



Irish National Sailing & Powerboat School

West Pier, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin

Tel: +353 (0) 1 2844195

Email: sailing@inss.ie

Web: www.inss.ie

Buoyage

Here's a short introduction to buoyage. We've focussed in on the main aspects of the marks, visible during daylight operations. The light colours and sequences are not detailed in this document, but in a further document that also shows how they would be depicted on charts.

IALA Regions

IALA stands for International Association of Lighthouse Authorities. A lighthouse authority is responsible for the installation and maintenance of all aids to navigation, e.g navigational marks (buoyage) and lighthouses. More recently, lighthouse authorities have started deploying virtual aids to navigation, effectively virtual buoys that appear on digital charts.

In Ireland the Commissioners of Irish Lights are the lighthouse authority.

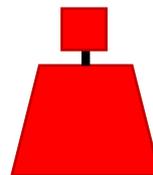
There is significant international cooperation and standardisation under IALA, with the world split into two regions called Region A and Region B. Region A consists of most of the world, including Europe, with the exception of the North America and Singapore and a few other minor areas, which comprise Region B. Buoyage remains very similar between the two, but for the purposes of this, we focus on Region A.

Lateral Marks

Used to mark out channels. Port lateral marks are to be kept to left, and starboard lateral marks to the right, when entering harbours or ports.

Port Hand Lateral Mark

- Square/Box Shape
- Red in Colour
- Keep on Left Side of boat entering port



Starboard Hand Lateral Mark

- Conical in shape
- Green in Colour
- Keep on Right Side of boat entering port



Direction of Buoyage

This symbol will be found on navigation charts. This indicates which way buoyage runs, namely which way “into” the harbour/port is.



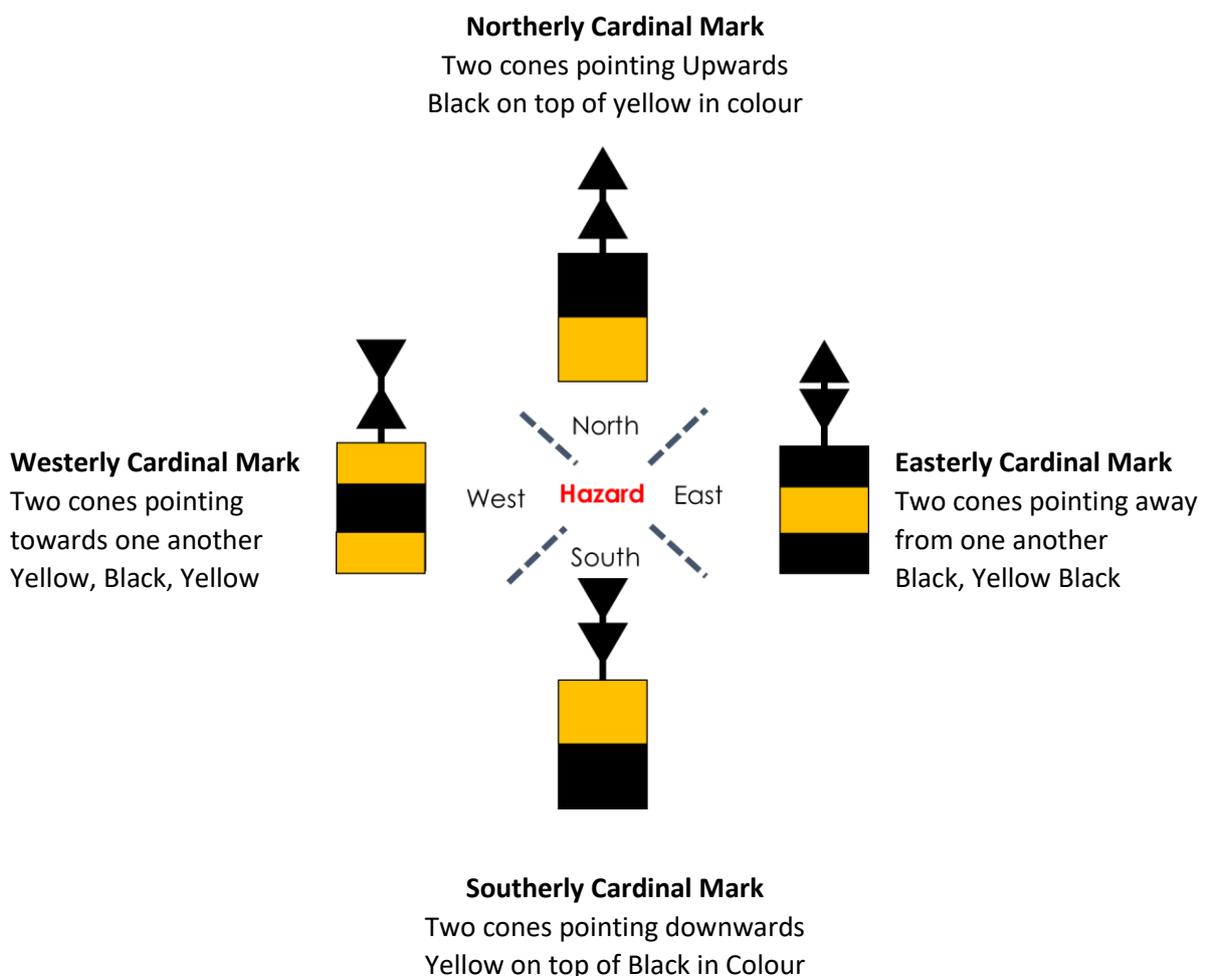
Safe Water Mark

This mark indicates the seaward beginning/end of a navigational channel delineated by port and starboard hand lateral marks. The name safe water mark can be a misnomer, as the closest safe water mark to Dun Laoghaire is in the middle of Dublin Bay. It marks the seaward side of the shipping lane into Dublin Port. Container ships, ferries and cruise ships use it as a roundabout, so its not a great place to be in a dinghy or keelboat.



Cardinal Marks

Cardinal Marks indicate a compass direction one should keep of the mark, e.g. you should stay to the North Side of a Northerly Cardinal Mark, as there is a hazard to the other side of it.

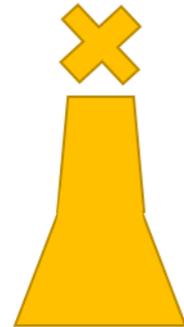


Note the direction of the arrows, the direction they point corresponds to where the black portion of the mark is.

Other Marks

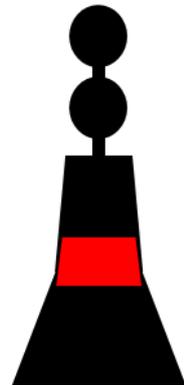
Special Mark

- Yellow in colour with cross on top
- Denotes area of special interest. For example, in the Dun Laoghaire area, a large yellow special mark behind the West Pier marks the seaward end of a storm water overflow pipe. Closer to shore, they mark a swimming and recreational area.



Isolated Danger Mark

- A red and black mark with horizontal colouring
- Two black spheres on top
- Denotes a danger directly below where the mark is, for example a hazardous rock.



New Wreck Mark

- Yellow and Blue vertical stripes
- Yellow Cross on top
- Denotes a new wreck, used where the wreck may be a hazard to other vessels and charts of the area have not been updated to reflect its position.
- May be used temporarily.

