

Here is the standard five minute on water start sequence.
The WSC often reduces this to a three minute start sequence for on-water starts.

If everything is on schedule, when you get out to the committee boat you will see an **RC** flag and an orange flag that delineates the committee boat end of the start line. If things are running late, you will see the previous two flags and the  **AP** signal. That's a red and white pennant, which is also called the  **Answering Pennant**.

 **AP** comes down, it signifies one minute until the class flag is raised. The class flag is the one which is so designated by the Sailing Instructions. So, at this point, there are six minutes until the start.

The **Class Flag** goes up at five minutes before the start and remains up until the start. This is a warning flag only. The Rules of Racing (RRS) don't kick in for another minute. **It is accompanied by a sound signal.**



P (Preparatory) flag goes up at four (4) minutes before the start. The P flag is blue with a white, square center. **It is accompanied by a sound signal.** This flag will remain up for three minutes.



P flag comes **down** at one minute before the start. **It is accompanied by a sound signal.** The only flag still up is the **Class Flag**.

START: The Class Flag comes down. **It is accompanied by a sound signal.** You should be at or very near the starting line going fast.

OTHER FLAGS YOU NEED TO KNOW



X: Blue cross on a white background. It means that one or more boats have started prematurely. The race committee may, but is not obligated to, inform the guilty boat(s). This flag will be lowered when all premature boats have returned or after 4 minutes, whichever comes first.



FIRST SUBSTITUTE: This is a triangular flag with blue edges top and bottom and a yellow center. This flag indicates a **General Recall**. Everybody starts over. New start sequence, etc.



I: Yellow flag with solid black circle at center. This indicates that Rule 30.1 (the around-the-ends rule) is in effect at the start.

 **BLACK FLAG:** This flag is all black. It means that any boat on the course side of the start line within a minute prior to the start is disqualified.



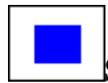
Y: Diagonal red and yellow stripes. This flag means that all competitors are **required** to wear personal buoyancy.



L: Diagonal yellow and black squares, two each. Ashore, it means that a notice to competitors has been posted. Afloat, it means come within hail or follow me.



M: Blue Flag with white X. This flag means, "The mark is missing. Round me instead of the missing mark."



S: White with blue square. This flag means, "The course has been shortened. The finish is between this flag and the nearby rounding mark,"



C: Red, white and blue horizontal stripes. This flag means, "The course has been changed." Look for compass heading to new mark and/or + or - sign indicating leg will be longer or shorter.



N: Blue and white checkers. This flag means, "The race has been abandoned." It should be accompanied by 3 sound signals.



N over A: This combination means, "Races have been abandoned. Further signals will be made ashore."