BookletChart™

Chesapeake Bay
NOAA Chart 12280

A reduced-scale NOAA nautical chart for small boaters
When possible, use the full-size NOAA chart for navigation.

- Complete, reduced-scale nautical chart
- Print at home for free
- Convenient size
- Up-to-date with Notices to Mariners
- Compiled by NOAA’s Office of Coast Survey, the nation’s chartmaker

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What are Nautical Charts?

Nautical charts are a fundamental tool of marine navigation. They show water depths, obstructions, buoys, other aids to navigation, and much more. The information is shown in a way that promotes safe and efficient navigation. Chart carriage is mandatory on the commercial ships that carry America’s commerce. They are also used on every Navy and Coast Guard ship, fishing and passenger vessels, and are widely carried by recreational boaters.

What is a BookletChart™?

This BookletChart is made to help recreational boaters locate themselves on the water. It has been reduced in scale for convenience, but otherwise contains all the information of the full-scale nautical chart. The bar scales have also been reduced, and are accurate when used to measure distances in this BookletChart. See the Note at the bottom of page 5 for the reduction in scale applied to this chart.

Whenever possible, use the official, full scale NOAA nautical chart for navigation. Nautical chart sales agents are listed on the Internet at http://www.NauticalCharts.NOAA.gov.

This BookletChart does NOT fulfill chart carriage requirements for regulated commercial vessels under Titles 33 and 44 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

Notice to Mariners Correction Status

This BookletChart has been updated for chart corrections published in the U.S. Coast Guard Local Notice to Mariners, the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency Weekly Notice to Mariners, and, where applicable, the Canadian Coast Guard Notice to Mariners. Additional chart corrections have been made by NOAA in advance of their publication in a Notice to Mariners. The last Notices to Mariners applied to this chart are listed in the Note at the bottom of page 7. Coast Pilot excerpts are not being corrected.


(Selected Excerpts from Coast Pilot)

Chesapeake Bay, the largest inland body of water along the Atlantic coast of the United States, is 168 miles long with a greatest width of 23 miles. The bay is the approach to Norfolk, Newport News, Baltimore, and many lesser ports. Deep-draft vessels use the Atlantic entrance, which is about 10 miles wide between Fishermans Island on the north and Cape Henry on the south. Medium-draft vessels can enter from Delaware Bay on the north via Chesapeake and Delaware Canal, and lightdraft vessels can enter from Albemarle Sound on the south via the Intracoastal Waterway.

The waters surrounding a vessel that is carrying liquefied petroleum gas are a safety zone while the vessel transits the Chesapeake Bay and Elizabeth River. (See 165.506, chapter 2, for limits and regulations.)

North Atlantic Right Whales—Endangered North Atlantic right whales may occur within 30 miles of the Virginia coasts in the approaches to the Chesapeake Bay (peak season: November through April, although right whales have been sighted in the area year round). (See North Atlantic Right Whales, indexed as such in Chapter 3, for more information on right whales and recommend measures to avoid collisions.)

All vessels 65 feet or greater in length overall (L.O.A.) and subject to the jurisdiction of the United States are restricted to speeds of 10 knots or less in a Seasonal Management Area existing around the entrance to the Chesapeake Bay between November 1 and April 30. The area is defined as the waters within a 20-nm radius of 37°00'36.9"N., 75°57'50.5"W. (See 50 CFR 224.105 in Chapter 2 for regulations, limitations, and exceptions.)

Chesapeake Light (36°54'17"N., 75°42'46"W.), 117 feet above the water, is shown from a blue tower on a white superstructure on four piles, 14 miles eastward of Cape Henry. The name CHESAPEAKE is displayed on all sides. A sound signal and racon are at the light. A fish haven, consisting of sunken fishing-boat hulls and marked by private unlighted buoys, is about 0.4 mile southwestward of the light.

Cape Charles, on the north side of the entrance, is low and bare, but the land back of it is high and wooded. Wise Point is the most southerly mainland tip of the cape. Low Fishermans Island, a National Wildlife Refuge, is 1 mile south of Wise Point.

The southwest end of Smith Island is 2.4 miles eastward of Wise Point; the island is 6 miles long, low and sparsely wooded, and awash at half tide midway along its length.

Cape Charles Light (37°07'23"N., 75°54'23"W.), 180 feet above the water, is shown from an octagonal, pyramidal skeleton tower, upper part black and lower part white, on the southwestern part of Smith Island.

Smith Island Shoal, which breaks in heavy weather, has depths of 21 feet 7.5 miles east-southeast of Cape Charles Light. Depths less than 40 feet extend another 5 miles northeastward. Outer limits of the shoal area are marked by a lighted buoy.

Nautilus Shoal, which extends 4 miles southeastward from Fishermans Island, has patches with depths of 6 to 11 feet. The buoyed channel along the southwest side of Nautilus Shoal, thence northward between Fishermans Island and Inner Middle Ground, had a controlling depth of about 16 feet in 1977-1980. The channel is used by local vessels drawing up to 12 feet. This channel is not recommended for strangers because of shifting shoals. In 1996, a 10-foot shoal was reported 1.5 miles S of Fishermans Island in about 37°03'31.2"N., 075°57'27.0"W. Breakers frequently occur along the axis of Inner Middle Ground, starting on the seaward side of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel and continuing the entire length of the shoal. This phenomenon appears to be associated with large swells rolling in from sea from the southeast-southeast to southeast.

Cape Henry, on the south side of the entrance, has a range of sand hills about 80 feet high.

Cape Henry Light (36°55'35"N., 76°00'26"W.), 164 feet above the water, is shown from an octagonal, pyramidal tower, upper and lower half of each face alternately black and white, on the beach near the turn of the cape.

A naval restricted area extends northward and eastward from Cape Henry. (See 334.320, chapter 2, for limits and regulations.)
NOAA’s navigation managers serve as ambassadors to the maritime community. They help identify navigational challenges facing professional and recreational mariners, and provide NOAA resources and information for safe navigation. For additional information, please visit nauticalcharts.noaa.gov/service/navmanagers.

To make suggestions or ask questions online, go to nauticalcharts.noaa.gov/inquiry. To report a chart discrepancy, please use ocsdata.ncd.noaa.gov/idrs/discrepancy.aspx.

Lateral System As Seen Entering From Seaward
on navigable waters except Western Rivers

For more information on aids to navigation, including those on Western Rivers, please consult the latest USCG Light List for your area. These volumes are available online at http://www.navcen.uscg.gov
SOUNDINGS IN FEET

UNITED STATES - EAST COAST
MARYLAND AND VIRGINIA

CHESAPEAKE BAY

Mercator Projection
Scale 1:200,000 at Lat. 38°10'
North American Datum of 1983
(World Geodetic System 1984)

SOUNDINGS IN FEET
AT MEAN LOWER LOW WATER

HEIGHTS
Heights in feet above Mean Lower Low Water.

AUTHORITIES
Hydrography and topography by the National Ocean Service, Coast Survey, with additional data from the Corps of Engineers, and U.S. Coast Guard.

HORIZONTAL DATUM
The horizontal reference datum of this chart is North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83), which for charting purposes is considered equivalent to the World Geodetic System of 1984 (WGS 84). Geodetic positions referred to the North American Datum of 1927 do not require conversion to NAD 83 for plotting on this chart.

POULATION REPORTS
Report all spills of oil and hazardous substances to the National Response Center via 1-800-424-8802 (toll free), or to the nearest U.S. Coast Guard facility if telephone communication is impossible (30 CFR 199).

For Symbols and Abbreviations see Chart No. 1

NOTE 1
Navigation regulations are published in Chapter 2, U.S. Coast Pilot 3 & 4. Additional editions to Chapter 2 are published in the Notice to Mariners. Contact your local Coast Guard District Office for the latest editions.

CAUTION
Improved channels shown by broken lines are subject to shoaling, particularly at the edges.

SMALL CRIFT WARNINGS
During the boating season small-craft warnings will be displayed from sunrise to sunset on Maryland Marine Police Cruisers and underway in Maryland and on the Chesapeake Bay and tributaries.

CAUTION
Limitations on the use of radio signals as aids to marine navigation can be found in the U.S. Coast Guard Light Lists and National Geophysical Intelligence Agency Publication 117. Radio direction finder bearings to commercial broadcasting stations are subject to error and should be used with caution.

Station positions are shown thus: ○ (exact location) or (approximate location)

Note: Chart grid lines are aligned with true north.
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NOTE:
TRAFFIC SEPARATION SCHEME

The traffic separation scheme is designed to aid in the prevention of collisions at the approaches to Chesapeake Bay and does not supersede or alter the applicable Rules of the Road.

The RECOMMENDED routes for entering and departing from Chesapeake Bay are outlined on this chart. The Northeast Approach is marked by a dashed magenta line centered on a line of fancy buoys which separates the courses of inbound and outbound vessels. Vessels should leave all buoys on their port hand.

It is RECOMMENDED that the following ships use the Southern Approach deep-water route when bound for Chesapeake Bay from sea or to sea from Chesapeake Bay: Deep-draft ships, drafts defined as 40 feet (12.2 meters) or greater in fresh water, and naval aircraft carriers. Ships drawing less than 40 feet (12.2 meters) may use the deep-water route when, in their master’s judgment, the effects of ship characteristics, its speed, and prevailing environmental conditions may cause the draft of the ship to equal or exceed 40 feet (12.2 meters).

It is RECOMMENDED that a ship using the deep-water route announce its intention on VHF-FM channel 16. As it approaches the Chesapeake Bay Southern Approach Lighted Whistle Buoy “C” on the south end of the Bay. Entrance Lighted Whistle Buoy “C” or on the north end of the route. Avoid, as far as practicable, overtaking other ships operating in the deep-water route.

Keep as close to the outer limit of the route which lies on the starboard side as is safe and practicable.

All other ships approaching the Chesapeake Bay traffic separation scheme should use the appropriate inbound or outbound traffic lane of the traffic separation scheme.

Traffic within the precautionary area may consist of vessels operating between Thomas Shoal and Chesapeake Channel and one of the starboard traffic lanes. Mariners are advised to exercise extreme care in navigating within this area. The normal Port Boarding area is outlined by a magenta band.

Use NOAA electronic navigational charts for the most up-to-date information.

7th Ed, 1998; Last Correction: 09/23/2001; Cleared through:
LNM: 3626 (10/22/2000); NM: 4026 (10/30/2000)
**NOTE F**

**TRAFFIC SEPARATION SCHEME**

The traffic separation scheme is designed to aid in the prevention of collisions at the approaches to Chesapeake Bay and does not supersede or alter the applicable Rules of the Road.

The RECOMMENDED routes for entering and departing from Chesapeake Bay are overlaid on this chart. The Northeast Approach is marked by a tinted magenta line centered on a line of buoyed markers which separates the courses of inbound and outbound vessels. Vessels should have all buoys on their port hand.

It is RECOMMENDED that the following ships use the Southern Approach deep-water route when bound for the Chesapeake Bay: from sea to sea or from Chesapeake Bay to the open sea. Deep-draft ships, defined as over 40 feet (12.2 meters) or greater in fresh water, and naval aircraft carriers, ships drawing less than 40 feet (12.2 meters), may use the deep-water route when, in their master’s judgment, the effects of shipping characteristics, speed, and prevailing environmental conditions may cause the draft of the ship to equal or exceed 40 feet (12.2 meters).

It is RECOMMENDED that a ship using the deep-water route:

- Announce its intention on VHF-MF channel 16 as it approaches Chesapeake Bay Southern Approach Lighted Whistle buoy “C” on the north end of the route.
- Avoid, as far as practicable, overtaking other ships operating in the deep-water route.
- Keep as near as the outer limit of the route which lies on the starboard side as is safe and practicable.
- All other ships approaching the Chesapeake Bay traffic separation scheme should use the appropriate inbound or outbound traffic lane of the traffic separation scheme.

Traffic within the precautionary area may consist of vessels operating between Thimble Shoals and Chesapeake Channels and one of the restricted traffic lanes. Mariners are advised to exercise extreme caution in navigating within this area. The normal Pilot Boarding Area is outlined by a magenta band.

*Note: Chart grid lines are aligned with true north.*
NOTE

TRAFFIC SEPARATION SCHEME

One-way traffic lanes overlaid on this chart in the vicinity of Smith Point are RECOMMENDED for all vessels except small craft. They have been designed to aid in the prevention of collisions but are not intended in any way to supersede or alter the applicable Rules of the Road. The recommended route is marked by a fairway buoy and a 4 nautical mile band which separates the courses of inbound and outbound vessels. Vessels should leave the buoy on their port hand.
As far as practicable, operating other ships in the deep-water route:

Go as near to the outer limit of the route which lies on the starboard side as is safe and practicable.

All other ships approaching the Chesapeake Bay traffic separation scheme should use the appropriate inbound or outbound traffic lane of the traffic separation scheme.

Traffic within the prescribed area may consist of vessels operating between Thomas Shoal and Choptank Channels and one of the established traffic lanes. Mariners are advised to exercise extreme care in navigating within this area. The normal Pfriem Boarding Area is outlined by a magenta band.

NOTE: CAUTION

The Choptank Bay Bridge-Tunnel complex has on several occasions suffered damage from vessels due to adverse weather conditions. Mariners in excess of three knots are expected in the area. Mariners including this area are urged to be particularly alert in regards to the weather situation. The National Weather Service provides 24 hour weather backlighting on 162.55 MHz. The Local Marine Operator also provides weather information at 0100, 0700, 1300, and 1900 local time on 2538 and 2400 MHz. Transmitting schedules are subject to change. Notice to Mariners. Maneuvering in close proximity of the bridge-tunnel complex is discouraged.

NOTE 6:

Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel

PRIVATE LIGHTS

MOVE TO LEFT AT 1/2 MILE FROM THE APPROACH

NOTE K

RIGHT WHALE SEASONAL MANAGEMENT AREA

All vessels greater than 65 feet in length must slow to speeds of 10 knots or less in seasonal management areas.
Note: Chart grid lines are aligned with true north.
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NOTE B
Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel
(Private lights)
Terror A & B - In each tunnel section the fixed navigation opening for small craft consists of a group of 3 spans. A fixed green light marks the centerline of each span and fixed red lights mark southwest bridge piers on each side of the openings.
WESTERN SPANS
HOR CL 70 FT
VERT CL 23 FT
EASTERN SPANS
HOR CL 70 FT
VERT CL 21 FT

North Channel Bridge - A fixed green light marks the mid-channel. Fixed red obstruction lights mark each pair in Trestles C and D.
NORTHERN SPAN
HOR CL 300 FT
VERT CL 72 FT
SOUTHERN SPAN
HOR CL 300 FT
VERT CL 72 FT

NOTE C
Chesapeake Bay Channels
The project depth in the channels in the Chesapeake Bay are shown on tabulations printed on large scale charts and are not indicated herein.

SOUNDINGS IN FEE

20
Note: Chart grid lines are aligned with true north.
VHF Marine Radio channels for use on the waterways:
Channel 6 – Inter-ship safety communications.
Channel 9 – Communications between boats and ship-to-coast.
Channel 13 – Navigation purposes at bridges, locks, and harbors.
Channel 16 – Emergency, distress and safety calls to Coast Guard and others, and to initiate calls to other vessels. Contact the other vessel, agree to another channel, and then switch.
Channel 22A – Calls between the Coast Guard and the public. Severe weather warnings, hazards to navigation and safety warnings are broadcast here.
Channels 68, 69, 71, 72 and 78A – Recreational boat channels.

Getting and Giving Help — Signal other boaters using visual distress signals (flares, orange flag, lights, arm signals); whistles; horns; and on your VHF radio. You are required by law to help boaters in trouble. Respond to distress signals, but do not endanger yourself.

Distress Call Procedures
- Make sure radio is on.
- Select Channel 16.
- Press/Hold the transmit button.
- Clearly say: “MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY.”
- Also give: Vessel Name and/or Description; Position and/or Location; Nature of Emergency; Number of People on Board.
- Release transmit button.
- Wait for 10 seconds — If no response Repeat MAYDAY call.

Have all persons put on life jackets!

NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards (NWR) is a nationwide network of radio stations broadcasting continuous weather information directly from the nearest National Weather Service office. NWR broadcasts official Weather Service warnings, watches, forecasts and other hazard information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
http://www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr/

Quick References
- Nautical chart related products and information — http://www.nauticalcharts.noaa.gov
- Interactive chart catalog — http://www.charts.noaa.gov/InteractiveCatalog/nrnc.shtml
- Chart and chart related inquiries and comments — http://ocsdata.ncd.noaa.gov/idrs/inquiry.aspx?frompage=ContactUs
- Chart updates (LNMs and NM corrections) — http://www.nauticalcharts.noaa.gov/mcd/updates/LNM_NM.html
- Coast Pilot online — http://www.nauticalcharts.noaa.gov/nsd/cpdownload.htm
- Tides and Currents — http://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov
- National Data Buoy Center — http://www.ndbc.noaa.gov/
- NowCoast web portal for coastal conditions — http://www.nowcoast.noaa.gov/
- National Hurricane Center — http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/
- Pacific Tsunami Warning Center — http://ptwc.weather.gov/
- Contact Us — http://www.nauticalcharts.noaa.gov/staff/contact.htm

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This Booklet chart has been designed for duplex printing (printed on front and back of one sheet). If a duplex option is not available on your printer, you may print each sheet and arrange them back-to-back to allow for the proper layout when viewing.

NOAA’s Office of Coast Survey  The Nation’s Chartmaker