

Teaching Rules of the Road for PWs

During a PW (Personal Watercraft) course, rules of the road must be covered both theoretically and practically. The timings of that delivery will depend on your location and operating area, but all instructors must deliver this both by explaining the relevant rules and by running a practical exercise to consolidate their students' knowledge.

Putting the theory into practice

The practical session needs to be well thought out. Remember that the exercise is a simulation and a way of checking your students' learning from the theory session. This means that the session should be run at low speed, giving students ample time to recognise a situation, consider what their actions should be and then react.

If a student does not take the correct avoiding action, stop the session, reconvene and teach the rule again.

Group control

One option for maintaining group control is to use a box setup. Establish a rule such as always keeping a buoy between each PW. This will encourage students to reduce their speed down to the speed of the slowest rider.



Any simulations should be between the instructor (on a PW or powerboat) and individual students on their PW, not student to student.

All candidates should have the opportunity to assess and react to a number of situations (head on/crossing/overtaking). So, if there are pillion riders, the session will need to be run in two parts to allow for a changeover.

Use of buoys

When deciding on marker buoys, the most important consideration is visibility. Centres operating on small lakes may be able to use quite small buoys. But those with more exposed operating areas will need significantly taller buoys.

The more visible the course, the easier it is for students to follow and concentrate on the techniques being taught.