



A Tall Ship Guide – Online Version

Tall Ship Guide Book

By Adam and Debbie Purser



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References

- **‘Debbie and Adam have compiled an excellent handbook.’ Hugh O’Neill, Tall Ship Captain**
- *“I think this tall ships publication is brilliant.” Sheila R.*
- *“Just what I wanted” Norman D.*
- *“Thank you, I found the guide really useful” Ann I*
- *“Thank you for this beautifully illustrated and very helpful download about tall ships.” Donatella G.*
- *‘Thank you for the information, I think it is very useful, a lot to learn!’ Catherine L.*
- *‘I was impressed by how simply you were able to explain what seemed like a very complex subject.’ Carl A*
- *"I am delighted to have this guide. Thank you!" Rita B*
- **‘I can heartily recommend the Tall Ship Guide to any prospective sailor.’**
Chris Phillips, Tall Ship Captain

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Captain Chris Phillips, Master, Pelican of London, former Master, STS Lord Nelson & SV Tenacious; Cape Horner (twice)."

"Adam and Debbie have sailed tall ships since not long after Noah was a young deck apprentice (demonstrated by the fact that Adam introduced me to the delights of professional bosunry two and a half decades ago), and their experience in vessels of all shapes and sizes is all here in this booklet for the readers' benefit and pure joy.

The text will be a great help to anyone who is interested in sailing of all kinds, but almost indispensable to anyone anticipating their first step into the murky world (and vocabulary) of tall ship sailing. It always shows when voyage crew have done some research before they come on board, and it can only be to their benefit to do so.

As such I can heartily recommend the Tall Ship Guide to any prospective sailor. Captain Chris Phillips



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Captain Hugh O'Neill, Master Mariner, MA (Maritime History)

Introduction to captain Hugh O'Neill:

I first went to sea on Merchant ships as a deck cadet in 1972 (aged 16). It had always been a childhood dream to learn how to sail traditional ships to better understand Joseph Conrad's writing. Although it would be 17 years of merchant seafaring before I resumed the dream, it was time well spent (in retrospect). I had qualified as Master Mariner in 1984, and had gained considerable experience in man management.

I sailed 3 voyages as volunteer Navigator on STA Schooners prior to joining them as full-time Mate in March 1989. My previous colleagues had thought I was mad leaving my highly paid job, only working alternate months: finding myself underwater on a bowsprit, engaged in mortal combat with a violent headsail, at 3am in a March gale in the English Channel, I thought my old colleagues may have had a point. However, by the end of the voyage, I had never felt so alive and knew it had been the best move of my life.

After about 2 years as Mate, I was promoted to Master and remained another 8 years. To coin the memorable phrase of a predecessor (Josh Garner): "The mantle of command rested easy on my shoulders". I left the STA Schooners at the end of 1998 to pursue the career of Marine Pilot in the Port of London. During my 8 years in London, I was asked to sail in relief capacity as master on the STA Schooners and a variety of Tall Ships including Astrid, Asgard II, Lord Nelson, Tenacious, Prince William and Stavros Niarchos.

After we emigrated to New Zealand, my only tall ship voyaging has been aboard "Spirit of New Zealand" as relief Mate.



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Knowing Adam and Debbie

I sailed several voyages with Adam and was always impressed by his capacity for hard work and his boundless passion for sailing. He was always first to volunteer for heroic deeds, like going aloft in atrocious weather to put storm lashings on the topsail.

I sailed with Debbie a couple of times in the West of Scotland and she too had that infectious enthusiasm – a major asset for strengthening crew ability and morale.

Tall Ships Guide Book

Debbie and Adam have compiled an **excellent handbook** which combines their considerable experience with a whole body of past literature. The book is clearly aimed at the non-mariner to whom the whole jargon of sailing is incomprehensible and could act as a deterrent. The simple truth is that nautical jargon is a very precise and specific meaning, and learning the ropes can be done in a simple and methodical manner. Great photographs and diagrams greatly assist the process.

Thanks to Adam and Debbie's passions, more people than ever before can experience sailing on a traditional vessel in some of the most beautiful and wild parts of our small blue planet. The more people who sign up for adventure, the more such magnificent vessels can have a future to help keep the dream alive for future generations.

Too often, marketing strategy promises life-changing experiences and dream fulfilment. But in the world of sailing traditional craft, this is no idle promise, but a realistic expectation. As a pilot, I have now met 4 masters of Passenger ships who recognized me as their first captain on the STA Schooners. It was that first exposure to seafaring which decided their course in life.

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In the present age of ‘social distancing’ and fear of the unknown, there can be no better tonic to both physical and spiritual health than to cast off the moorings, set sail, haul in the sheets, and aim for distant horizons. The challenge of learning a new skill, of becoming a part of a crew and sharing the adventure of a seafaring voyage is always invigorating. Bon Voyage

Captain Hugh O'Neill



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Acknowledgements

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Debbie and Adam would like to thank the following organisations and people.

The Tall Ships Youth Trust formerly the Sail Training Association as without the voyage on the STA Malcolm Miller in April 1990 we would not have met.

Luke Powell for building our first pilot cutter Eve of St Mawes.

Our families and shareholders who have always been supportive through good and tough times.

Many wonderful captains, skippers, professional crew, and shipmates on the thousands of nautical miles we have sailed.

Thank you to our sailing partners past and present who have enabled Classic Sailing to help thousands of people to sail on tall ships and traditional vessels.

We are grateful to the huge number of people that have sailed with us.

Captain Hugh O'Neill, Chris Phillips and Harry Mutter for proof reading the book and correcting some nautical terms.



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Contents

1. About the Authors
2. Preface
3. **How to work on tall ships.**
4. Online Learning
5. **List of Tall Ship Types**
6. Tall Ships Races Classification System
7. Basic Terms
8. Parts of Ship
9. Sail and Mast Names
10. Parts of a Square Sail
11. Parts of a headsail
12. Parts of a Gaff and Gaff Topsail sail.
13. How to 'Heave to'
14. How to climb the mast.
15. Watch Keeping Explained.
16. How to Spot Wildlife at Sea.
17. Wind Speed Table
18. **Clothing for Tall Ships**
19. Types of Tall Ship in Detail.
20. **Future Tall Ship Races 2021, 2022 and 2023**



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About the Authors

Adam and Debbie Founded Classic Sailing in 1996 having met sailing on a Tall Ship in 1990.

Debbie has marine qualifications at command level for vessels up to 3000 tons and has worked on STS Lord Nelson, Barque Europa and skippered many fine traditional vessels.

Adam has had command positions on STS Malcolm Miller, Bessie Ellen and skippered lugers, pilot cutters and ketches.

Between them they have sailed on over 50 tall ships and traditional vessels. They have sailed in all the Oceans of the World and sailed to the Arctic, Antarctic, remote islands like Tristan da Cunha.

The ports we know stretch from Hobart in Tasmania to Montevideo, many places around different Oceans and a host of European ports.

We don't know it all and don't expect to!



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Preface

What are Tall Ships, Square Riggers and Clipper Ships?

Preface

This guide is about vessels you can see sailing today. The types of ships, sail names, parts of ship, terminology and the dates of forthcoming Tall Ships Races.

Tall Ships

Tall ships are historically large, traditionally-rigged sailing vessel. Today modern tall ship rigs include topsail schooners, brigantines, brigs, barques, ketches, lugers, cutters and other traditionally rigged vessels.

Square Sail

Square rig is a generic term that comes from the roughly square shape of the sails hung from horizontal spars of sailing vessel. Nowadays it relates to the same group of vessels as 'tall ships'. Square rig – as opposed to fore-and-aft rig – means that the sails are spread square (perpendicular) to the wind, which requires yards pivoting on masts.

Clipper Ships

Clipper ships were very fast sailing ships of the 19th century. They were quick, yacht like vessels due to being very narrow, with three masts setting a square sails. They were designed for speed and could carry high value cargoes in small bulk. Today Clipper Ships is a term used mostly in North America as a generic description of 'tall ships'.

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Dutch “Klippers”, which refers to their cargo-carrying (and now passenger-carrying) sailing vessels designed for the shallow waters of the Dutch coast and inland waters.

Tall Ships

In this book ‘tall ships’ includes the terms ‘clipper ships’ and ‘square riggers’.



Oosterschelde in the Cape Verde

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How to Work on Tall Ships



Many people want to work on tall ships, you are not alone. Brutal fact. Very few tall ships can afford to pay staff at 'entry level' like deck hands or watch leaders.

These are generally filled by volunteers and some even have to pay their own living costs. You can spend a lot of time and money gaining qualifications, but you will nearly always earn more on private yachts than sail training ships.

The big difference between private yachts and ships that do charter or sail training is that our ships sail almost every day, rather than spend weeks in port polishing chrome winches and waiting for the owner to turn up. Adventure charter ships go to Antarctica, race in tall ships events, have a new guest crew each

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week to get to know and share experiences. The wages may be poor but your life will have a story to tell.

The Classic Sailing fleet has more than its fair share of female skippers and mates. There are skippers of awesome tall ships, sailing schooners and ketches that are only in their twenties or thirties and very experienced captain's still inspiring young crews in their 60's.

Many of our skippers made a career change to work at sea, and some have gone on to buy their own boat and set up their own adventure charter business. It is never too late.....

Looking for work right now!

Please Apply Direct to the Ships Operators

Please note Classic Sailing is not an employment agency for tall ships, and we are not responsible for employing the paid or voluntary crew on the vessels we work with.

Voluntary positions are available on some of the ships we work with but you have to be approved by the vessel owners or Captain.

The vessels offering volunteer positions change from time to time and you will need to contact them directly yourself.

Please bear in mind that to gain approval as a volunteer you may have to pay to sail on them first.

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Job Opportunities Through Sail Training International – Mostly UK and Europe

Sail Training International runs the Tall ships Races in Europe and works to promote the value of international sail training. They have a job vacancies website for work on tall ships and smaller sailing vessels.

<https://sailtraininginternational.org/sailtraining/jobs/>

Job Opportunities The American Sail Training Organisation – Mostly US and Canada

If you live in the Americas the qualifications are different. The best source of information is:

<https://tallships.sailtraining.org>



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A Career on Tall Ships

Working on tall ships is a very desirable occupation for many reasons. Unfortunately this gives rise to a situation where tall ship owners, who all have very difficult finances, can either charge people to work for them or pay practically nothing. As many of them are also charities you can see the logic of this, but it is very frustrating if you have your heart set on a sailing career.

Here are some ways into the Tall Ship Industry in the UK

Route 1: Volunteer tall ship crewing

Many professional tall ship sailors started off by working as a volunteer for nothing for an unspecified amount of time on a tall ship or large yachts. You can eventually get paid as your experience and knowledge of the ships staffing systems comes into play, but there is likely to be a limit on how far you can progress towards real wages without formal qualifications or specific trade skills like rigging, cooking, engineering or electronics.

Tip: Always record your sea time and get it signed by the captain, even on a Classic Sailing voyage where you have paid to be crew. If the ship signs you on as sail training crew, you are crew.

More information see ASTO The British ' Association of Sail Training Organisations'



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ASTO has a popular [job vacancies](#) page which includes paid vacancies and volunteer opportunities on British Sail training Vessels from Tall Ships like Lord Nelson to yachts of all sizes.



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Route 2: Cadetship in Merchant Navy

The second route is to take a formal cadetship with a merchant shipping company and become a qualified, deck or engineering officer. If you want the definite prospect of wages throughout your training and are young enough to be selected by a shipping company then this is a long route in with good all-round sea career prospects. We have seen a young woman with a degree in music and a passion for tall ships go from being a galley assistant on a tall ship to the chief officer of a chemical tanker. She now sails on Tall Ships as a 2nd mate in her free time in either a voluntary or paid role. Many of the ship's officers on British tall ships have come through this route.

These are some UK contacts that may be able to help

Trinity House <http://www.trinityhouse.co.uk/careers/cadets.html>

3. UK Deck Officer Training (Yachts & Sail Training Ships up to 3000 ton)

You can work your way up a career qualification chain similar to the merchant navy route but aimed at super yacht crew and sail training ships. The progression is a yacht rating - deck officer - chief mate - Officer of the Watch and eventually UK Master Certificate without joining the Merchant Navy. It requires a lot of sea time on vessels over 15m loadline length and the passing of about STCW 95 Courses and exam modules. The total cost of all these courses and exams is several thousand pounds. ASTO did offer grants for some

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of the course modules if you are under 40 and working already in sail training.

Recording Qualifying Sea time towards Yacht rating or Deck Officer

If you sail on larger vessels you can usually count it as qualifying sea time if you talk to the mate or Captain and explain what you are trying to achieve. It helps to obtain a **Seamans Discharge book** or similar sea time record book for your country of origin to be taken seriously. If you are British you will need an up to date **MCA (Maritime Coastguard Agency) Training Record Book** which you can download from the MCA website. Its a bit like a nautical NVQ where you have to gather evidence of your practical experience at sea. Tasks vary from washing decks to understanding the limitations of trial manoeuvres using Automated Radar Plotting Aids. You will need to ask very nicely to get officers or skippers to sign off any tasks completed if you are only there as guest crew.



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Useful Contacts:

MGN Notice for tall ship qualifications & manning levels
Marine Coastguard Agency <https://www.mcga.gov.uk>

UK Sailing Academy that offers the complete course and STCW95 modules www.uksa.org

4. RYA Route: Work on Tall Ships under 200 tons

If a UK commercial sailing vessel is under 200 tons or 24 metres length then you can skipper it with a Commercially endorsed RYA Yachtmaster Offshore or RYA Yachtmaster Ocean qualification.

You can work your way up through the Royal Yachting Association (RYA) courses from Competent Crew to Day Skipper -with Classic Sailing and we can also help you gain experience as a voluntary mate and gain your 60 mile qualifying passages for Coastal Skipper or Yachtmaster Offshore exam.

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Online Learning



Want to study Navigation and Seamanship?

- Would you like to gain a qualification?
- Do you want to understand how navigation works?
- All online courses are in English and can be undertaken anywhere in the world.

Learning online makes it possible.

- It's only a few hours per week to advance your skills?
- You do it in your own time
- You can do it at home – no traveling or commitment to evening classes.

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Worldwide Charts

The great thing is that all charts all around the world use the same system, style and symbols. Major features are in English - even on Chinese charts.

Beginners course helps you learn in a structured way about, points of sailing, safety at sea, an introduction to navigation and chart work and much more. Includes a pack sent by post.

Intermediate course, an excellent way to learn how to use both paper and digital charts. Includes a pack sent by post.

Advanced Course, take your navigation skills to the level required to skipper up to 200 tons. Includes a pack sent by post.

[Seamanship and Navigation Online Courses](#)

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How to "Heave To" on a Square Rigger



Not many of us will reach the lofty heights of tall ship captain, but it is nice to know what is going on. 'Heaving To', stopping a square rigger is very different from sailing a 'fore and aft' rigged sailing ship.

What is 'Heaving to'?

The act of 'heaving to' is a manoeuvre to quickly stop under sail. It can be achieved with many different sail plans, not just square rig. The techniques vary a bit between types of vessel. To reduce speed on a square rigger, you just start taking away sails. If you want to stop more urgently then 'heaving to' is really the only sensible option.

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How not to stop a square rigger

To do an emergency stop on a schooner you could sail her up into the wind to stop her, although there would be a lot of flapping sails.

On a square rigger sailing into the wind would immediately back the square sails so the wind is pushing on the wrong side and you could risk losing control and certainly there is a big risk of losing a mast. The sails are in a state called 'All aback'.

The foremast is particularly vulnerable because all the 'standing rigging' is designed mainly for going downwind, plus all the flapping headsails would put more stresses on that mast.

Another problem with going all aback is that it is very hard to get the square sails down, and more dangerous to go aloft and stow them. If you have to stop in a hurry, or just want to pause in the middle of the ocean, then the 'hove to' manoeuvre is a good one, because the only mast you back is the main mast.



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How to Heave To a Square Rigger

This is based on the techniques used on barque Europa.

A barque has three masts with square sails on the main and foremast.

1. Clew up the main course
2. Sail up onto a beam reach
3. Brace the main mast square

You need a team to brace each yard on the main mast and bring them all square, and possibly a bit sharper until they all back with the wind on the wrong side.

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4. Now the Sails Counter Each Other Out

The sails on the foremast are pulling normally and trying to sail you forward and away from the wind. The main mast square sails are backed and the wind on them is trying to swing the ship back.

The resultant effect is that the forces counter act each other and the ship is stationary with most the sail still set.

5. Ship Comes to a Stop

With most your sails still set, it is easier to get going again - in theory!

You could try this technique , with the captains approval and a very able crew, for real on any similarly rigged barque as long as it is not attempted in too strong winds or big seas, because of the strain on the masts. If you have stun'sails up - then it all gets a bit tricky.

Get to sea to see how it in action!



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Types of Tall Ship and Traditional Vessels.

Types of Ship

1. Fully-rigged Ship i.e. all masts carried squares
2. Four-masted Barque. A Barque has the aftermost mast rigged fore-and-aft
3. Three-masted Barque
4. Four-masted Barquentine, Barquentine - only the foremast carries squares
5. Three-masted Barquentine
6. Main-mast Barquentine (Xebec Polacre)
7. Three-masted Topsail Schooner (able to carry square topsails)
8. Two-masted Topsail Schooner
9. Brig (2 masts, both square rigged)
10. Brigantine, 2 masts, of which the foremast only carries squares e.g. Asgard II
11. Three-masted Schooner
12. Three-masted Lugger
13. Gaff Ketch
14. Yawl
15. Gaff Cutter



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Tall ships Races Class A, B, C and D



Photo by Adam Purser

Tall ships Races Class A, B, C and D

Description of Class of Vessels

Class A

Class A is all square- rigged vessels, such as, barque, barquentine, brig or ship- rigged, and all other vessel more than 40 metres Length Overall (LOA), regardless of rig.

Class B

These are traditionally- rigged vessels (i.e. gaff- rigged sloops, ketches, yawls and schooners) with an LOA of less than 40 metres and with a waterline length (LWL) of at least 9.14 metres.

Class C

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Large modern rigged vessels (i.e. Bermudan- rigged sloops, ketches, yawls and schooners) with an LOA of less than 40 metres and with a waterline length (LWL) of at least 9.14 metres not carrying spinnaker-like sails.

Class D

Small modern rigged vessels (i.e. Bermudan- rigged sloops, ketches, yawls and schooners) with an LOA of less than 40 metres and with a waterline length (LWL) of at least 9.14 metres carrying spinnaker-like sails.

Basic Terms

You will need to know a few basic terms to understand tall ship identification.

Sail types

- Headsails - sails in front of the foremast - can include the forestaysail and all the jibs.
- Jibs - headsails attached to the bowsprit.
- Staysails - any sail that is hoisted up a stay except stays from the bowsprit.
- Gaff sails - a four-sided sail attached on three sides, the bottom to the boom, the vertical part to the mast (luff) and by a boom on its top edge (head), known as the gaff. This leaves the fourth side at the stern (leech) the only unsupported side. All this structure was required to keep the sail in a reasonable shape to sail. Traditional canvas like cotton or flax stretches considerably and the gaff structure helps to overcome this problem.
- Square sails - these are the sails that hang like curtains from the yards. Again originally designed to overcome the

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problem of stretching of the canvas, the yards support the sail at the top and sheets on bottom outer corners, the tacks/clews, pull the sail to the desired position and shape.

- Courses - the lowest square sail.



Peggy and Eve of St Mawes at Classic Sailing Annual Pilot Cutter Review

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Parts of ship

- Bowsprit - the pointy bit out the front.
- Foremast - mast in front of all the others
- Mainmast - mast behind the Foremast
- Mizzen mast - mast behind the Mainmast.
- More masts than three give rise to a variety of names, Jiggermast, Middle mast, Driver mast, Pusher mast, Spanker.
- Sheets - ropes that pull the sail so that they catch the wind and are adjusted as the wind direction changes or alters in strength.
- Halyards - ropes that pull the sail up.
- Rudder - the blade at the stern that steers the ship.
- Stays - ropes or wires that support masts from in front or behind.
- Shrouds - ropes or wires that support the masts from either side of the ship.
- Ratlines - ropes or wooden struts attached to the shrouds that you stand on as you climb the mast.

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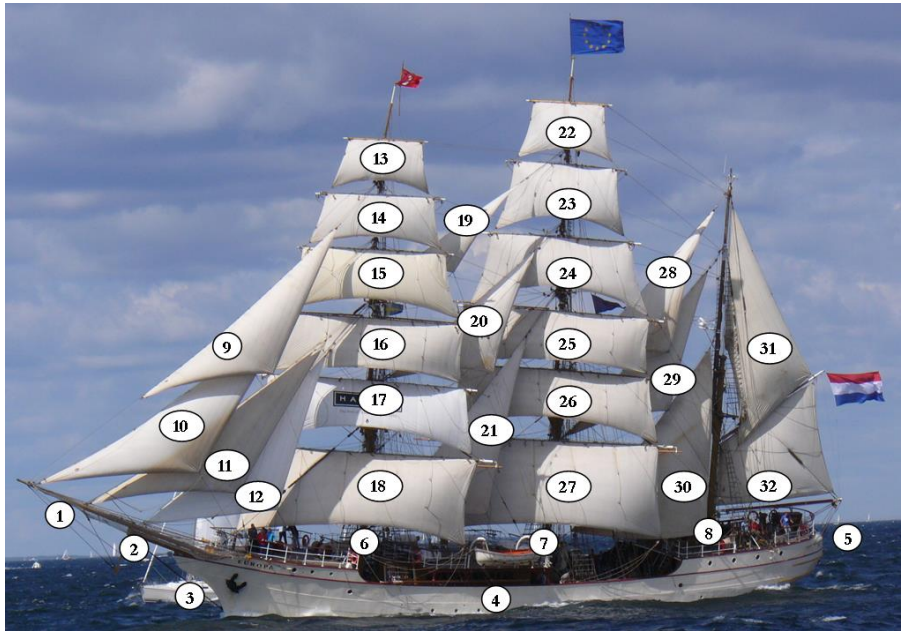
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Running rigging – the ropes that set and hand the sails, and also set them to best catch the wind. To set sail is to put them to work and to hand sails is to put them away.

- Sheet; to set a sail to catch the most wind.
- Buntline; to bring the foot of a square sail up to its yard when handing sail.
- Clewline; to bring the lower corner of a square sail up to the yard when handing sail.
- Downhaul; to haul a sail down, gravity is not always enough!
- Halyard; to hoist sails or yards.
- Tack; to bring the lower corner of the sail down when setting Halyard; to hoist sails or yards.
- Tack; to bring the lower corner of the sail down when setting sail. (Tack is part of the sail and not a verb in this instance.)
- Yard Braces; to adjust the angle of the yards of a square-rigged ship relative to the centreline.
- Topping lift; to lift a yard or boom in a vertical position.
- Outhaul; stretches the foot or head of a fore-and-aft sail along the boom or gaff.
- Gaff preventer or vang to control the gaff in a horizontal plane, stops the gaff flying around out of control.
- Boom stop to control the mizzen boom in a horizontal plane. Like the gaff preventer.
- Purchase; extra tackle for the outhaul or other situations. Consists of two blocks and ropes that create mechanical advantage, known as blocks and tackle.
- Tricing line to keep the lazy sheet from chafing or for pulling parts of a sail in when handing sail.



Sail and Mast Names



In English and German, other translations welcome.

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Outer Bowsprit or Jibboom | 10. Outer Jib |
| 2. Inner Bowsprit | 11. Inner jib |
| 3. Bow and stem | 12. Foretopmast staysail |
| 4. Hull | 13. Fore Skysail - Fore Moonraker |
| 5. Stern | 14. Fore Royal |
| 6. Foremast | 15. Fore Topgallant |
| 7. Mainmast | 16. Fore upper topsail |
| 8. Mizzen mast | 17. Fore lower topsail |
| 9. Flying jib | |

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- | | |
|--|--|
| 18. Forecourse - Foresail | 8 Besan / Besanmast |
| 19. Main Royal Staysail | 9. Jäger |
| 20. Main Topgallant Staysail | 10. Außenklüver |
| 21. Main Topmast Staysail | 11. Innenklüver |
| 22. Main Skysail - Main
Moonraker | 12. Vorstengestagssegel |
| 23. Main Royal | 13 Fore Skysail (don't know
if there's a german term for
it) |
| 24. Main Topgallant | 14 Vorroyalsegel |
| 25. Main upper topsail | 15 Vorbramsegel |
| 26. Main lower topsail | 16 Vorobermarssegel |
| 27. Maincourse - Main sail | 17 Voruntermarssegel |
| 28. Mizzen Topgallant Staysail | 18 Fock |
| 29. Mizzen Top Staysail | 19 Großroyalstagssegel |
| 30. Mizzen Staysail - unique to
this ship the sail shown is
known as the 'Desmond' | 20 Großbramstagssegel |
| 31. Mizzen Gaff topsail | 21 Großstengestagssegel |
| 32. Mizzen Gaff Sail also known
as the Spanker | 22 Main Skysail (see 13) |
| | 23 Großroyalsegel |
| | 24 Großbramsegel |
| | 25 Großobermarssegel |
| | 26 Großuntermarssegel |
| | 27 Großsegel |
| | 28 Besanbramstagssegel |
| | 29 Besanstengestagssegel |
| | 30 Besanstagssegel |
| | 31 Besantoppsegel |
| | 32 Unterer Besan |

In German, thanks to Jade Cooper

- 1 Klüverbaum
- 2 Bugsprit
- 3 Bug
- 4 Mittschiffs
- 5 Heck / Achterdeck
- 6 Vortopp / Fockmast
- 7 Großtopp

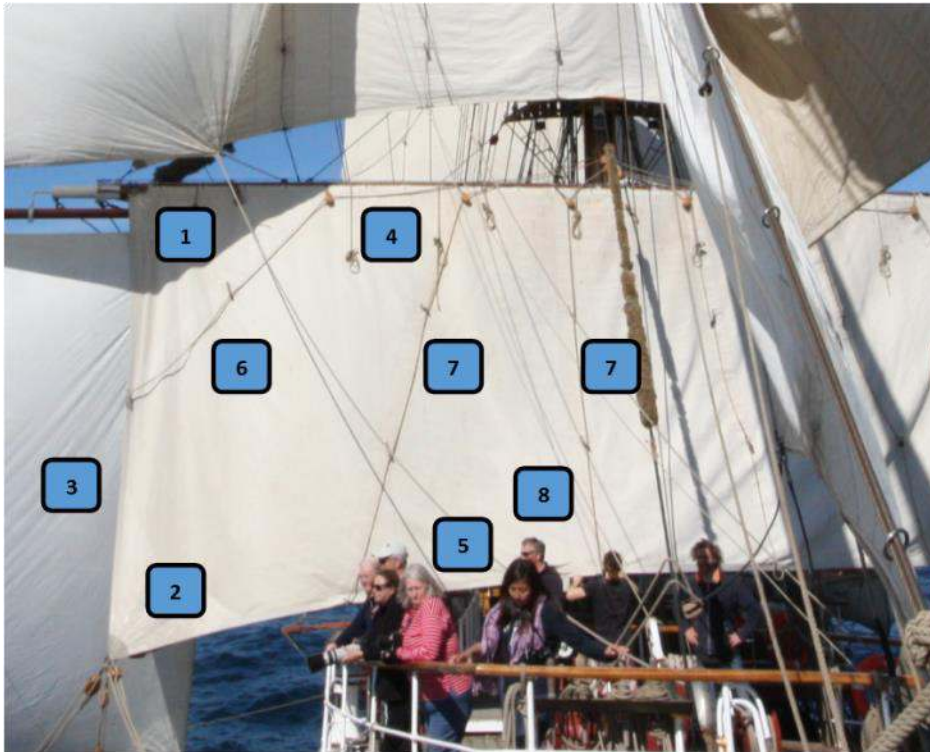
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Names of Square Sail Parts



Parts of a square sail – many of these terms are also used on other shaped sails but the square sail is considered the master sail.

- Tack – The top outer corners
 - This is an important term both historically and today because it tells you what ‘tack’ your sailing ship is on.

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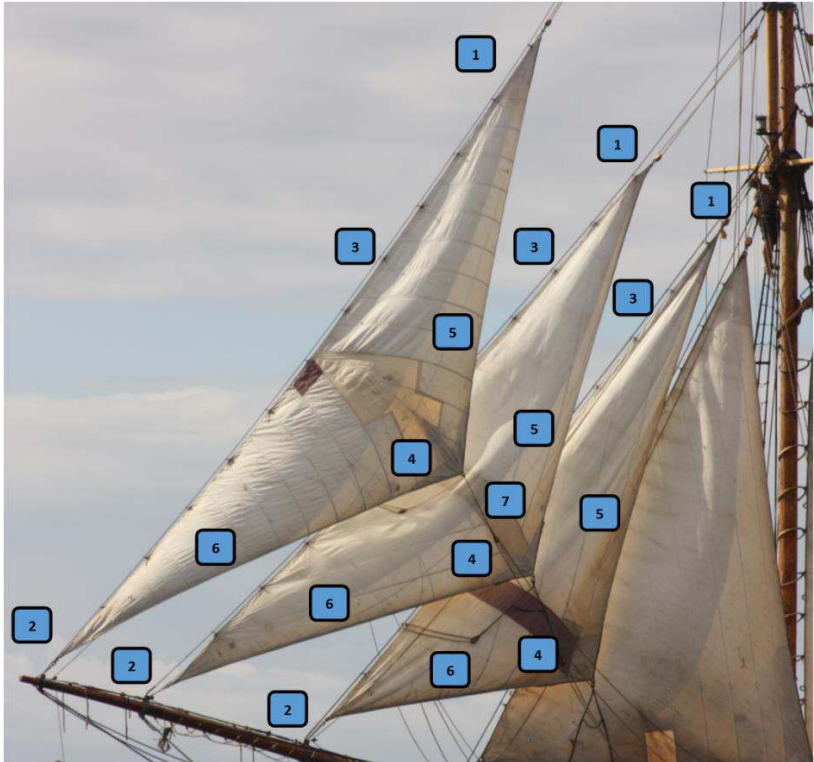
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- Whichever ‘tack’ is the furthest forward is the side the wind is coming from, from this picture the ‘starboard tack’ is marginally forward of the port tack, so this ship ‘Europa’ is on the ‘starboard tack’. That’s the origin of why we say a sailing vessel is on a port or starboard ‘tack’.
- Clew – the bottom outside corners.
- Leach – the outer sides of the sail.
- Head – the top of the sail
- Foot – bottom of the sail
- Leach (Clew) Line – these ropes pull the leach of the sail up to the yard when ‘handing’ putting the sail away.
- Buntlines - these ropes pull the bunt of the sail up to the yard when ‘handing’ putting the sail away.
- Bunt – the bulk of the middle of the sail.
- Fretlines – the lines on your forehead when you can’t remember the parts of the sail!



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Head Sail Part Names



1. Head
2. Tack
3. Luff
4. Clew
5. Leach
6. Foot
7. Sheet rope

From the front the sails are

- Flying jib
- Outer jib
- Inner jib
- Part of the staysail

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Gaff Sail Parts



Photo Pilot Cutter Agnes

Gaff Sail Parts

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| 1. Peak | 6. Clew |
| 2. Gaff | 7. Foot |
| 3. Head | 8. Leach |
| 4. Throat, the corner by the mast | 9. Reefing Lines |
| 5. Foot | |

Gaff Topsail parts

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10. Head

11. Topsail

12. (11) Cut out to fit mast

How to Climb Aloft



Where Can I Climb the Rigging on a Tall Ship?

Classic Sailing offers tall ship voyages where you will be encouraged to climb the rigging as part of your job as working tall ship crew. It is never compulsory and you will have more than one chance to try it. We think to climb aloft on a windjammer at sea is one of life's natural highs. The adrenalin buzz is huge, even if you have done it before, and the amount of courage to work aloft in any weather has not been diminished much over the centuries by the introduction of modern safety harnesses.

How agile do I need to be to Climb the Rigging?

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Classic Sailing directors Adam and Debbie have been working aloft for years and have seen all ages and sizes successfully climb the rigging on a tall ship from 70 year old's to 13 year old youngsters.

For someone of average fitness the challenge is about 75% mental and 25% physical.

We have also seen sailors with many disabilities climb aloft on specialist tall ships, like Lord Nelson and Tenacious. Some people climb a bit further each time and finally make it to the crow's nest by the end of a voyage.

The 'crows nest' is actually called the cross trees where the parts of the mast join and the shrouds are rove tightly to the hounds. (Rove, the route a rope, wire or chain takes to perform its function.)

An ideal opportunity for a friend take that precious photo to say "I did it" - whether it is the first platform or the royal yard.

Natural adventurers find they love their lofty perch and volunteer to go up at any opportunity to help stow sails or just to enjoy the amazing views.

How difficult is Climbing the Mast?

You can climb free without being clipped on (apart from the tricky bits) or you can clip on as you go. Some ships have now adopted a system of fall arrestors which mean you remain attached to the rig for the entire climb with minimal fiddling with clips.

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Shrouds are the strong wires that hold each mast up on either side of the ship. Ratlines are the horizontal rungs of the ladder strung between the shrouds.

You climb by holding on to the shrouds which are not vertical but angled, and you tread on the ratlines like the rungs of a ladder.

Ratlines

The lower ratlines on most tall ships are solid wooden slats and the 'ladder' is wide enough for several people to climb close together for a bit.

The angle of your 'stairway to heaven' is considerably less steep than most decorating ladders and a lot more secure. You always climb on the windward shrouds (side of the ship closest to the wind) so with the ship heeling under a press of sail, the angle on your side is very gentle and arm strength is not really an issue.

Up and Over the Futtock Shrouds

The first hurdle for most people is the infamous 'futtock shrouds' just below the first platform. All the tall ships we work with have a safety wire here for you to clip to, so if you do slip you won't go far.

Commitment more than strength.

This does need a definite commitment as a bit of arm strength is required because the futtock shrouds lean backwards for about 4-6ft to access the platform.

Preparing to step onto the foot ropes below the yards.

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- 1 Check you can comfortably reach both the foot rope and the safety wire you will clip your safety harness onto.
- 2 If there is someone else already on the yard you need to warn them by saying 'stepping on' the reason you do this is because you weight on the footrope will affect the other person and being warned is helpful.

As you step onto the foot ropes below the yard you clip your safety harness to a wire jackstay so you can use your hands to stow the sail. Your safety harness will slide along the yard so you do not have to reposition it once you are on the foot rope.

Working Aloft Variations

Every time you go aloft, the rigging can be in a different configuration. The gap between ratlines and footrope can be quite a step for little legs.

If the yards are braced up sharp then being small is an advantage if you have to wiggle through a tight spot. Like rock climbing you have to look ahead and plan your route skywards to suit the conditions. There may be a time when your watch leader is looking for volunteers to go aloft at night, so try and memorise your favourite moves around the tricky bits.

(P.S. It's a lot easier than rock climbing. Ships' masts are designed to be giant climbing frames.)

Personal Goal for the year: Climb the rigging of a tall ship

No shortage of voyages where you can attempt your goal, and experience a whole load more. Just Check put

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Why a Watch System?

To be on watch means you are the team whose turn it is to work the ship.

Other teams could be sleeping, eating or just not working the ship and relaxing or enjoying the view! Generally, the longer the voyage and the bigger the ship the more organised the ship is into a watch system. If you were just coastal sailing for a few hours on small tall ship and not sailing overnight, there is not much need for a watch system. But as soon as you sail overnight you need to organise watches so that everybody gets a chance to sleep and take their turn at working the ship

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in a fair way. The longer you sail the more important the watch system is.

The Core Watch Tasks

Sailing requires constant attention to the helm, keeping a lookout, setting the sails. Sailing requires constant attention to the helm, keeping a lookout, setting the sails for depending on the wind and monitoring the safety of the ship. The core task you will be performing with training and assistance are steering the ship, keeping a lookout, helping put up and take down the sails and setting the sails to catch the wind.

If you are not allowed to do these tasks it is not a proper tall ship sailing experience.

The ship's officers will take responsibility for the safety of the ship with your assistance in pointing out anything untoward and looking out for each other.

Other tasks.

There are many other tasks that you could be asked or volunteer to do. This will vary from ship to ship and you should know what you are letting yourself in for before you join the ship.

Possible tasks include

- Cleaning the heads and showers
- Cleaning the cabins and internal spaces
- Washing the deck

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- Helping to prepare meals and tables
- Clearing tables and washing up
- moving stores
- laundry
- Repairing sails
- Painting and scraping
- rigging work
- other maintenance tasks
- undertaking courses-
- Chart work
- Astro navigation
- knots and splicing
- Learning other skills
- attending lectures and seminars
- assisting other crew members
- book keeping
- assisting the 'Purser'
- medical assistance
- engine room assistance
- recording ships data
- wind
- speed
- direction
- ships
- speed
- course steered
- course achieved
- sea state
- cloud cover
- Wet and dry thermometer readings to get relative humidity.
- visibility
- sea temperature
- ships position
- recording weather forecasts
- Scientific sampling of the sea water and what is in it.

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The Watch Rota

The purpose of the watch rota is to ensure everybody gets a fair share of the work and fair opportunity to relax and rest.

There are many different ways to do it and you might find they are changed during the voyage for valid reasons and that different groups of people do different styles of rota.

The basics

From the number of watches and the length of the watches you can build a pattern, some patterns take three or four days to rotate right through the sequence.

Two Watch Systems at the Same Time

Quite often you will find that a ship will run two watch systems at the same time. One will be for the 'professional crew' onboard and the other for the 'voyage crew' or 'trainees'.

Each ship will have their own reasons for doing this.

Two reasons for this are:

- ❓ Giving the professional crew a more consistent watch system ensures the chain of command is less likely to be disrupted particularly for emergencies.

- ❓ If the voyage crew has a different system, it means the 'professional crew' get to work with all the 'voyage crew' and not just one watch.



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You can see in this table the five most common watch systems.

Hours per watch			6	4	4	4 or 2	4 or 2
Number of watch teams			2	3	4	3	4
How long before the watch rota repeats			12 hours	12 hours	2 days	3 days	4 days
	Watch Names	Hours	Hard,	Steady	Tedious	British Watches,	Tedious.
Day 1	Middle	00:00					
		01:00					
		02:00					
		03:00					
	Morning	04:00					
		05:00					
		06:00					
		07:00					
	Forenoon	08:00					
		09:00					
		10:00					
		11:00					
	Afternoon	12:00					
		13:00					
		14:00					
		15:00					
	Evening Watch	16:00				First Dog Watch	
		17:00				First Dog Watch	
		18:00				2nd Dog Watch	
		19:00				2nd Dog Watch	
	First Watch	20:00					
		21:00					
		22:00					
		23:00					
Day 2	Middle	00:00					
		01:00					
		02:00					

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	Morning	03:00					
		04:00					
		05:00					
		06:00					
		07:00					
	Forenoon	08:00					
		09:00					
		10:00					
		11:00					
	Afternoon	12:00					
		13:00					
		14:00					
		15:00					
	Evening Watch	16:00					
		17:00					
		18:00					
		19:00					
	First Watch	20:00					
		21:00					
		22:00					
		23:00					
Day 3	Middle	00:00					
		01:00					
		02:00					
		03:00					
	Morning	04:00					
		05:00					
		06:00					
		07:00					
	Forenoon	08:00					
		09:00					
		10:00					
		11:00					
	Afternoon	12:00					
		13:00					

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Day 4	Evening Watch	14:00					
		15:00					
		16:00				First Dog Watch	
		17:00				First Dog Watch	
		18:00				2nd Dog Watch	
		19:00				2nd Dog Watch	
		20:00					
		21:00					
		22:00					
		23:00					
	Middle	00:00					
		01:00					
		02:00					
		03:00					
	Morning	04:00					
		05:00					
		06:00					
		07:00					
	Forenoon	08:00					
		09:00					
		10:00					
		11:00					
	Afternoon	12:00					
		13:00					
		14:00					
		15:00					
	Evening Watch	16:00					
		17:00					
		18:00					
		19:00					
	First Watch	20:00					
		21:00					
		22:00					
		23:00					

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The Watch Leader

The role of watch leader can be of keen importance to the 'voyage crew' the more formal the watch system and style of ship management is the more important this role becomes.

Running two watch systems at the same time

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Each ship will have their own reasons for doing this.

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The Watch Leader

The role of watch leader can be of keen importance to the 'voyage crew' the more formal the watch system and style of ship management is the more important this role becomes.

Watch leader positions

Professional Watch leader.

A member of the 'professional crew' who will have thorough experience of the ship and what to do in all circumstances.

Selected volunteer watch leader.

They will have experience of the ship but rather than paying the full price that 'voyage crew' pay they will have either paid less or

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nothing at all. They will have been selected on previous voyages and possibly received training in this role.

Elected watch leader.

On formation of a watch team the team will elect one of their number to be the watch leader. They probably have sailed on the vessel before or have considerable experience on other similar vessels. They receive no benefit from this position and sometimes just a lot of headaches!

This system works well on longer voyages where the watch leader can be changed on a weekly basis.

Duties of the Watch Leader

Again the more formal the ship management style the more roles the 'watch leader' will be expected to perform.

From the least to the most requirements:

Minimum

- Draw up a watch rota
- Ensure everyone is on time for their duties
- Ensure the next watch is wakened and ready to take over on time
- Inform the next watch leader of the current sailing situation and any pending changes.
- Adapting the rota to take account of illness or other circumstances

Middle - All of the above plus

- Be able to train the 'voyage crew' in basic tasks.
 - coiling
 - hauling
 - easing safely
 - making fast
 - helming
 - lookout
- lead the watch in performing sail handling tasks

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- Getting the watch on the correct ropes at the right time.

Maximum - All of the above plus

- Developing team members to take on tasks individually or as a mini team.
- With authority from the 'watch officer' or Captain
 - Decide how to set the sails and implement sail trim and setting or handing sail.

Helmsman or Steersman

Controls the ships course through the water using the ships wheel.

Helming is one of the most responsible individual positions for 'voyage crew' and it is not difficult to learn and is a very rewarding part of your watch.

The 'officer of the watch' will inform the helmsman the course to be steered.

Types of helming command.

- By the compass in degrees from 0 to 360 or by points of the compass, such as East by South. (Which requires knowledge of the 32 Cardinal points of the compass.)
 - To steer by compass direction you need to see yourself moving the ship around the compass. (The compass does not move – you move the ship.)
- By sight of something to aim for or to avoid.
- By wheel command
 - Hard a port/starboard – turn the ship as fast as possible to port or starboard.
 - Two spokes to port – refers to the spokes on a ships wheel.
- By sailing terms
 - Sail close hauled - as close to the wind as possible.

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- Full and by – close to the wind but maintaining maximum speed
- Anything like, come up, closer, bear up, nearer the wind, means to point closer to the direction of the wind.
- Anything like, away, down, off, bear away, means to point further away from the direction of the wind.

Receiving and responding to helm orders is very important as what you do can affect the safety of the ships position and avoiding damage to the sails or rigging.

This is the traditional way to do it.

‘Officer of the watch’ says

‘Steer 180’

Helmsman responds clearly –

“Steer 180’

This is a clear communication back to the Officer of the Watch so they know you have heard the order correctly.

‘Officer of the watch’ says

‘Thank you’ or acknowledges in some way that you are about to do the correct thing.

Helmsman says clearly –

“180 on’, this means you are now on the new instructed course.

‘Officer of the watch’ says

‘Thank you’

It may seem a bit fussy but in an emergency in a gale of wind it will ensure both ‘helmsman’ and ‘officer of the watch’ understand each other.



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Lookout

All ships under way, moving through the water, are required by law to keep a good lookout.

The lookout reports to the 'Officer of the watch' anything which may affect the ship or the voyage. Usually stationed at the bow.

This position is especially important while the ship is sailing, since the sails may obscure the view from the helm or bridge. Many tall ships have two lookouts stationed forward one on the port on the other on the starboard side.

When there are two of you it is important that when you look astern or forward you look to the other side of the ship; this ensures nothing is overlooked directly forward or astern of you.

Lookout may seem irrelevant now that we have radar, GPS and AIS (Automatic Identification System) but there are things in the water that only eyes can see. For instance did you know that every year over 100,000 containers are lost overboard and these can float semi submerged and could cause big damage if you were to hit one.

Icebergs are also difficult to spot in rough and or reduced visibility conditions.

During you lookout briefing you will be told how to communicate with the "Officer of the watch" without leaving your post.

In addition doing lookout duty is the best way to spot wildlife at sea. See the next section.

Additionally, all crew members are expected to report anything of possible consequence.

Never assume someone in command has seen a possible danger.

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How to Spot and Identify Wildlife at Sea



Blue Whale

- Sighting
- Hearing
- Smelling
- Pointing to sightings
- Identifying
- Recording
- Reporting
- Where
- When
- How
- Further Reading

Sighting

On the Sea

This technique will help you spot more wildlife and other interesting things in the sea and sky. It is regarded as best practice for seafarers who call it 'Lookout duty'.

Standing on deck and glancing over the sea you will miss most things. You have to focus on sections of the sea at a time.

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If the bows of the ship are 12 o'clock and the stern 6 o'clock look first from near you on the water then slowly raise your search focus away from you until you meet the horizon at 12 o'clock.

Still on the horizon move your focus to 1 o'clock and then slowly draw your vision towards you until you are looking at the water close to you.

Still looking close to you turn to the 2 o'clock position and slowly look out towards the horizon.

Turn your horizon vision to 3 o'clock etc. etc.

This does take concentration and you probably don't want to do it for more than about twenty minutes.

If you have a team of you working together you can cover different sectors of the sea around you and work out a rota to swap people in out of 'lookout duty'.

Looking for the clues in seascapes.

If you know what is normal it is easier to see the bits that are odd.

Study the sea and learn its moods, you can do this as you look for wildlife, to me it has always added interest to lookout duty.

There she blows!

Moby Dick has taught us all to look for the spout of whales as the breath out through their blow holes but there are other clues.

The shape of the sea is affected by the wind, tides, and any obstacles close to the surface or swelling up from below.

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The stronger the wind the bigger the waves. The further part the waves or swell is the further that swell has travelled.

You can often see swells in the sea from more than one direction, known as cross seas. These tend to have sudden high peaks as the swells combine in unexpected ways.

Tides when set against the wind make the waves choppiest, the shape of the wave is different they seem to have a hollow front and fuller back.

Look for unusual splashes, the glint of fast-moving creature in the side of a wave.

Birds and Cetaceans acting together.

It is not unusual to see a flock of birds diving into the sea chasing a shoal of fish. Very often you will find whales, dolphins or porpoise in there to hunting the shoal of fish at the same time.

In the air

It is very difficult to focus your eyes on objects in the sky. The trick here is to do the same technique as searching the sea but instead of going in one smooth motion from looking close to far away go a little distance away and look up, nothing there, look down and move your focus a little further away, look up, so on and so forth.

Hearing

When it's dark or you have no vision you can often hear cetaceans as they blow air out of their blow holes. Believe me it can make you jump when a hump back whale blows right beside you as you are sailing along peacefully under sail at night. On hearing it you might be able to see it either with the naked or helped by a search light. When sailing at night never shine a light into someone's face as this will ruin their night vision, which takes 20 minutes to fully adapt to the darkness. And yes, carrots do help you see in the dark!



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Smelling

If you can't see and you can't hear you may smell cetaceans. They eat fish and their breath is very smelly and if you happen to be down wind of a school of dolphins in the dark it is possible you will smell them. I have smelt a shoal of oily fish whilst sailing off the coast of Cornwall. (We quickly got the mackerel fishing lines over the side and had a bucket full of mackerel in time for breakfast.)

Pointing sightings out

It's wonderful to share what you have spotted with other people and there is a very simple way to do this. You will really appreciate this if you tried to see what someone is pointing at and they are not close to you.

So working on the clock principle - a dolphin right in front to the ship is called 'Dolphin at 12 o'clock half way to the horizon'. One abeam of the boat is called 'dolphin at 3 o'clock nearby', now you know what abeam of the ship means!

Identifying

This is the best Website I have found so far - www.oceanwanderers.com

We welcome other [Suggestions for good resources](#)

From your favourite bookshop

Seabirds an identification guide. By Peter Harrison published by Helm.
Classic Sailing's favourite.

Sealife: A Guide to the Marine Environment. By Geoffrey Waller (Editor)
published by Helm. Classic Sailing's other favourite.

How to Record your wildlife sightings

You need to keep a note of the following

1. Time and time zone.

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2. Sea state – rough –calm etc. see Classic Sailing's [Wind Speed Guide](#)
3. Wind direction and strength see Classic Sailing's
4. Visibility – good – moderate - poor
5. Where the sighting was in relation to the ship – see 'Pointing Sighting Out'
6. What direction the species was travelling
7. Species
8. Confidence in identification
9. Quantity of adults and young
10. Behaviour
11. Then using the ships log or your own GPS you can note the exact position.

Reporting

Your recordings may be useful to Marine Conservation Groups and other research groups.

There is a list of some organisations below in further reading.

Where and When

You can see marine wildlife in almost any open sea but they are more likely to be seen in remote places away from too much of mankind's harmful influences.

There are also migratory routes for many whales in a north or south direction. See further reading.

Classic Sailing list of current [Wildlife Voyages](#)

Sailing Ships are Best

Sailing ships offer the best way to study wildlife at sea, you are acting with nature, not powering across it in an oil guzzling ocean juggernaut.

Sailing is quiet and unthreatening to the nature around you. You are closer to the sea and closer to nature. Nature will often come to you.

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Taster Voyages

Because they are shorter voyages they are closer to human habitats and less likely to see wildlife but a short voyage may be a good way to see if you like tall ship sailing.

Longer Wildlife Voyages

Classic Sailing has been sailing in remote wildlife areas for many years. Antarctica, the Azores, Spitsbergen, Greenland, Iceland and nearer to home the Western Isles of Scotland and the Isles of Scilly.

You do not need any sailing experience to sail on any of these voyages.

- Choose your [Wildlife Voyage](#).

Further Reading, Reporting and feedback.

Please tell us if this was helpful or if you have any suggestion, always glad to hear from you skippers@classic-sailing.co.uk

- Seabirds an Identification Guide. By Peter Harrison published by Helm. Classic Sailing's favourite.
- Sealife: A Guide to the Marine Environment. By Geoffrey Waller (Editor) published by Helm. Classic Sailing's other favourite.
- Chapter 4 of the [US Navy Lookout Training Handbook](#)

Reporting marine sightings to websites.

Recording schemes providing information on sightings to particular institutions or projects helps conservation, management, education and awareness raising. It also promotes identification skills.

[Cetaceans Seawatch](#) on UK 01865 717276

Basking sharks Marine Conservation Society – records must be submitted via the internet. at www.mcsuk.org/baskingsharks.html

European Basking Shark Photo-Identification Project
at www.baskingsharks.co.uk

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Egg cases (skate and ray) The Great Egg-case Hunt, Shark Trust on UK 01752 672020 or at www.sharktrust.org/eggcase

Fish - United Kingdom Marine Fish Recording Scheme on UK 01752 275216 or at www.national-aquarium.co.uk/fishreports

Jellyfish Marine Conservation Society on UK 01989 566017 or at www.mcsuk.org

Molluscs Conchological Society Marine Recording Scheme on UK 01483 417782 or at www.conchsoc.org/

Seashore wildlife Porcupine Marine Natural History Society at www.pmnhs.co.uk

British Marine Life Study Society's Shorewatch on UK 01273 465433 or at <https://www.glaucus.org.uk/>

Marlin at www.marlin.ac.uk

Turtles Marine Conservation Society at www.mcsuk.org/ or on UK 0131 226 6360

Birds BTO reporting system for ringed birds, at www.bto.org/ringing/ringinfo



Happy wildlife spotting!

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Beaufort Wind Scale in Miles per hour (Mph), knots and Kilometers per hour (Km/h)				
Beaufort Scale Force	Wind in MPH	Wind in Knots	Wind in Km/h	Description - Wave Heights—Visible Condition
Force 0	0-1	0-1	0-1	Calm; Ht 0.0m ~ At sea no waves - glassy like appearance of sea.
Force 1	1 - 4	1 - 3	2 – 6	Light Airs Ht 0m ~ At Sea wind makes glassy ripples on water.
Force 2	4 - 7	4 - 6	7 – 11	Light breeze Ht 0.1m ~ At Sea smooth wavelets
Force 3	8 - 12	7-10	13 - 19	Gentle breeze Ht 0.4m Slight ~ At sea slight waves no white horses.
Force 4	13 - 18	11-16	20 – 30	Moderate breeze Ht 1m - Slight to moderate ~ At Sea waves described as with occasional white horses. On land raises dust and loose paper; small branches are moved
Force 5	19 - 24	17 - 21	31- 39	Fresh breeze Ht 2m Moderate ~ At sea consistent white horses
Force 6	25 - 31	22 - 27	40 – 50	Strong breeze Ht 3m Rough At Sea large waves start to form, more extensive white foam crests, some blown spray.
Force 7	32 - 38	28 - 33	51 – 61	Moderate (near) gale Ht 4m Rough to very rough. At Sea waves begin to heap up and streaks begin to appear down the waves. On land whole trees in motion; inconvenience in walking against wind
Force 8	39 - 46	34 - 40	62 – 74	Fresh gale Ht 5.5m Very rough to high At Sea waves get longer - crests break into spindrift and the streaks become more pronounced.
Force 9	47 - 54	41 - 47	75 – 88	Strong or severe gale Ht 7m High At Sea high waves and dense streaks of foam may begin to affect visibility. On land slight structural damage occurs; chimney pots and slates removed
Force 10	55 - 63	48 - 55	89 - 102	Whole gale or Storm - Ht 9m Very High At Sea very high waves with overhanging crests, lots of spray makes the sea almost white, visibility seriously affected.
Force 11	64 - 72	56 - 63	103 – 117	Violent Storm Ht 11m Very High At Sea exceptionally high waves and a complete coverage of long white foam patches. All crests blown into froth.
12	73+	64 +	118 +	Hurricane Ht 14m plus Phenomenal At sea the air is completely filled with driving spray, visibility extremely difficult. On land devastation occurs.

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How to Keep Warm Sailing a Tall Ship

Sail a boat with blocks and tackles to pull, the work will warm you. It's the bits in between when you are not pulling on ropes but you remain on deck because it's your turn on watch that you need to know how to stay warm.

Wear a woollen hat and bring two spares.

Gone are the days when this always meant itchy head. Try merino wool or chunky knits with fleece lining. Make sure they will stay on your head in a strong wind. Baseball hats are for baseball. Save your haircut till you come home or grow a beard.



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Protect your kidneys.

On a sailing holiday we go looking for the wind. It can whistle around your midriff or lower back if you are wearing low slung jeans. It might be ok for builders to wear jeans, but we can assure you there is no such thing as “fisherman’s bum.” They keep their kidneys covered at sea.



Don’t forget the suntan lotion and sunglasses either.

It is very bright at sea, and Northerlies bring crystal clear air and high UV. A bikini moment is not impossible but unlikely. A wind tanned face and brown hands like Captain Poldark beats beetroot bank holiday look.



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Cut the windchill with strategic waterproofing.

This is a bit like the 'cream or jam' first argument for West Country Scones. Trousers or jacket first? You don't have to do the full 'Musto' look as soon as the mate says prepare for sea. The ships salopettes (armpit high waterproof trousers) keep your core warm and still allow you to let off steam. Leave the jacket part till you have sweated all the sails up or it is actually raining.



Hands are waterproof.

If you handle wet ropes with gloves on they get wet and if you take them off to get into the chocolate biscuit packet then you can't get them back on. Glowing red hands from pulling ropes is a bit of an acquired taste, so if you are happier wearing gloves then try cheap ski gloves this time of year as leather sailing gloves are freezing. If you have hands hard enough to pull ropes then I personally think you are better off without them. Shove your hands up your sleeve to keep warm between jobs, or stuff them in those lovely fluffy pockets that many sailing jackets have. Keep your dry gloves for holding onto the ships wheel or tiller.

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Take lots of socks and a buff or two

Boots and thick socks with fleecy leggings are my favourite combination. You will never have time to dry wet socks unless make friends with the engine room or your vessel has a stove or radiators.

How many jumpers then?

Blimey. I don't know. I can never fit those Norwegian fisherman's jumpers in my rucksack. Think I'd rather pinch one off a Norwegian fisherman. For voyages 3-30 days I take 3 long sleeved thermals, 2 thin merino wool jumpers and one physiologically chunky item that might make me look like Shackleton or Bjork, depending on my mood, or the location.

Footwear.

You are not sailing on a pristine white modern yacht with polished hulls immaculate varnish and luxury woollen carpets.

Yachty deck shoes are not the norm. The real rufty tufty sailor may go barefoot but they do risk stubbing their toes on all sorts of deck fittings. In hot or warm climates closed toed sandals are good and trainers also do well.

Don't buy yellow yachty short boots, they are useless in any sea.

In any sort of sea or cooler climate that you want to keep your feet warm and dry there are some good options.

The luxury Musto leather boot is warm and waterproof. It's high enough up your calf to keep most of the water out. It helps if your trousers go over them.

For me I prefer Muck or Sealand boots, they are like Agile but half the price. They are high on your leg, close fitting on the ankle so you can walk good distances ashore in them and best of all they are well insulated for warmth.

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These are Sealand boots as worn in Antarctica and were perfect.



Wet Weather Gear.

There is a huge choice of brands, Musto, Helly Hanson, etc but they all have pretty much the same three range options.

Coastal

The cheapest will be called something like Coastal and are good for short periods at sea in the open.

Off Shore

These ranges offer excellent weather protection but are not so heavy you can't go for a walk in them.

Ideal for tall ship sailing.

Ocean

This is the serious ocean racer kit, you will be dry and warm but your movements will be harder.

Over the top for tall ship sailing.

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Nigh time Hottie

Filling 12 hot water bottles from the kettle on a Brixham Trawler is an all night job that is unlikely to be popular, so if you really feel the cold you might need to offer to help with the supper washing up and sneak your hottie into the galley. In bed baby doll pyjamas might not be your best option. If you see the skipper up in the night they may look fully dressed in an outfit that you remember from yesterday.... Best not to ask if they sleep in their clothes. They may just have checked pyjamas.

Don't wear your boots in bed

It's bad manners and it hints that you are seasick and past caring. Also don't leave them on deck to dry. My friend Ester treated herself to a posh pair of leather sailing boots when she was promoted to mate. She left them on deck in a bucket to air on a cloud free night, only to find a sleep walking school kid had gone on deck and accidentally pee-ed in them.

Below decks is your home - so the idea is to keep it civilised, warm and dry. This takes effort from everyone not to sit down in wet oilskins, or leave them dripping on a hook by your bed.



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Fully-rigged Tall Ship



Fully rigged ship the Christian Radich under full sail.

Fully Rigged Tall Ship

A fully-rigged tall ship has square sails on three or more masts.

This is the pinnacle of tall ships, some would argue it is the only type of proper tall ship. Others go even further and say the only ships in the world are fully rigged tall ships.

If that were true it would mean that there are under two dozen ships afloat today. Meanings change and today the term 'tall ship' is now generic and applied to any traditionally rigged vessel.

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Christian Radich Details

Owners the Christian Radich

Foundation of Oslo Norway

Builder: Framnæs Mekaniske

Værksted

Launched: February 1937

Homeport: Oslo

Identification:

IMO number: 5071729

Call sign: LJLM

MMSI number: 258373000

Status: active

General characteristics

Class and type: Full-rigged ship

18 permanent crew • 88 passengers

Displacement: 1,050 tonnes
(2,310,000 lb)

Length:

62.5 m (205 ft)

73 m (240 ft) including bowsprit

Beam: 9.7 m (32 ft)

Height: 37.7 m (124 ft)

Draught: 4.7 m (15 ft)

Propulsion:

27 Sails, 1,360 m² (14,600 sq ft)

Engine, Caterpillar 900 HK

Speed:

Sails, 14 knots (26 km/h)

Engine, 10 knots (19 km/h)



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Four-masted Barque



Sedov - Photo: Christian Ferrer / Wikimedia Commons, via Wikimedia Commons

Four-masted Barques

Four-masted Barques have square sails on the three front masts.

Four-masted Barque Sedov (She used to be white hulled.)

History Germany

Name:

Magdalene Vinnen II (1921–1936)

Kommodore Johnsen (1938–1948)

Builder: Friedrich Krupp

Germaniawerft,

Kiel, Germany

Launched: 1921

Fate: Acquired in 1945 by the Soviet Union as a war reparation

1945 Russia

Name: Sedov

Acquired: 1945

Identification:

IMO number: 7946356

Call sign: UELO

MMSI number: 273510000

General characteristics

Tonnage: 3,500 GRT standard

Displacement: 7,300 long tons (7,400 t) (at 5,350 ts load)

Length: 117.5 m (385 ft 6 in) oa.

Hull: 108.7 m (356 ft 8 in)

Deck: 100 m (328 ft 1 in)

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Beam: 14.9 m (48 ft 11 in)

Height: 54 m (177 ft 2 in)

Draft: 6.5 m (21 ft 4 in)

Propulsion: Auxiliary diesel

Sail plan: Sail area: 4,195 m²
(45,150 sq ft)

Speed:

18 kn (33 km/h; 21 mph) max

8 kn (15 km/h; 9.2 mph) under
engine

Complement: 240 (Professional
crew: 70; Cadets:

120; Guest trainees: 50)



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Barques



Photo three masted Barque Europa

Three Masted Barques

Three-masted barques have square sails on the fore and main mast. The aft most mast does not carry square sails.

Barque Europa

History - Built in Germany

Name: Senator Brockes

Namesake: Barthold Heinrich

Brockes

Builder: H. C. Stülcken & Sohn,
Hamburg

Cost: 300,000 Reichsmark

Yard number: 409

Launched: 1911

Out of service: 1977

History - Netherlands

Name: Europa

Owner and operator: Rederij bark
EUROPA,

Port of registry: The Hague, The
Netherlands

Christened:

Acquired:

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In service: • Homeport: 1994

The Hague

Identification:

IMO number: 8951932

Call Sign: PDZS

General characteristics

Type: Three-masted steel barque

Tonnage: 303 GT

Length: 56 m (184 ft)

Beam: 7.5 m (25 ft)

Height: 33 m (108 ft)

Draught: 3.8 m (12 ft)

Power: 2 × 365 HP Caterpillar 6-cyl. Diesel

Propulsion: Sail; auxiliary Diesel engine

Sail plan: 30 sails (incl. 6 studding sails; 1,250

m² (13,500 sq ft) sail area

Speed: 13 knots (24 km/h; 15 mph)

Range: Worldwide

Complement: 64

Three-masted Barque Tenacious



Three masted Barque Tenacious

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Three-masted Barque Tenacious

History

Tenacious is one of two tall ships specially built to enable people of all abilities to sail. There are up to eight wheel chair users per voyage.

United Kingdom

Name: STS Tenacious

Owner: Jubilee Sailing Trust

Builder: Jubilee Yard (Merlin Quay), Southampton

Laid down: 6 June 1996

Launched: 3 February 2000

Commissioned: 2000

Status: Operational

General characteristics

Tons burthen: 586 tons

Length: 54 m (177 ft) hull, 65 m (213 ft) including bowsprit

Beam: 10.6 m (35 ft)

Draught: 4.58 m (15.0 ft) in summer

Propulsion:

Sails: 1,217 m² (13,100 sq ft)

Engines: 2x400bph

Sail plan: Barque (three-masted))

Speed: 11 knots (20.37 km/h)

under sail, 8 knots (14.82 km/h) under power

Complement:

Permanent crew approx 11 (incl. 3 volunteers)

Voyage crew up to 40 (50% of whom may be sensory impaired or physically disabled)



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Three-masted Barque Gloria



Gloria shown off Cape Horn photo by Adam Purser.

Three Masted Barque Gloria

Details

Owner Columbian Navy

Ordered: 6 October 1966

Builder: Astilleros Celaya S.A.,

Bilbao, Spain Commissioned: 7

September 1968

General characteristics

Type: Barque

Displacement: 1,300 tons

Length: 64.7 metres (212 ft)

Beam: 10.6 metres (35 ft)

Draft: 6.6 metres (22 ft)

Propulsion: Diesel, 500 hp

Sail plan: 1,400 square metres
(15,000 sq ft)

Speed: 10 knots (19 km/h; 12
mph) under power

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Barquentines



Esmeralda Photo off Cape Horn by Adam Purser

Schooner Barquentines

Barquentines have three or more masts and only the foremast has a full set of square sails. The important distinction is that the foremast has square sails from top to bottom.

Esmeralda is technically a schooner barquentine, as her foremast is constructed in the same way as a schooner's is, with the lower mast being the same height and structure as the main, mizzen and jigger masts. A true barquentine would have a true square-rigged mast structure, i.e. lower mast, topmast, topgallant mast etc. (two or more of which could these days be incorporated into a pole mast,

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but the tops and crosstrees would be in the same place. (Thanks to Chris Phillips for the full description.)

Esmeralda Details

Operator: Chilean Navy	Sail plan: four-masted barquentine; 21 sails, total sail area of
Laid down:	2,870 m ² (30,892 sq. ft.)
Launched:	Speed: max 13 knots engine, 17.5 knots sail
Nickname(s):	Complement:
Fate: training ship	Armament: May 12, 1953
General characteristics	300 sailors, 90 midshipmen
Displacement: 3754 tons	4 × 57 mm ceremonial gun mounts
Length: 113 m (371 ft)	1946
Beam: 13.11 m (43.0 ft)	
Height: 48.5 m (159 ft)	
Draft: 7 m (23 ft)	



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Main-mast Barquentine – Xebec or Polacre



STS Pelican of London, photo by Adam Purser

Main Mast Barquentine STS Pelican of London

A Main Mast Barquentine is a three masted vessel with square sails only on the main mast.

History Norway

Name: Pelican

Builder: Chantiers et Ateliers
Augustin Normand, Le Havre,
France
Launched: 1948

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Status: Arctic fishing trawler

Name: Kadett

Acquired: 1968

Status: Re-classed as a coastal trading vessel

History

United Kingdom

Name: Pelican of London

Acquired: 1995

In service: 2007

Identification:

IMO number: 5273339

MMSI number: 235057366

Status: In use

Notes: Rebuilt as sail training ship, 1995–2007

General characteristics

Tons burthen: 226 GRT

Length: 45.0 M (148 ft.) LE; 34.6 M (114 ft.) LOA hull

Beam: 7.03 M (23 ft.)

Draught: 3.95 M (13.0 ft.) (aft)

Propulsion: Volvo Penta TAMD 120A-CC 290HP. Reconditioned 2000.



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Topsail Schooners



Topsail Schooners

Photo Topsail Schooner Oosterschelde off Cape Verde

Topsail Schooners

Topsail Schooners have two or more masts and the foremast has square sails but only attached to the topmast or above.

In other words, there is no main mast square sail unlike a Barquentine that has a full set of square sails.

Oosterschelde Details

History

Completed: 1918

General characteristics

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Type: Topsail Schooner

Tonnage: deadweight of 400 tons

Length: 50 metres (160 ft)

Beam: 7.5 metres (25 ft)

Height: 36 metres (118 ft)

Depth: 2.95 metres (9 ft 8 in)

Installed power: Deutz 6 cylinder,
360 hp

Sail plan: Topsail schooner, 891
square metres

(9,590 sq ft) sail area

Capacity: room for 24 embarked
passengers, up to

120 passengers on daytrips

Crew: 4 to 8

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Malcolm Miller Three-masted Topsail Schooner

Malcolm Miller Details

Builder: John Lewis & Sons, Aberdeen

General characteristics

Past - Sail Training Ship, now private yacht Displacement: 299 metric tonnes full load

Length:

45.68 m (149.87 ft) sparred

41.15 m (135.01 ft) overall

Beam: 8.31 m (27.26 ft)

Draught: 5.73 m (18.80 ft)

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Photo © Rémi Jouan, CC-BY-SA, GNU Free Documentation License, Wikimedia Commons

Topsail Schooner La Recouvrance

Two-masted topsail schooner - only has topsail square sails on the foremast.

Recouvrance Details

France

Name: Recouvrance

Namesake: Recouvrance

Owner: Goelette la Recouvrance

Build 1990

Chantier du Guip 11 July 1991

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14 July 1992 1993

Brest, France

Fate: tourist vessel

Displacement: 150 tonnes (170 short tons)

Length: 25 m (82 ft), 42 m (138 ft) overall

Beam: 6.4 m (21 ft)

Height: 28 m (92 ft)

Draft: 3.2 m (10 ft)

Sail plan: Two-masted square-topsail

schooner, 430 m² (4,600 sq ft)

total sail area

Capacity: 30 persons

Complement: 5: captain, mate, and 3 crew including cook

La Recouvrance is the one of the three French ships the author would like to run a cutting out expedition.



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Brig



Photo Two Masted Brig Morgenster

Brig

A Brig has two masts both with square sails, the main mast also has gaff sails on the stern side. In this photo of Morgenster you can also see between the main and foremast a staysail has been set.

Brig Morgenster Details

Dutch

Owners: Marian and Harry

Mutter • Type: Brig

Built: 1919 (restored 2008-2010)

Length: overall 48 metres

Length: on deck 39 metres

Draft: 2.4 metres

Sail Area: 600 sq metres

Guest Crew: 24 guests in 2 and 4 person cabins and optional hammocks.

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Brig



Photo Niagara by Lance Woodworth, CC BY 2.0 via Wikimedia Commons

USS Niagara Details

Owner: Pennsylvania Historical
and Museum Commission

Sunk: 1820

Raised: 6 March 1913

Restored: 1913, 1931–1943,
1963, 1988

Homeport: Erie, Pennsylvania

Flagship Niagara League 31 Dec.

1812

4 June 1813

General characteristics

Class and type: Niagara-class brig

Displacement: 297 long tons (302
t)

Length: 110 ft 8 in (33.7 m) LBP

Beam: 32 ft (9.8 m)

Height:

113 ft 4 in (34.5 m)

Foremast

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118 ft 4 in (36.1 m)

Mainmast

Draft: 9 ft (2.7 m)

Sail plan: 12,665 sq ft (1,177 m²)
on two
masts

Complement: 155 officers and
enlisted

Armament:

18 × 32-pounder carronades

2 × 12-pounder long guns

1998:

Tonnage: 162 GT

Installed power: 2 × 200 bhp (150
kW)

diesel engines

Crew: 20 professional, 20
volunteer

Armament: 2 × 32-pounder
carronades



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Three-masted Schooners



Adix at Pendennis Cup
Photo by Justin Ratcliffe

Three-masted Schooner

Three-masted Schooners only have gaff sails, no square sails. The masts are all the same height or the foremast is shorter than the main and or mizzen.

Adix Details

Builder Astilleros de Mallorca

Built 1984

Former Name Jessica, XXXX

Sailing Yacht – Three-masted
Schooner

Construction Steel

LOA 64.85m (212.76ft)

Beam 8.88m (29.13ft)

Draft 4.09m (13.41ft)

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Two-masted Schooner



Two-masted Schooner 'When and If'

History United States

Commissioned by General (Then colonel) George S. Patton

Designed by John C Alden

Built by F.F Pendleton of Wiscasset, Maine in 1939

Named 'When and if'

"When the war is over, and If I live through it, Bea and I are going to sail her around the world." George S Patton Jnr.

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Unfortunately, General Patton died in 1945 before he ever had the chance to sail her around the world.

Owner 'Sail When and If'

Length overall 63 ft 5 ins

Length waterline 47ft 2 ins

Beam 15ft 1ins

Draft 8ft 6ins

Guest Crew Overnight Max 3

Guests day sail Max 32

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Gaff Ketch



Gaff Ketch Bessie Ellen Photo by Debbie Purser

Gaff Ketches

A gaff ketch has two masts and there are gaff sails on both masts. The main mast is shorter than the foremast. The mizzen is positioned in front of the rudder.

Gaff Ketch Bessie Ellen

British

Owner: Nikki Alford

Built: 1904 Plymouth

Characteristics

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Rig: gaff ketch 8 sails

Sail area: 320 sq m

Length on deck: 25.6m 84ft

Length overall: 36.5m 119ft

Beam: 6m 20ft

Draft: 2.4m

Air draft: 26.5m 86ft

Tonnage: 87 GRT

Professional crew: 4-6

Guest crew berths: 12

Day sail capacity: max 60 guests

Luxury dinner in saloon: max party of 32

Buffet in saloon: max 60 guests

Leader and Provident Two Gaff Ketches



Leader Gaff Ketch

British

Owner Trinity Sailing Trust

Number 99504

Port: Brixham

Builder W A Gibbs, Galmpton,
Devon

Date Launched 1892

Radio Call Sign MFZX5

Gross Tonnage 53.21

Net Tonnage 47.12

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Length Overall including

spars 30.50 m 100' 0"

Length of Hull 24.40 m 80' 0"

Sail Area 222 sq m 2390 sq ft

Displacement 100 tons

Ballast 15 tons

Engine, Daewoo 6 cylinder 119

kW 160 Hp

Water Capacity 2,300 litres

Fuel Capacity 1,040 litres

508 gals 229 gals

Provident Details

British

Owners Trinity Sailing Trust

Number 139433

Port Brixham

Builder J Sanders, Galmpton, Devon

Date Launched 1924

Original Fishing Number BM28

Characteristics

Radio Call Sign M1GB

Gross Tonnage 41.62

Net Tonnage 34.43

Length Overall incl. spars 27.56 m / 90' 5"

Length of Hull 21.51 m / 70' 6"

Length of Waterline 18.29 m / 60' 0"

20.80 m 68' 3" 5.90 m 19' 4" 3.00 m 9' 10"

Maximum Beam 5.49 m / 18' 0"

Maximum Draft 2.83 m / 9' 4"

Sail Area 180 sq m, 1940 sq ft

Maximum Sail Area 280 sq m / 3010 sq ft

Displacement 85 tonnes

Engine Gardner 6 Cylinder 95 kW / 120 Hp

Water Capacity 1,957 litres / 431 gals

Fuel Capacity 950 litres / 209 gals

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Three-masted Lugger



Photo Grayhound in St Mawes Harbour, by Debbie Purser

Lugers

Lugers have one or more masts and the sails are supported on a yard but to tack or wear ship (gybe) the foot of yards need to be dropped to the deck and moved to the opposite side of the mast and then hoisted again. There are other varieties of lug sails but in essence the dipping lugsail is the founding characteristic of lugers.

Grayhound Sailing Lugger -
Specification

Three-masted lug rig sailing
vessel

Builders Freya and Marcus
Pomeroy-Rowden

Build started in 2010

Launched in 2012
length on deck 63'6"
length overall 108 '
Beam 19'5"
Draught 10'9"
56 tonnes
SQ feet canvas 3500

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Crew 5

Guest crew 9 (more for day sails)

Yawls



Photo Courtesy Cirdan Sailing Trust

Yawls

Yawls are two masted but the mizzen mast is behind the rudder. You can see it has to have a bumpkin out the stern to control the set of sail. (The bumpkin is like a bowsprit sticking out the stern.)

Duet

Owners the Cirdan Sailing Trust
Designed by Linton Hope
Built at White's yard on the River
Itchen in Hampshire,
Construction - wooden
Built in 1912

In 1996 Duet was the first vessel
of the Ocean Youth Club
Guest Crew 7
Skipper and mate
Length 21.95 metres long
(including spars)
Beam 3.38 metres

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Gaff Cutters



Gaff Cutters

Gaff Cutters have a gaff mainsail and two or more head sails in front of the single mast.

Gaff Cutter Eve of St Mawes

Boat Specification - Eve of St Mawes

Construction: Larch on Oak, copper fastened throughout

Built and Designed by Luke Powell, Working Sail.

Launched April 1997 in Exeter Canal Basin.

Owners - Privately owned

Characteristics

Length on deck 38'

Length with bowsprit 51'

Beam 12'

Draught 6' 2"

Engine 42hp

Tonnage 14

Rig Gaff Cutter

Sails: gaff mainsail, gaff topsail, staysail, working jib, jib topsail

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Gaff Cutters



Photo courtesy of Eda Frandsen Sailing

Eda Frandsen Gaff Cutter

Eda Frandsen Vessel Specification

Year Built/Restored 1938/1995

Build Port Grenna

Characteristics

Length Overall 73ft

Length on deck 56ft

Beam 15ft

Draft 8ft

Sail Area 2210sq ft

Guest Crew Overnight 8 persons

Professional Crew 3

Max for day sails 12 persons

Shower and 2 toilets

Generator for 240V

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Tall Ships Races 2021

The Tall Ships Races 2021 will take place between 26 June and 3 August. During these six weeks, the races will visit Klaipeda, Turku, Tallinn, Mariehamn, and Szczecin...

[Information from Sail Training International](#)

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Tall Ships Race 2021 the postponed 2020 Race



Following its postponement due to the COVID 19 pandemic, we are delighted to announce that The Tall Ships Races 2020 will return as The Tall Ships Races Magellan-Elcano 500 Series 2021...

[Information from Sail Training International](#)

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Tall Ships Races 2022



The Tall Ships Races 2022 will see the international fleet of Tall Ships and Small Ships return to the North Sea. From 7 July-7 August, we will visit **Esbjerg**, **Harlingen**, **Antwerp** and **Aalborg**...

[Information from Sail Training International](#)

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Tall ships Races 2023 - Unknown

The route and ports for the annual Tall Ships Races are decided by the Sail Training International at their annual autumn conference.

For 2023 things will be done differently as the 2020 conference has been cancelled due to covid-19.

What arrangements they will use to decide is not clear at the moment.
(August 2020)

How do they normally choose the Race ports and routes?

There is a general suggestion which sea area the race will be held in. For 2023 this is the North Sea of Europe.

The Conference is a bit like the International Olympic Conference where they take bids for where the Olympic Games to be held in eight years' time. For the Tall Ships it is the ports that bid for the Race in about two years' time.



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The Ports bidding for 2023 include –

Bid by Hartlepool – North East England



Hartlepool is bidding to host the Tall Ships Race again in 2023

Earlier this year Hartlepool Borough Council announced they would be bidding to host the Tall Ships Races at the town's marina in 2023, with the authority awaiting an announcement on whether they have been successful.

[Information courtesy Hartlepool Mail](#)

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Bid by The Shetlands

[Information courtesy Shetland Times](#)

Lerwick is a very fine port and a visit to the unique islands making up Shetlands is always going to be pleasure.

NEWS ST ONLINE

2023 Tall Ships bid races ahead

November 26, 2019

SHARE ON



Plans to bid for the Tall Ships' Race in 2023 have taken an important step forward, after councillors agreed to back the bid alongside supporting smaller scale events.

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