

ADAPTIVE SPORTS CONNECTION GLOSSARY OF SAILING TERMS FOR SHORE HELP

Underlined words and terms are ones that you will likely hear or use most often.

A

ASC: An acronym for the Adaptive Sports Connection.

Anchor: A device used to hold a boat to the sea bottom

Aft: At, near, or towards the stern.

B

Bailer: A device used to remove water from the boat (anything from a simple hand scoop to built-in self/auto bailers)

Barrel knot: A knot that is used as a stopper knot with several twists/loops for size and grip ability so lines don't accidentally pull out of blocks or fairleads.

Battens: Thin slats usually fiberglass or wood that are inserted at the leech of the sail for added stiffness and support of the leech of the sail.

Block: A pulley/sheave that is encased in its own housing. A block can help to improve mechanical advantage when pulling on a line.

Boom: Horizontal spar that supports the foot (bottom) of the sail. Named for the sound it makes when it hits someone's head.

Boom Vang: A line or device that runs from the underside of the boom to the mast. The vang helps keep the boom down and tighten the leech of the sail. Make sure the boom vang is loose before raising the sail, otherwise the sail may not go fully up.

Bow: The forward part/front end of a boat.

Bow Line: Also known as a "Painter". The bow line is used to tie the bow/front boat to the dock or other object.

Bowline (knot): May be the most important knot in sailing. A non-slip knot that is easy to undo even after fully loaded.

Buoy: A floating device. Usually anchored in place but may be drifting. Usually for mooring/navigation/information.

C

Catamaran: A boat with two hulls.

Centerboard: A thin, wide blade going down through the bottom of the hull in the center of the boat in a **Centerboard Trunk**. This blade helps to keep the boat from going sideways in the water. A centerboard can pivot up and down whereas a Daggerboard serves the same purpose but slides up or down in a pocket (does not pivot).

Cleat: A fitting where a line can be secured. Note, there are many styles of cleats (horn, cam, clam, etc.)

Cleat Hitch: The method of securing a line to a horn cleat by taking a turn around the cleat and then passing the line in a figure-eight pattern around the horn of the cleat, with the last loop being an underhand loop.

Clew: The aft lower corner of the sail is the clew. It is where the foot and the leech of the sail meet.

Clove Hitch: Similar to two half hitch knots with line crossing over on top (sometimes called a Double Hitch).

Cockpit: Open part of boat.

Crew: The person or persons in the boat who trim the jib (and possibly other sails), balance the boat people, keep a lookout for things the helmsperson may not see, and help the helmsperson/skipper.

Cunningham: A line or mechanism used to tension the luff (forward edge) of a sail. Usually through an eye (called a cringle) along the luff above the tack (see "Tack"). It is different from a downhaul in that a downhaul holds/pulls down a boom (or other spar) and not the sail directly (a downhaul may indirectly pull on a sail).

D

Dolly: A lightweight trailer that is used to move and/or launch/retrieve boats (often by hand and is not road-worthy).

Downhaul: A line used to pull/hold the boom down (or other spar). At ASC, when a boom is able to slide up and down where it attaches to the mast (with a fitting called a gooseneck, see "gooseneck"), the downhaul is sometimes used in place of, and to serve the function of, a cunningham (to tension the luff of the sail). Be sure the downhaul is loose before raising the sail, otherwise a sail may not go up all the way.

F

Fairlead: Block or fitting used to change the direction of a running line such a jib sheet.

Fenders: Cushions/bumpers used to reduce the chafe between a boat and the dock or other boats

Fiberglass: Many boats are made of fiberglass. It is a woven material impregnated with a liquid resin that is very stiff when the resin hardens.

Figure 8 knot: A knot in the shape of an "8". Sometimes used near the end of a line to prevent it from passing through a fairlead, eye, or block (a stop/stopper knot).

Flake a sail: Lay a sail in gentle back and forth folds so as to not crease/damage a sail, keep it neat and out of the way, and to make it easier to raise the sail at the appropriate time.

Foot: The bottom edge of the sail between the tack (front corner) and the clew (back corner).

Forestay: Forward support of mast that helps to hold the mast upright in the fore and aft direction, usually a wire leading from the bow to the mast (part of the standing rigging).

Furl: Roll or fold up a sail and secure neatly.

G

Gooseneck: A hinged fitting that connects the boom to the mast (that type of fitting can also be found elsewhere)

H

Halyard(s): Line/wire attached to the head of a sail used to hoist sails up (jib halyard, main/mainsail halyard, etc.).

Head: The top of the sail (also a term for a toilet on a boat equipped with one).

Hiking Strap(s): A strap (sometimes padded for comfort) attached to the cockpit under which a sailor places their feet in order to hold the sailor in the boat while hiking out.

Hull: The body of a boat.

J

Jib: The front sail on boats with two or more sails. It is small and triangular in shape.

Jib Hank(s): The fitting(s) along the luff of the jib used to attach the jib to the forestay. (A hank-on jib versus a furling jib)

Jib Sheet: The line(s) used to control the trim of the jib.

L

Leech: The back edge of the sail. The leech runs between the head and the clew of the sail.

Life jacket: A device that provides flotation for people in the water. A Coast Guard approved Life Jacket/Personal Flotation Device (PFD) must be worn at all times when on or near the water at the Adaptive Sports Connection.

Line(s): The general term for rope on a boat. Additionally, "sheets", "halyards", "guy", and other names are used to differentiate lines by use/function.

Luff: The forward edge of a sail, running between the tack and the head of a sail (nearest the mast for a mainsail).

M

Mainsheet: The line attached to the boom that controls the Mainsail in and out.

Mast: The vertical spar that supports the sail.

O

Outhaul: A line/rigging attached to the clew of the mainsail and used to pull/stretch the foot of the sail out along the boom.

P

Paddle: A device with a handle and blade used to move the boat through water.

PFD: A Personal Flotation Device. A Type IV (throwable) PFD is the common example versus a wearable Life Jacket

Port: Refers to the left side of the boat when facing the bow as well as to which tack a boat is on. If a boat is on "port tack" the wind is coming from over the left/port side of the boat.

R

Rigging: Rigging is divided into two groups. Standing rigging is wire used to keep the mast standing upright. Running rigging is line used for adjusting the sails (halyards, sheets, cunningham, boom vang, etc.).

Rudder: The movable, underwater blade used for steering the boat (usually at the transom of the boat).

S

Sail(s): Sails use the wind to propel the boat. Most sails are triangular (having three corners).

Shackle: A U-shaped piece of metal with a pin to close the open end of the “U”. It is used to connect objects together, such as connecting a halyard to the head (top) of a sail.

Sheet(s): A control line for a sail used to trim a sail in or out to adjust the angle of the sail relative to the wind.

Shrouds: Pieces of standing rigging that holds the mast from falling sideways.

Skipper: The person in charge of the boat, usually the person steering the boat (helmsperson) on a small sailboat.

Spar(s): Poles that support the sail(s). Spars include masts (vertical spars), booms (horizontal spars), and other spars such as whisker poles and spinnaker poles.

Starboard: Refers to the right side of the boat when facing the bow. A boat is on a “**Starboard Tack**” when the wind is on its starboard side (coming over the right side of the boat).

Stays: Pieces of standing rigging that hold the mast from moving forward or backward. The **Forestay** runs from the mast to the bow/front of the boat.

Stern: Back/aft end of a boat/hull.

Stopper knot: A knot usually near the end of a line to prevent it from passing through a block or fairlead (often a Figure 8 or barrel knot).

T

Tack: The lower front corner of the sail where the luff and the foot of the sail meet.

Telltails: Small lengths of lightweight material attached to the sail to indicate the airflow over the sail and/or to the shrouds to help indicate wind direction. There can also be masthead telltails.

Tiller: The long piece of wood/material connected at or near the top of the rudder to control the rudder’s movement. It changes the boat’s direction when moved from side to side.

Traveler: The mainsheet traveler is a device/system that allows for changing the position where parts of the mainsheet connect to the boat. On a small sailboat, the traveler is typically mounted either in the cockpit or near the stern of the boat. It is often a track/bar with a sliding/rolling car that runs perpendicular to the centerline of the boat. Sometimes it is just made up of lines.

Transom: The very back edge/surface of the boat is called the transom (usually vertical or near vertical).

Trunk: The centerboard housing.