

Nautical sound signals



Below is a handy guide to the sound signals used in boating.

Using sound signals made up of long and short blasts are a great way for ships to communicate with each other without any language or visual barriers. Here's what they look like:

	Turning to starboard (right turn)
	Turning to port (left turn)
	My engines are in reverse (look out behind)
	What are you doing (get out of the way)
	Approaching bend or obstruction (here I come)
In fog	
	In fog, every two minutes (look out)
	In fog, vessel stopped (don't bump into me, I am stopped)
	Not under command (I am not able to manuvre)
	Ring bell or gong at minute intervals
	A vessel less than 100 metres in length at anchor (look out, I am a small vessel, stopped here)
	At anchor, restricted visibility (watch out, I am parked here)
	Last vessel in tow (I am being towed)
Overtaking	
	I intend to overtake to your starboard side (overtaking on your right)
	I intend to overtake to your port side (overtaking on your left)
	I agree (you can overtake)
Key	
	Short blast (1 second)
	Long blast (5 – 6 seconds)