

# *LTS SAILING TERMS*

**Aback** – When sails are pressed against the mast by the force of the wind.

**Aboard** – On or in a vessel.

**About** – A boat is said to be about when her sails are filled on her new tack. “Come About”

**Adrift** – Drifting unsecured

**Alee** – To leeward (away from the wind source) “Hard Alee”

**Aweigh** – Describes an anchor that is off the bottom and being hoisted.

**Bailers** – Small retractable devices in the bilge of a small boat through which water passes when the boat is moving rapidly.

**Bareboat** – The charter of a cruising boat that has no paid hands.

**Barging** – Forcing maneuvering room to windward of another boat at the start of a race.

**Beam** – The greatest width of a boat.

**Bend** – To secure “bend on a sail” or a line to a sail

**Berth** – A bed in a boat 2. A mooring location at a pier 3. A margin of safety “wide berth”

**Bilge** – The very lowest part of a boat’s interior, where water is most likely to collect.

**Bitter End** – The last part of a rope.

**Block** – A pulley through which a line is lead.

**Blue Water** – Ocean going, offshore.

**Bosun’s Chair** – Halyard supported seat to lift someone up the mast.

**Broach** – To round up sharply when sailing downwind.

**Buoy** – A small anchored floating object in any of various sizes and shapes to mark a channel, defines a race course, or serves as a mooring.

**Burgee** – A small flag (generally triangular), usually with a yacht club’s emblem.

**Chafe** – Wear on running rigging or on sails.

**Chart** – A map of a body of water and its adjacent shore - showing as much as an ocean or as small as a harbor.

**Cleat** – Fitting around which a line under strain is secured.

**Close Hauled** – Sailing toward the wind.

**Cockpit** – A recessed area in the deck in which a tiller or steering wheel is located.

**Code Flag** - A colorful flag representing, in the international code, a number or letter.

**Coil** – To arrange a line in loops, which are then hung from a cleat or other stationary object.

**Companionway** – A series of steps leading below from the deck.

**Cotter pin** – A small wire ring or pin used to secure the clevis pin in a block or shackle to keep turnbuckles from rotating.

**Cradle** – Framework on which a boat rests when out of the water (on the hard).

**Dinghy** – A small, light rowing or sailing boat.

**Dowse** – To lower quickly.

**Draft** – The distance between the waterline and the lowest part of the keel. The distance a boat “draws” is the amount of water needed for a boat to float. 2. The amount and position of fullness in a sail.

**Drogue** – Sea anchor used to slow a boats speed

**Ease** – To let out (a sheet)

**Fall Off** – Steer away from the wind

**Fender** – A padded or air filled object that is hung over the topsides to protect them from abrasion by an object or boat alongside.

**Fitting Out** – To prepare a boat for launching and sailing.

**Foul** – A tangled line, prop, etc. 2. Bad weather “Foulies”- Foul weather gear

**Full and By** – Sailing close-hauled with all sails full.

**Furl** – To roll, fold, gather or make up and secure any sail on its boom or yard.

**GPS** – Global Positioning System

**Gear** – All non-permanent equipment, running rigging, etc.

**Gimbals** – Supports permitting a table, stove or berth to pivot as the boat heels so that its top remains level.

**Gunwale** – Pronounced “gun’l”. The rail of a boat, where the deck meets the topsides.

**Harden up** – Head up into the wind

**Hatch** – Opening in a deck, covered by a hatch cover.

**Head** – Toilet room on a boat

**Heading** – Course, direction

**Head to wind** – A boat heading directly into the wind.

**Head Up** – steer closer into the wind

**Heave** – To throw

**Heel** – The degree to which the boat tips to leeward under the force of the wind in the sails.

**Helm** – The steering position on a boat. Helmsman – The person steering a boat.

**Hike** – For the crew of a small boat to lean over the windward rail to help keep the boat from heeling and go faster.  
“Hike out”

**Keel** – A permanent or retractable heavy fin under the hull that provides the weight to counterbalance heeling as well as lateral resistance to counteract leeway.

**Knock** – Slang for header, a wind shift that requires the helmsman to head off to keep the sails full.

**Knot** – One nautical mile (6060.2 feet) per hour. 2. Turns in a line that secures it to another object.

**Lead** – To rig a sheet or halyard

**Leeward** – Away from the wind. Pronounced “louard” rhyming with steward

**Lifelines** – A plastic-coated wire that encircles the deck, several feet above the rail, running from one support (stanchion) to another and used as a handhold in dangerous conditions.

**Lift** – A wind shift that permits a higher heading. Opposite of header.

**Log** – A book in which a boat’s speed, distance, and activities are noted.

**Long Eyes** – Binoculars

**Luff** – To alter the course toward the wind, to head up 2. The forward side of a sail 3. When a sail shakes with little wind

**Lull** – A temporary decrease in wind velocity during a storm.

**Make/Made** – To go faster than another boat so that the land appears to move behind it. 2. To secure something.

**Moore** – To secure a boat to an anchored buoy.

**Off the wind** – Downwind, on a broad reach or run also “before the wind”

**PFD** – Personal Floatation Device (life jacket)

**Painter** – A short tow or mooring line, one end of which is secured to a dinghy’s bow.

**Pawl** – A hinged pin in a winch that, when engaged between teeth, locks the winch and keeps it from backing off.

**Pinch** – To sail too close to the wind, so that though the boat seems to be pointing high, she is making less progress to windward because of excess leeway resulting from the drop in speed.

**Point** – To sail effectively close hauled.

**Points of sail** – By the lee, run, reach, and close-hauled.

**Pram** – A flat-bottomed blunt-bowed dinghy.

**Pressure** - Wind

**Puff** – A short gust of wind.

**Reef** – To shorten sail in strong wind. 2. A barely submerged chain of rocks, coral or sand.

**Rhumb Line** – The straight-line compass course between two points, - shortest distance.

**Rig** – To prepare a boat for sailing 2. The spars, sails, and standing and running rigging.

**Roller Furling** – Rolling the luff of a jib around the forestay instead of furling the sail by lowering it.

**Scope** – The amount of anchor rode let out in excess of the water depth. Like “4 to 1 scope”

**Scull** – To propel a boat forward with the use of the rudder or single oar over the stern.

**Shackle** – A looped metal fitting that secures the end of a line to a fitting, sail, etc.

**Sheave** – The roller over which a line passes as it goes through a block.

**Shock cord** – Elastic rope/line.

**Sister ships** – Boats built to the same design.

**Skiff** – A small, light sailboat or rowboat.

**Splice** – To make a loop in the end of a line by weaving strands from both over and under each other – the resulting friction keeps the strands from slipping.

**Spring Line** – A docking line that runs at an acute angle from pier to boat to help stop fore and aft surging.

**Squall** – A sudden local storm.

**Stow** – To put something away in it’s proper place.

**Tactics** – In a race, decisions about course relative to other boats.

**Trapeze** – A wire hanging from the mast which, when attached to a harness, permits a crew member to stand out from a one-design on the windward rail to improve the righting moment.

**Tune** – To adjust running and standing rigging until they are at optimum tension and position.

**Turnbuckle** – A tension-adjusting device composed of threaded rods joined by a threaded barrel.

**Upwind** – The direction from which the wind is blowing.

**V-Berth** – Two bunks, generally in the forward cabin, whose feet are joined.

**Winch** – A geared drum around which sheets & halyards are wrapped. It is driven by a hand driven arm (winch handle).

**Windlass** – A winch, powered by hand or motor, for hauling anchors.