

Rules for Building and Classing

Steel Barges

Notices and General Information



January 2026



RULES FOR BUILDING AND CLASSING

STEEL BARGES JANUARY 2026

NOTICES AND GENERAL INFORMATION

**American Bureau of Shipping
Incorporated by Act of Legislature of
the State of New York 1862**

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Notices and General Information

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Notices and General Information

Introduction

1. The 2026 edition of the *Rules for Building and Classing Steel Barges* consists of the Parts as shown in Table 1. Reference is made in these Rules to the following generic Rules:
 - a) *Rules for Conditions of Classification (Part 1A)* includes consolidated requirements for “Classification” applicable to all types of and sizes of vessels, barges and specific shipboard arrangements/systems, etc., except for those in offshore service, as specified in the Foreword to Part 1A. Additional specific requirements are contained in Chapter 5 of Part 1A.
 - b) *Rules for Alternative Arrangements, Novel Concepts and New Technologies (Part 1D)* introduces a procedure for acceptance of alternative arrangements, novel concepts, and new technologies based on Goals and Functional Requirements, including a consolidated list of Tier 1 Goals.
 - c) *Rules for Materials and Welding (Part 2)* contains materials requirements common to ABS-classed vessels, other marine structures and their associated machinery, including steel, aluminum, and FRP materials.
 - d) *Rules for Survey After Construction (Part 7)* contains consolidated requirements for “Surveys After Construction” applicable to all types and sizes of vessels, barges and specific shipboard arrangements/systems, etc., as specified in Part 7, Chapter 1, Section 1.
2. The numbering system applied in the Rules is shown in Table 2.
3. The primary changes from the July 2025 Rules are identified and listed in Table 3. The effective date of the indicated Rule Changes is 1 January 2026, unless specifically indicated otherwise.
4. The effective date of each technical change since 1993 is shown in parenthesis at the end of the subsection/paragraph titles within the text of each Part. Unless a particular date and month are shown, the years in parentheses refer to the following effective dates:

(2000) and after	1 January 2000 (and subsequent years)	(1996)	9 May 1996
(1999)	12 May 1999	(1995)	15 May 1995
(1998)	13 May 1998	(1994)	9 May 1994
(1997)	19 May 1997	(1993)	11 May 1993

TABLE 1
Applicable Editions of Parts Comprising January 2026 Barge Rules

Rules for Building and Classing Steel Barges		
Notices and General Information		January 2026
Part 3:	Hull Construction and Equipment	January 2026
Part 4:	Barge Systems and Machinery	January 2025
Part 5:	Specific Barge Types	July 2025
Rules for Conditions of Classification – not included		
Part 1A:	Rules for Conditions of Classification	January 2026*
Rules for Alternative Arrangements, Novel Concepts and New Technologies – not included		
Part 1D:	Rules for Alternative Arrangements, Novel Concepts and New Technologies	January 2026*
Rules for Materials and Welding – not included		
Part 2:	Rules for Materials and Welding	January 2026*
Rules for Survey After Construction – not included		
Part 7:	Rules for Survey After Construction	January 2026*

* **Note:** The latest edition of these Rules is to be referred to. These Rules may be accessed in Rule Manager.

TABLE 2
Division and Numbering of Rules

<i>Division</i>	<i>Number</i>
Part	Part 1
Chapter	Part 1, Chapter 1
Section	Section 1-1-1
Subsection (see Note 1)	1-1-1/1
Paragraph (see Note 1)	1-1-1/1.1
Subparagraph	1-1-1/1.1.1
Item	1-1-1/1.1.1(a)
Subitem	1-1-1/1.1.1(a)i
Appendix	Appendix 1-1-A1 or Appendix 1-A1-1

Note:

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An odd number (1, 3, 5, etc.) numbering system is used for the Rules. The purpose is to permit future insertions of even-numbered paragraphs (2, 4, 6, etc.) of text and to avoid the necessity of having to renumber the existing text and associated cross-references, as applicable, within the Rules and associated process instructions, check sheets, etc.

Rule Change Notice (2026)

TABLE 3
Summary of Changes from the July 2025 Rules

EFFECTIVE DATE 1 January 2026 – shown as (2026)
(based on the contract date for new construction between builder and Owner)

<i>Part/Para. No.</i>	<i>Title/Subject</i>	<i>Status/Remarks</i>
PART 3	Hull Construction and Equipment	
3-2-3/15	Decks	To include the "Q" factor for higher-strength materials in the equations for retractable tween decks.
3-2-5/3.1.1, 3.3, 3.5, 3.7	Fore End Construction	To include the "Q" factor for higher-strength materials in the equations for retractable tween decks.
3-2-6/2	Watertight Bulkheads	To relocate the Commentary under 2-4-5/1.2 to BARGE 3-2-6/2 for design of bulkheads since 2-4-5/1.2 does not match the intent of the Rule.
3-2-8/3.5, 9.3	Superstructures and Deckhouses	To include the "Q" factor for higher-strength materials in the equations for retractable tween decks.
3-2-9/9, 11.1, 13.3, 15.5, 19	Protection of Deck Openings	To remove detailed requirements for portable hatch covers secured by tarpaulins, wooden hatch covers, and propose a reduced design pressure for hatches on semi-enclosed decks.