

-Securing your Boat- Guidelines and Standards

Specific points on cleating, spring lines, bow lines, hurricane basics and general preparation, all pertaining to securing your boat.

Securing your Boat

I. Cleats

- A. A cleat allows a line to be easily adjusted and then held fast. No other knot under a load does this.
- B. If two lines are used on one cleat, place the line most likely to need adjustment on top.
- C. A line with an eyelet can be used on a cleat. This may allow more (enough) room for a second line to be cleated on top. Eyelets are beneficial only to allow more room. The eyelet is difficult to remove and impossible to adjust (under a load). Make ready an extra line and sharp knife.
- D. One length of rope has one purpose. A long rope cleated in the middle and used for a spring line and a bow line should NEVER be done.
- E. Check your dock cleats, if they can be kicked from side to side (and they move) they must be tightened.
- F. The load on your boat and dock cleats should be shared using independent lines on a separate cleat. The more the better.
- G. Reserve cleats for Dock Line only. Routing electrical cord and hanging fenders can be improvised elsewhere.
- H. Do not use cleats on finger pier for storm preparation. Adjustments cannot be made if water rises above the cleats.
- I. Coil extra line beside the cleat. Do not wrap it more than 3 times.

II. Spring Lines

- A. Set your spring lines to STOP the boat from coming closer than three feet from the main dock.
- B. Two independent spring lines should be made long enough to extend from outside pilings to a cleat at midship. If your boat does not have midship cleats you will need longer lines to rig spring lines to your bow and stern cleats. Be sure to compensate for line stretch when securing lines.
- C. Bow and stern lines are stressed (shocked) with wave action. Three strand nylon rope stretches and reduces the shock on cleats and your line. However, a low stretch spring line will hold your position better, while unaffected by waves and snatching.
- D. Bowline knots placed over more bowline knots (on a piling) are hard to remove and wave action causes chafe to all lines.
- E. A cow hitch will keep the line from falling lower on the pile, no piling hook is needed. Cow hitch will not chafe your neighbor's lines, since it grips the pile. Hitches should be separated, with no overlap.
- F. NEVER place a spring line eyelet anywhere on the boat when the other end is secure to an outside piling. This cannot be adjusted. Instead, use the eyelet to the pile (make a cow hitch) then you can adjust.

III. Bow and stern lines

- A. If a line with an eyelet is used, place the eye on the boats cleat and NOT the dock. If an adjustment is needed, no boarding will be necessary. Besides, riding the nose of a bouncy boat doesn't make it easier to adjust.
- B. Set all bow and stern lines to keep boat off finger pier. Fenders are a "fall-back" measure. A boat "riding" its fenders rarely fares well.
- C. Four bow lines and four stern lines are REQUIRED.

- D. Two extra lengths of rope should be made ready by coiling and stowing (in plain sight) in cockpit.
- E. Use chafe guard as needed. A hose simply slipped over a dock line should be secured with tape or string, otherwise surges and waves can ratchet it off.
- F. Fall-back lines do no harm and may be useful in later adjustments.
- G. Snubbers may be very useful but should be governed.
- H. No lines to cross fairways.
- I. The length of all lines should be long enough to allow adjustment either “in” or “out”. Four or more feet of length should be left beyond the cleat.
- J. Bow and stern lines tied too low on piling may create chafe to line, and the upward pull of the line could pull the piling out.

Suggested Line Size

<u>LOA (ft)</u>	<u>Min Diameter</u>
Up to 35'	1/2"
36' - 44'	5/8"
45' - 54'	3/4"
55' - 64'	7/8"
Over 65'	1" or larger

The Condition of all lines should be judged acceptable (subjective), don't kid yourself.

IV. High wind adjustments

- A. Sail Boat winches are a good tool. Free them of sheets ahead of storm. Make a dock line ready and plan the route the line will take.
- B. A three part block (Boom Vang) is a matter of making the device ready ahead of time.
- C. Come-alongs are fairly awkward and can be dangerous if not experienced with this tool. These tools are rated for load; make sure it is rated heavy enough. “Snatching” can foul the device. Many are difficult and tricky to release under load; back lash can break hands and arms.
- D. Muscles may be effective. More people/more muscle. Know your limitations and work together With a Plan. The likelihood of an accident increases in direct proportion to the number of people helping. Plan-coordinate-execute

IV. Electrical Cords

- A. Cheap electrical cords with broken insulation are **dangerous and possible deadly**. Inspect your cord and keep it out of the water.
- B. Always turn breaker off when connecting/disconnecting power cords from boat or dock.
- C. Avoid using cleats to secure or route cord. Cleats should be reserved for line.

- D. Allow at least **5 feet** range in tide when routing electrical cord(s). If expected storm tidal range is to exceed 5 feet you should consider unplugging to avoid damage to your boat, cord and dock electrical pedestal.

Tropical Storm Response

Beginning before a named storm through a hurricane watch and warning.

I. Before a storm (Now)

- A. Tie your boat to a standard to withstand strong summer thunderstorms lasting an hour or more.
Don't underestimate these severe storms. Ask for help as needed
- B. Make all dock lines ready. Know where they are and what condition they are in.
- C. Volunteers for storm crew can sign up at Ships Store
- D. RPM must have current phone numbers for the owner and/or caretaker(s) of the boat.
- E. Survey your boat slip and dock area. Report needed repairs to RPM.
- F. Make a list of all the supplies you will need.

II. During a Tropical Storm/Hurricane Watch

- A. Tie your boat to a High standard.
- B. Ask for help if needed. Offer help if able.
- C. The boat owner or a designated caretaker will be responsible for securing your boat.
- D. Get storm track forecast, use it to plot wind direction ahead of time.
- E. VHF-16 USCG announces an advisory to VHF-22
- F. VHF-5 Boat owners and Crew (low power setting)
- G. The proposed order of an evacuation plan will be announced. Advisory updates will be given by RPM.
- H. RPM Staff will be working on call

III. Tropical Storm/Hurricane Warning

- A. Tie your boat to an Ideal standard.
- B. Review "Securing your Boat" as needed.
- C. Top off water tank.
- D. Remove Headsails, canvas, isinglass and dinghies on Davits.
- E. Lock or Tie off dock box lids.
- F. Remove all loose items from boat and dock.
- G. Continue to monitor forecast and advisories.
- H. Given unsafe conditions, be prepared to leave RPM.
- I. River House and all front-side businesses will be closed.
- J. Westside bathhouse will be closed
- K. Disconnect power cords, cable tv cables and hoses from power towers and stow on boat