigation lights from sunset to sunrise and during restricted visibility
- ☐ Monitor changes in the weather and trim sails / make sail changes in response to actual and expected wind changes
- ☐ Navigate to avoid any hazards
- ☐ Stay within safety margins, e.g. clearing and safe passing distance, under keel clearance, safety depth and contour
- ☐ Make log entry in the deck logbook every hour (or whatever agreed) and record any activities relating to the navigation of the vessel, e.g. course alteration, sail change etc.
- ☐ Plot a position on the chart as per skipper's instructions
- ☐ Hand steer from time to time in varying sea conditions in order to gain a "feel" of how the vessel responds
- ☐ Prepare meals and clean the boat as per the watch rota
- ☐ Do the [Deck walk](#) as per the watch rota and look around the deck frequently for chafe and wear
- ☐ Make appropriate sound signals in restricted visibility
- ☐ Call the skipper if in any doubt about any situation in sufficient time
- ☐ Have no hesitation in using engine in case of immediate safety need (e.g. collision avoidance, stranding)
- ☐ Follow [Master's Sanding and Night Orders](#), don't be afraid to call the skipper early and often

Watchkeeping rules and handovers

- ☐ Keep the watch on deck and remain alert by moving around frequently
- ☐ In no circumstances leave the deck until properly relieved, except when doing single watches where coming below deck is essential for navigation or making logbook entrances. In any case the time below the deck should be minimized as much as possible and sole lookout avoided if possible during periods of darkness or restricted visibility
- ☐ Continue to be responsible for the safe navigation of the vessel despite the presence of the skipper on deck until informed specifically that the skipper assumed the con and this is mutually understood and recorded in the logbook
- ☐ Not undertake any other duties that would interfere or compromise the keeping of a safe navigational watch
- ☐ Ensure there are no distractions caused by the use of personal mobile phones, computers, etc
- ☐ Come on deck about 5 minutes before the changeover. The relieving watch must not take over the watch until their vision is fully adjusted to the ambient light conditions. Familiarize yourself with current settings (e.g. radar, ENC).
- ☐ If manoeuvre, course alteration or other action to avoid a hazard is taking place at the moment of the watch change, handover should be deferred until the action is safely completed
- ☐ Make detailed handover to the next watch:
 - Current situation including a position, course, weather and sail changes, tides, vessels in vicinity:
Useful mnemonic: "*What Would Trevor Do*" meaning to handover info on *Weather, Wind, Traffic, Direction* (i.e. compass course, visual indicator of land features)
 - Expected track and draught of the vessel
 - Conditions and hazards likely to be encountered, including predicted tides, currents, and weather
 - Any trends that might be useful to the next watch
 - Any special instructions from the skipper (Night Orders)
- ☐ Respect the off-watch: keep the boat sailing well and eliminate unnecessary noises
- ☐ Agree on who is responsible for waking the next watch. Will the current watch wake the off-watch crew, or will the off-watch set alarms and come on deck without assistance
- ☐ Keep the deck free of clutter by frequently tidying up lines and making sure everything is in order
- ☐ The off-watch should rest as much as possible to avoid fatigue, especially on longer passages
- ☐ The off-watch that was the last on-watch should help the current on-watch if being called
- ☐ No matter how you feel try to always show up for meals and maintain watches to keep the morale and health (feeling good is a collective responsibility)
- ☐ Always clip on at night, when going to the bow and when you are alone on deck
- ☐ Drink water regularly throughout the watch to avoid dehydration
- ☐ Keep the kitchen spotless by the end of the watch
- ☐ Make hot water available and replenish the snacks before the off-watch crew gets out of bed (make a note of what everyone likes to drink, eg. black tea with 2 teaspoons etc.)
- ☐ Wear the right gear for the conditions

Reference: [MGN 315](#)