

## **Hints About How to Adjust to Living Aboard**

(For those who like to read)

Normally we are all able to stay quite clean and comfortable, but this does require some self-discipline developed early in the cruise and a pre-departure recognition that this small sailboat study-cruising program is quite different from the every day routine based in a comfortable home, school or office ashore... and is intended to be a mild, fun-type challenge.

### **MOTION SICKNESS (SEA SICKNESS)**

This phenomenon is best-treated 1/2 hour before leaving the dock. One can use medication in pill form, the new magic behind-the-ear patch, a prescription item known as "Transderm Five" or wristbands called "The Sea Band". Waiting till the last minute to do something to correct sea sickness after it begins could cause unpleasantness until the captain can get the boat back into quiet waters... which is most generally possible.

### **SNORKELING FROM SAILBOATS**

When snorkeling or swimming, keep a towel topside atop the cabin for use when departing the water. This practice keeps salt water out of the cabin, thereby preventing dampness and mildew in bedding, clothing, cushions and other items below deck.

Everyone must have a Buddy while in the water. Always swim within an arm-length of your Buddy and keep an eye out for your Buddy at all times. (This way there will be a 50-50 chance that the shark will get your buddy instead of you.)

Before entering the water, be sure the Dive Flag is up. Stay within 50 feet of the boat while snorkeling. If you go beyond this limit, then tow a floating dive flag with you and your Buddy.

### **MOVING ABOUT DECKS**

The mariner's rule is, "One hand for yourself; one hand for the boat." This is good safety practice. It simply means, always hang onto something. If a task requires two hands, then call on a shipmate to lend a hand. Hang on at all times, because to some people, you may be important.

When moving fore and aft on a sailboat, pass on the high side or windward side of the boat (This is because if you fall, you will fall on deck rather than overboard and we sure would not want to delay the cruise for the rest of the crew while we all go back and attempt to fetch you out of the sea.). In rough weather, revert to the safe, childhood habit of crawling on all fours (This looks awfully baby-like, but then there is not going to be anyone else out there to see you.)

Keep in mind that if a part of the boat is broken, it can be repaired easily. However, if a part of you is broken or lost, the repair is not so easy. Nothing is so important on the sailboat that you should risk injury to yourself or any shipmate, so please take care of yourself at all times.

Minimize danger of injury to fingers by removing large rings. Rings can get caught on shrouds (cables supporting masts) and can cut fingers. Also, the sea loves to eat wrist watches, and the shrouds cooperate in this endeavor.

Excessive use of sun oils and/or lotions while lying about the decks without the benefit of protecting the deck surface with a towel will result in excessively slippery decks which make for difficulty in moving about.

## THE HEAD

Next to food, the subject in many a new person's mind coming aboard for the first time is the HEAD or the location of the marine toilet. Why is the toilet called a head? In days gone by, before the modern mechanical device was invented and sailing ships were manned only by males of the species, it was a simple matter to do one's thing over the bow or at the head of the ship. It was quite satisfactory to all hands at the time and also quite sanitary because as the ship plunged through the sea, spray and even solid water from waves would keep the head of the ship clean.

So, whenever a seaman excused himself to go to the head, everyone understood that he was planning to relieve himself over the bow of the ship.

When the mechanical toilet was invented and placed in a compartment below decks, the term, head following the contraction. Now ships (and boats) have two heads; one at the bow of the vessel and the other where the marine toilet is located.

The head (toilet) is a complicated device, tricky to use... not at all cooperative... and requires a lot of work. The normal toilet in a comfortable home ashore suddenly gushes about 7-10 gallons of fresh water with a simple pull of the little lever. In order to make life afloat much more challenging, the head demands that we all pump those same 7-10 big gallons of seawater... teacup at a stroke. By cruise's end, if you have normal biological functions, you will notice a distinct enlargement of the musculature of your left arm. This can be corrected next year by signing aboard a "right handed" sailboat.

It does not really matter whether or not you have sailed many seas aboard small sailing craft, the captain always wants to give everyone "potty training number two"... perhaps it's his/her thing... bear with him/her while he/she goes through the whole rigmarole.

Actually, strict adherence to what the captain says about the head contraction will lead to a clean and happy boat. In addition, it will stay afloat. While the first point has reference to people staying comfortable and well as opposed to sick, it is relatively unimportant as compared to having the whole boat sink because someone did not secure the head properly.

Aboard small sailing craft, all hands, male or female sit to urinate. If this needs to be explained, ask the captain.

After one uses the head, one cleans the head... each and every time. The heavy philosophy behind this is, if everyone cleans the head after she/he uses it, then no one needs to clean up after anyone else. The head is always clean for the next person.

One last item about the use of the head... It is definitely a no-no to use the head in an enclosed harbor or a canal due to the pollution factor. At sea, natural human waste products are quickly recycled.

## **MAN OVERBOARD**

A person who loses hold of the sailing craft and is falling overboard should inform others aboard that same is happening... Shout it out. Do not keep it a secret.

If you are the person who has fallen overboard, remain calm, and do not attempt to swim after the sailing craft. Conserve your strength. Look around in the water for floating objects that are being thrown in the water for your benefit and gather some about your person for these are expensive items that should not be lost. Since these are very expensive items, you can be assured that the captain will sail back to retrieve them. So if you are clinging tightly to these expensive items, you will most surely be pulled aboard with them.

At the time of "man overboard", at least one person will be designated to keep his/her eyes GLUED to the person in the water. This duty is most urgent... most important. This person can not be distracted from this task because the captain depends upon this lookout to point out the victim after the sailboat is brought about. The captain cannot watch the victim because he/she is busy maneuvering the craft.

It requires approximately three minutes to bring the sailboat back to a person in the water... So relax and save your strength... tread water.

## **SLEEPING ABOARD**

Sleeping bags are very handy for shipboard use, but a bed roll of sheets and a blanket will do just fine. Choose a blanket to fit the season. If you prefer to use a pillow, then bring your favorite.

Most people prefer to sleep topside under the stars. However, in order to be prepared for unexpected rain during the night, everyone should know where he or she will sleep and how to set up the bunk area. These arrangements should be made before the sun sets.

The first thing after getting up in the morning, the bedding should be rolled and secured for the day. This practice allows for the best use of the limited space aboard small craft.

In the event sleeping gear is damp from dew, a short period of drying topside in the early morning sun and breeze will rectify the situation.

## **LIFE JACKETS OR PFDs**

Know the location and use of Life Jackets or Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs).

## **FIRE EXTINGUISHERS**

Know the locations and use of Fire Extinguishers.

## **LOOKOUT**

The captain will keep a sharp lookout for safety of the sailboat. However, while you are relaxing topside, it would also be wise for you to keep an eye out for other water craft, obstructions to safe navigation, or anything else that might be a hazard to your health and safety and/or that of the craft. It is possible for the captain to overlook something. Just let him/her know if you see something that might be amiss. When in doubt, ask the captain.

If the captain goes below deck, he/she should designate someone to be the Lookout Watch.

## **FRESHWATER**

We have found that safe drinking water is available in certain places and we do not expect this to be a serious problem. Normally, people consume approximately 1/2 gallon per day per person.

## **BATHING**

The ocean is our bathtub. While mother nature provides ample cool, clean water for that early morning bath overboard, fresh water is in short supply. The transom shower can be used for a brief fresh water rinse.

Most hair shampoos lather well in the sea and should be used as soap for total body cleansing. Using a clean, dry towel after bathing leaves nicely shampooed hair and prevents itchy skin.

## **PERSONAL CLEANLINESS**

After snorkeling or bathing, dry thoroughly. Before entering the water, place a towel topside for this purpose. Salt water below decks causes moisture, mold, mildew and stench where the sun cannot get at it.

## **MOSQUITOES**

We almost always find night anchorages far removed from mosquitoes. However, we recommend that you bring along mosquito repellent smoke coils for that rare night when the breeze dies down completely. When this happens it is usually in the wee hours of the morning and the relief provided by mosquito coils is well worth the little extra effort of including a box in your seabag. Buy these at camping or hardware stores.

## **SAILING IS GREAT EXERCISE**

If for health reasons your physician has recommended limited exercise for you, please consider not going on any of the trip. Even though we do not include a planned daily exercise routine, the exercise is nonetheless ever present whether or not it is realized. Physical exercise comes in the form of motion of the sea. Our bodies are required to maintain balance while combating the forces of surges and momentum. This form of body maintenance is great because, in a sense, we don't have to work for it. At cruises' end we have found our bodies are firmer, our spirits are stronger and our heads are freer. We wish the same for you.

## **HEY! IT'S REAL OUT THERE!**

Normally we are prepared to take care of ourselves on the open sea, however this depends upon everyone pitching in to help out (total teamwork). This means that everyone should take responsibility for learning the most frequently used knots, nomenclature and sailing seamanship (to a reasonable extent so the captain has help). It follows that the more the crew learns and can help out, the farther the cruising range and the more experiences the group can have. The captain will operate within the limits of safety for his/her crew and craft.

## Shipboard Nomenclature

### Handling of Lines and Use of Cleats -

There are very few ROPES aboard a sailing craft... like a BELL ROPE... almost all others are known as LINES. Every line has two parts; a STANDING PART, which is attached to something, and the BITTER END, or the free end.

Aboard sailboats there is a variety of lines, but there are two very important ones: HALYARDS and SHEETS. HALYARDS are those lines that hoist sails up the masts. SHEETS are lines that control the angle of the sails to the line of the keel and/or wind.

These lines are secured in place by CLEATS. A few TURNS of the lines are taken around a CLEAT, then the line is secured by a CLEATING KNOT.

Sailing a boat requires teamwork, usually under the coordination of the CAPTAIN, a historic practice which has been proven successful over time. At times the CAPTAIN may turn this coordinating function over to another member of the crew who becomes known as the OFFICER OF THE DECK (O.D.) who then "CONS" the vessel.

The captain or O.D. may coordinate some sailing maneuvers by the use of certain terms with respect to lines and cleats. For example, if a craft is about to GET UNDERWAY from a dock, the call for ALL HANDS to STAND BY will be called out. STANDING BY is doing something... which is to be aware, and continue to be aware, of what is happening, and to be ready to step in to lend a hand when needed. The term SINGLE UP will be given, which means that the crew should remove the cleating knot and all but a single TURN of the line from the cleat to which a MOORING LINE is secured. GIVE SLACK means to allow the line to slip around the cleat. HOLD means to apply pressure, or pull, on the bitter end so that the single turn around the cleat does not clip. This does not require much strength, because the cleat is doing the work or taking the strain. CAST OFF means to remove the line from the cleat and allow the line to be SLACK or to have no strain on it.

COILING a line is done in a clockwise manner. A coiled line is then STOWED (placed) in its proper place so that it can be easily found even in darkness. Good sailors can get around the decks of their sailboats and sail them while blindfolded. In many conditions of fog and darkness this becomes a reality.

In general, the entire sailing craft should be kept orderly at all times. GEAR ADRIFT means there are items lying about that are not in their proper storage places. This condition can constitute a hazard to the craft; and, since the integrity and operating condition of same may be conducive to saving all our lives, it behooves the crew to keep her SHIPSHAPE AT ALL TIMES.

When in doubt, ask the captain.

## Protect Yourself From the Tropic Sun

Six out-of-state sailors, unfamiliar with the effects of the intense Florida sun, suspected their captain was being overly concerned and unreasonable in his requests that they cover up to limit their exposure to the sun. They did not follow his advice. As a result, all participants except one were so disabled from painful sunburn that they could not take part in the activities of the 2nd and 3rd days. Their burns forced them to remain below deck until their return to port, which, by popular consent, were well ahead of the time scheduled.

Our sailing trip will occur between 24 and 26 degrees north latitude, where the sun is almost as intense as it is at the equator, and the reflection of the sun upon the ocean intensifies its burning potential. Additionally, according to many reports, the ozone layer is now providing the earth less protection from ultra-violet rays than it did until recently. It is possible for people with fair skin and light hair to become burned in as little as 10-15 minutes!

While we are concerned with short-term effects that sunburn can have upon our participants and programs, an additional consideration is the fact that the American Cancer Society says there are 23,000 new cases of skin cancer reported each year. These are generally caused by too much sun exposure, and all the sunburns we accumulate during our lives can lead to cancer as we get older. (Of course, perhaps, young people never get older!)

Please take responsibility for your sunburn protection!

BE ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN to bring the following:

- \* your determination to avoid sunburn
- \* a long-sleeved shirt and long pants, preferably cotton, light in weight, and light in color
- \* a wide-brimmed hat fitted with a lanyard
- \* sunscreen with a sunburn protection factor (SPF) of at least 15. (A sunscreen with an SPF of 15 means it would take 15 times longer to sunburn than if no sunscreen were worn. Sunscreens can be obtained with an SPF of up to 45. NO sunscreen blocks the sun completely.)
- \* sunglasses will protect your eyes from damage. Be sure they are the type that block out ultra-violet rays. "100% UV blockage" is available. Glass lenses are more effective and scratch less easily than plastic.

WE WILL NOT ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY if you allow yourself to burn. We trust and expect that you will act in the best interest of your skin and your time with us.