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| Yachting Race Signals |  |

The meanings for commonly used flag signals in sailing racing are given below. It should be noted that although most of the signals are defined in the ISAF Racing Rules these can be changed by the sailing instructions or in some cases must be defined by the sailing instructions to be effective.

When a flag signal is displayed over a class flag, the signal applies only to that class. Using numeral flags for class flags can cause some ambiguity with postponement signals and should be clarified in the sailing instructions.

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| **POSTPONEMENT SIGNALS** | | | |
| **Flag signal** | **Sound signal when displayed** | **Sound signal when removed** | **Meaning** |
| AP |  |  | Races not started are postponed. |
| AP 1 |  |  | Races not started are postponed one hour |
| AP 2 |  |  | Races not started are postponed two hours |
| AP 3 |  |  | Races not started are postponed three hours |
| AP 4 |  |  | Races not started are postponed four hours |
| AP 5 |  |  | Races not started are postponed five hours |
| AP 6 |  |  | Races not started are postponed six hours |
| AP A |  |  | Races not started are postponed. No more racing today. |
| AP H |  |  | Races not started are postponed. Further signals ashore. |
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| **STARTING SIGNALS** | | | |
| STARTING SIGNALS - SYSTEM 1 1997-2000 RULES | | | |
| **Flag signal** | **Sound signal when displayed** | **Sound signal when removed** | **Meaning** |
| CLASS FLAG |  |  | Warning signal (10 minutes to start) |
| P |  |  | Preparatory signal (5 minutes to start) |
| FLAGS REMOVED |  |  | Start |
| STARTING SIGNALS - SYSTEM 2 1997-2000 RULES | | | |
|  |  |  | Warning signal displayed 10 minutes to start. Removed 1 minute before preparatory signal. |
|  |  |  | Preparatory signal displayed 5 minutes to start. Removed 1 minute before start. Class flag should be displayed before or with the preparatory signal. |
|  |  |  | Start |
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| STARTING SIGNALS - NEW 2001 RULES SYSTEM | | | |
| CLASS FLAG |  |  | Warning signal, 5 minutes to start (or as defined in the sailing instructions) |
| or or or |  | (long sound signal) | Preparatory signal, 4 minutes to start. Flag P or if a starting penalty applies I, Z, Black flag or I over Z is used. Removed 1 minute before start. (See below for meanings of the Preparatory flags) |
| CLASS FLAG REMOVED |  |  | Start |
| PREPARATORY FLAGS - STARTING PENALTIES | | | |
| P |  |  | Normal preparatory signal; no starting penalties are in effect. A boat over the line at the start you can return through the line or round an ends. Remember that a boat returning must keep clear of boats not returning. |
| I |  |  | The Round-an-End Rule 30.1 will be in effect. A boat over the line during the minute before the start must sail to the pre-start side of the line around either end before starting. |
| Z |  |  | The 20% Penalty Rule 30.2 will be in effect. A boat within the triangle formed by the ends of the line and the first mark during the minute before the start will receive a 20% scoring penalty as specified in Rule 44.3(c). (20% of the number entered or as dictated by the sailing instructions) |
| Black |  |  | The Black Flag Rule 30.3 will be in effect. A boat within the triangle formed by the ends of the line and the first mark during the minute before the start will be disqualified. |
| and |  |  | Both the Round-an-End Rule and the 20% Penalty Rule will be in effect during the minute before the start. |
| RECALL SIGNALS | | | |
| X |  |  | Individual recall. (The sound signal is in addition to the start sound signal) The X flag is displayed until the earliest of the following: all boats over the line have returned correctly, 4 minutes from the start or until one minute before the next start. |
| 1st Substitute |  |  | General recall. Signalled when there unidentified boats over the line or subject to one of the starting penalties, or there has been an error in the starting procedure. The new warning signal for the recalled class will be made 1 minute after the 1st substitute is removed. (The two sound signals when the first substitute is displayed are in addition to the start sound signal) |
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| **ABANDONMENT SIGNALS** | | | |
| **Flag signal** | **Sound signal when displayed** | **Sound signal when removed** | **Meaning** |
| N |  |  | All races are abandoned. Return to the starting area. The first warning signal will be made 1 minute after N is removed. |
| N H |  |  | All races are abandoned. Further signals will be made ashore. |
| N A |  |  | All races are abandoned. No more racing today. |
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| **OTHER SIGNALS** | | | |
| **Flag signal** | **Sound signal when displayed** | **Sound signal when removed** | **Meaning** |
| L |  |  | When displayed afloat means: Come within hail or follow this boat.  When displayed ashore means: A notice to competitors has been posted. |
| Y |  |  | Wear personal buoyancy. |
| M | **:** |  | The object displaying this signal replaces a missing mark |
| C | **:** |  | When displayed at a rounding mark, the position of the next mark has been changed. If the direction to the mark has changed it shall be indicated by displaying the new compass bearing or a green triangular flag (or board) for a change to starboard or a red rectangular flag (or board) for a change to port. If the length of the leg has changed then this shall be signalled by displaying a "-" if the leg will shorter or a "+" if the leg will be longer. Repeated sound signals should be made to draw attention to the signal. (see RR33) |
| B |  |  | When fully hoisted means: Protest time has begun. When half hoisted means less than 30 minutes of protest time left. When removed means protest time has ended. (If the B flag is used it must be specified in the sailing instructions) |
| Blue |  |  | When displayed at the finishing line means: The race committee boat is in position at the finishing line. |
| S |  |  | The course has been shortened.  When displayed at a rounding mark the finish is between the nearby mark and the mast displaying the S flag.  When displayed at a line that boats are required to cross at the end of each lap the finish is that line.  When displayed at a gate the finish is between the gate marks. |
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| **SIGNALS DISPLAYED BY COMPETING BOATS** | | | |
| **Flag signal** | **Sound signal when displayed** | **Sound signal when removed** | **Meaning** |
| Red Flag | hail "Protest" |  | I intend to protest. (Boats under 6 meters in length need not display this flag) |
| Yellow Flag |  |  | Boat is taking a Scoring Penalty. (Scoring penalties must be specified in the sailing instructions if used) |

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| **See also**: | [International Code Flags](http://www.autohoot.com/code_flags.htm) - shows the International code flags for the alphabet and numerals |
|  | [Race Start Sequence Table](http://www.autohoot.com/race_start_sequence.htm) - a table giving the start signals for a three class start using the new 2001 rules sequence |
|  | [Starting system 1](http://www.autohoot.com/race_start_sequence_system1.htm) - An example of the start sequence using system 1 |
|  | [Starting system 2](http://www.autohoot.com/race_start_sequence_system2.htm) - An example of the start sequence using system 2 |
|  | [The Perfect Start](http://www.autohoot.com/the_perfect_start.htm) - article on starting sailing races |

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