The Racing Rules of Sailing

Rule 26: Starting Races

Races shall be started using the following signals. Times shall be taken from the visual signals; the absence of a sound signal shall be disregarded.

Minutes before starting signal	Visual signal	Sound signal	Means
5	Class flag	One	Warning signal
4	Preparatory flag	One	Preparatory signal
1	Preparatory flag removed	One long	One minute
0	Class flag removed	One	Starting signal