

TONNAGE GUIDE
FOR
SIMPLIFIED MEASUREMENT



Coast Guard Marine Safety Center
Tonnage Division (MSC-4)
www.uscg.mil/hq/msc

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. PURPOSE.....	3
2. GROSS / NET TONNAGE VS. DISPLACEMENT TONNAGE	3
3 TONNAGE MEASUREMENT SYSTEMS	3
4 FORMAL VS. SIMPLIFIED MEASUREMENT	4
5. MEASUREMENT SYSTEM APPLICABILITY.....	4
6. MEASUREMENT SYSTEM HEIRARCHY	4
7. REGISTERED DIMENSIONS	4
8. DEFINITIONS	5
9. SIMPLIFIED MEASUREMENT PROCESS	6
10. FIVE NET TON THRESHOLD	6
11. SIMPLIFIED TONNAGE CALCULATION	7
12. GROSS TONNAGE FORMULATION (MONOHULL VESSELS).....	7
13. GROSS TONNAGE FORMULATION (TWIN HULL VESSELS).....	8
14. GROSS TONNAGE FORMULATION (TRI-HULL VESSELS).....	8
15. NET TONNAGE FORMULATION.....	9
16. GUIDANCE ON DIMENSIONS	9
17. TONNAGE MEASUREMENT QUESTIONS.....	9
18. REFERENCES	9
APPENDIX.....	10

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Guide is to explain the Simplified tonnage measurement system with regard to (1) other available tonnage measurement systems, (2) vessel eligibility for Simplified measurement, (3) the use of tonnage in the vessel documentation process, (4) the responsible Coast Guard offices, and (5) calculating Simplified tonnage. This Guide is primarily directed to an audience composed of vessel builders, brokers and owners, mortgage companies and other interested members of the public. This Guide will **not** be used as the basis for Coast Guard tonnage decisions in response to questions and appeals from industry or other government agencies. Such decisions will be deferred to applicable law, regulations, and policy documents such as Marine Safety Center Technical Notes (MTNs).

2. GROSS / NET TONNAGE VS. DISPLACEMENT TONNAGE

This Guide addresses gross and net tonnage, which relate to vessel volume and appear on a documented vessel's Certificate of Documentation (COD). Gross and net tonnage is widely used as the basis for vessel regulation and assessment of taxes and fees. Gross and net tonnage is not to be confused with displacement or weight tonnage, often expressed in "pounds", "tons" or "long tons".

3 TONNAGE MEASUREMENT SYSTEMS

There are two basic tonnage measurement systems presently available in the United States, namely the Convention and Regulatory systems. The primary system is the Convention or international system, which is derived from the provisions of the International Convention on Tonnage Measurement of Ships, 1969, to which the United States is a party. The Regulatory or national system has three subset systems, namely Standard, Dual and Simplified. The Standard is the oldest system, dating back to the 1860's, and is based on the British "Moorsom" system. Dual measurement was developed in the mid 20th century to benefit shelter deck vessels by providing alternatives to fitting them with tonnage openings. The Simplified system was initially authorized by Congress in 1966 for recreational vessels to reduce the measurement cost burden for owners and the measurement workload on the government. Later, the Simplified system was extended to certain commercial vessels. Convention tonnage is dimensionless and expressed as GT ITC (or simply GT) for gross tonnage and NT ITC (or simply NT) for net tonnage. Regulatory tonnage is calculated in units of register tons of 100 cubic feet per ton and expressed as GRT for gross register tons and NRT for net register tons.



