

TACK, STARBOARD OR PORT

A boat is on the *tack, starboard* or *port*, corresponding to her *windward* side.

When *racing*, you are **always** on either *starboard* or *port tack*, even when you are in the act of tacking or gybing. Your *tack* (*starboard* or *port*) is determined by your *windward* side; i.e., if your port side is your *windward* side, you are on *port tack*. For discussion on how to determine your *windward* side, see the definition *Leeward* and *Windward*.

Let's look at a boat (P) tacking from *port tack* to *starboard tack*. At some point during her tack, P will pass head to wind. At the moment she passes head to wind her starboard side becomes her *windward* side; therefore she is instantly on *starboard tack*. However, rule 13 (While Tacking) requires her to *keep clear* of other boats until she is on a close-hauled course; and rule 15 (Acquiring Right of Way) requires her to initially give other boats *room* to *keep clear* once she gets the right of way.