

# Water Awareness and Charge Certificate Manual

## Module 69: Nautical Glossary

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# 1 Definition of Seamanship

The term Seamanship is defined as the skill of navigating and operating a ship and applies not only to the skipper of a vessel, but to the crew as well.

Operation of a vessel is under normal conditions is not challenging and true seamanship will only be show in adverse conditions and emergencies. At these times the safety of the vessels and crew depends on the skipper. His / her decision is often required within seconds and must be accepted and acted on by the crew immediately and without question.

Every vessel behaves differently, so the skipper must get to know their own boat.

Good seamanship includes proper preparation and this can often make all the difference. In particular, always check:

- The weather forecast for the next 24 hours
- The seaworthiness of the vessel and its equipment
- General hazards in the area of the voyage
- Local knowledge: rules, safety and micro weather.
- Leave details of the voyage with local authorities or competent responsible persons known to you.

# 2 General Nautical Terms

ABAFT	Toward the rear (stern) of the boat. Behind.
ABEAM	A relative position at right angles to the keel of the boat, but not on the boat.
ABOARD	On or within the boat.
ABOVE DECK	On the deck (not over it - see ALOFT)
ABREAST	Side by side; by the side of.
ADRIFT	Loose, not on moorings or towline.
AFT	Toward the stern of the boat.
AGROUND	Touching or fast to the bottom.
AHEAD	In a forward direction.
ALEE	Away from the direction of the wind. Opposite of windward.
ALOFT	Above the deck of the boat.
AMIDSHIPS	In or toward the centre of the boat. Zero rudder angle with respect to helm or tiller position
ANCHORAGE	A place suitable for anchoring in relation to the wind, seas and bottom.
ASTERN	In backwards direction, opposite of ahead.
ATHWARTSHIPS	At right angles to the centreline of the boat; rowboat seats are generally athwart ships.

AWEIGH	The position of anchor as it is raised clear of the bottom.
BATTEN DOWN	Secure hatches and loose objects both within the hull and on deck.
BEAM	The greatest width of the boat.
BEARING	The direction of an object expressed either as a true bearing as shown on the chart, or as a bearing relative to the heading of the boat.
BEARING AWAY	Turn away from the wind
BEATING	Sailing up wind
BELOW	Beneath the deck.
BIGHT	The part of the rope or line, between the end and the standing part, on which a knot is formed. A loop of rope or line.
BILGE	The interior of the hull below the floor boards.
BOAT HOOK	A short shaft with a fitting at one end shaped to facilitate use in putting a line over a piling, recovering an object dropped overboard, or in pushing or fending off.
BOW	The forward part of a boat.
BOWLINE	A knot used to form a temporary loop in the end of a line.
BRIDGE	The location from which a large vessel is steered and its speed controlled.
BRIDLE	A line or wire secured at both ends in order to distribute a strain between two points.
BROACH	veer and pitch forward because of loss of steering or a sea hitting the stern,
BULKHEAD	A vertical partition separating compartments.
BUOY	An anchored float used for marking a position on the water or a hazard or a shoal and for mooring.
CABIN	A compartment for passengers or crew.
CAPSIZE	To turn over.
CAST OFF	To let go.
CAVITATION	Formation of air bubbles at the trailing edge of the prop
CHAFING GEAR	Tubing or cloth wrapping used to protect a line from chafing on a rough surface.
CHART	A map for use by navigators.
CHINE	The intersection of the bottom and sides of a flat or v-bottomed boat.

CHOCK	A fitting through which anchor or mooring lines are led. Usually U-shaped to reduce chafe.
CLEAT	A fitting to which lines are made fast. The classic cleat to which lines are belayed is approximately anvil-shaped.
CLOVE HITCH	A knot for temporarily fastening a line to a spar or piling.
CLOSE HAULED	Sailing as close to the eye of the wind as possible
COAMING	A vertical piece around the edge of a cockpit, hatch, etc. to prevent water on deck from running below.
COCKPIT	An opening in the deck from which the boat is handled.
COG	Course over ground
COIL	To lay a line down in circular turns.
COURSE	The direction in which a boat is steered.
CURRENT	The horizontal movement of water.
DEAD AHEAD	Directly ahead.
DEAD ASTERN	Directly aft.
DECK	A permanent covering over a compartment, hull or any part thereof.
DINGHY	A small open boat. A dinghy is often used as a tender for a larger craft.
DISPLACEMENT	The weight of water displaced by a floating vessel, thus, a boat's weight.
DISPLACEMENT HULL	A type of hull that ploughs through the water, displacing a weight of water equal to its own weight, even when more power is added.
DOCK	A protected water area in which vessels are moored. The term is often used to denote a pier or a wharf.
DRAFT	The depth of water a boat draws.
EBB	A receding current or tide.
FATHOM	Six feet. ( American charts still marked in fathoms)
FENDER	A cushion, placed between boats, or between a boat and a pier, to prevent damage.
FIGURE EIGHT KNOT	A knot in the form of a figure eight, placed in the end of a line to prevent the line from passing through a grommet or a block.
FLARE	The outward curve of a vessel's sides near the bow. A distress signal.
FLOOD	A incoming current or tide.

FLOORBOARDS	The surface of the cockpit on which the crew stand.
FOLLOWING SEA	An overtaking sea that comes from astern.
FORE-AND-AFT	In a line parallel to the keel.
FORWARD	Toward the bow of the boat.
FOULED	Any piece of equipment that is jammed or entangled, or dirtied.
FREEBOARD	The vertical distance from the surface of the water to the lowest point of the gunwale.
GALLEY	The kitchen area of a boat.
GANGWAY	The area of a ship's side where people board and disembark.
GIVE-WAY VESSEL	A term used to describe the vessel which must yield in meeting, crossing, or overtaking situations. Also known as the burdened vessel
GOOSE WINGED	To sail downwind with the main sail on one side of the boat and the jib on the other
GRAB RAILS	Hand-hold fittings mounted on cabin tops and sides for personal safety when moving around the boat.
GROUND TACKLE	A collective term for the anchor and its associated gear.
GUNWALE	The upper edge of a boat's sides where it meets the deck.
GYBE	Altering course by turning the stern of the boat though the eye of the wind
HATCH	An opening in a boat's deck fitted with a watertight cover.
HEAD	A marine toilet. Also the upper corner of a triangular sail.
HEADING	The direction in which a vessel's bow points at any given time.
HEADWAY	The forward motion of a boat. Opposite of sternway.
HEAVE	Linear vertical motion of a ship
HELM	The wheel or tiller controlling the rudder.
HELMSPERSON	The person who steers the boat.
HITCH	A knot used to secure a rope to another object or to another rope, or to form a loop or a noose in a rope.
HOLD	A compartment below deck in a large vessel, used solely for carrying cargo.
HOVE TO	A vessel that is underway, but not making way
HULL	The main body of a vessel.
IMPELLOR	A welded rubber bush on a steel shaft that is driven by the engine to draw water up into the engine

INBOARD	More toward the centre of a vessel; inside; a motor fitted inside a boat.
JETTY	A structure, usually masonry, projecting out from the shore; a jetty may protect a harbour entrance.
KEEL	The centreline of a boat running fore and aft; the backbone of a vessel.
KNOT	A measure of speed equal to one nautical mile (6076 feet) per hour.
KNOT	A fastening made by interweaving rope to form a stopper, to enclose or bind an object, to form a loop or a noose, to tie a small rope to an object, or to tie the ends of two small ropes together.
LATITUDE	The distance north or south of the equator measured and expressed in degrees and parts thereof.
LEE	The side sheltered from the wind.
LEE HELM	Vessel bears away with the helm amidships
LEEWARD	The direction away from the wind. Opposite of windward.
LEEWAY	The sideways movement of the boat caused by either wind or current.
LINE	Rope and cordage used aboard a vessel.
LOA	Length Overall
LOG	A record of courses or operation. Also, a device to measure speed.
LONGITUDE	The distance in degrees east or west of the meridian at Greenwich, England.
LUBBER'S LINE	A mark or permanent line on a compass indicating the direction forward parallel to the keel when properly installed.
LUFFING	Altering course towards the wind until you are head to wind
MAKING WAY	A vessel that is underway and moving through the water.
MARLINSPIKE	A tool for opening the strands of a rope while splicing.
MIDSHIP	Approximately in the location equally distant from the bow and stern.
MOORING	An arrangement for securing a boat to a mooring buoy or a pier.
NAUTICAL MILE	One minute of latitude; approximately 6076 feet - about 1/8 longer than the statute mile of 5280 feet.
NAVIGATION	The art and science of conducting a boat safely from one point to another.

NAVIGATION RULES	The regulations governing the movement of vessels in relation to each other, generally called steering and sailing rules.
OUTBOARD	Toward or beyond the boat's sides. A detachable engine mounted on a boat's stern.
OVERBOARD	Over the side or out of the boat.
PAINTER	A docking line leading from the bow.
PIER	A loading platform extending at an angle from the shore.
PILE	A wood, metal or concrete pole driven into the bottom. Craft may be made fast to a pile; it may be used to support a pier (see PILING) or a float.
PILING	Support, protection for wharves, piers etc.; constructed of piles (see PILE)
PILOTING	Navigation by use of visible references, the depth of the water, etc.
PITCH	Rotational motion about the lateral axis of a ship
PLANING	A boat is said to be planing when it is essentially moving over the top of the water rather than through the water.
PLANING HULL	A type of hull shaped to glide easily across the water at high speed.
PORT	The left side of a boat looking forward. A harbour.
QUARTER	The sides of a boat aft of amidships.
QUARTERING SEA	Sea coming on a boat's quarter.
REACHING	Sailing with the wind on the side of the boat (Close, beam or broad)
RODE	The anchor line and/or chain.
ROLL	Rotational motion about the longitudinal axis of a ship
RUDDER	A vertical plate or board for steering a boat.
RUN	To allow a line to feed freely.
RUNNING	Sailing downwind
RUNNING BY THE LEE	Running with the mainsail on the windward side
RUNNING LIGHTS	Lights required to be shown on boats underway between sundown and sunup.
SCOPE	Technically, the ratio of length of anchor rode in use to the vertical distance from the bow of the vessel to the bottom of the water. Usually six to seven to one for calm weather and more scope in storm conditions.

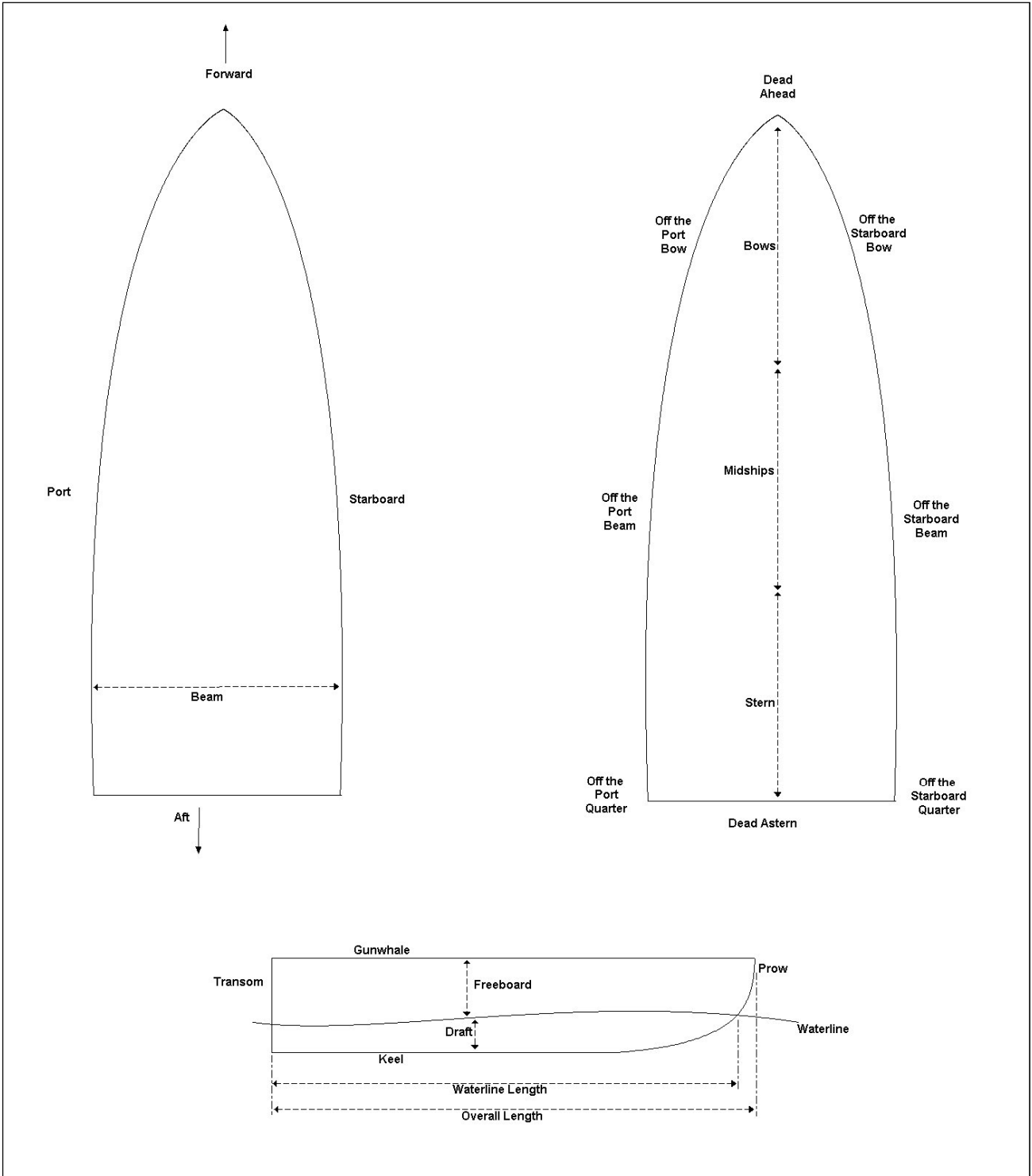


SCREW	A boat's propeller.
SCUPPERS	Drain holes on deck, in the toe rail, or in bulwarks or (with drain pipes) in the deck itself.
SEA COCK	A through hull valve, a shut off on a plumbing or drain pipe between the vessel's interior and the sea.
SEAMANSHIP	All the arts and skills of boat handling, ranging from maintenance and repairs to piloting, sail handling, marlinespike work, and rigging.
SEA ROOM	A safe distance from the shore or other hazards.
SEAWORTHY	A boat or a boat's gear able to meet the usual sea conditions.
SECURE	To make fast.
SET	Direction toward which the current is flowing.
SLACK	Not fastened; loose. Also, to loosen.
SOG	Speed over ground
SOUNDING	A measurement of the depth or water or liquid in a tank.
SPRING LINE	A pivot line used in docking, undocking, or to prevent the boat from moving forward or astern while made fast to a dock.
SQUALL	A sudden, violent wind often accompanied by rain.
SQUARE KNOT	A knot used to join two lines of similar size. Also called a reef knot.
STAND-ON VESSEL	That vessel which has right-of-way during a meeting, crossing, or overtaking situation. Also known as the privileged vessel
STARBOARD	The right side of a boat when looking forward.
STEM	The forward most part of the bow.
STERN	The after part of the boat.
STERN LINE	A docking line leading from the stern.
STOW	To put an item in its proper place.
SURGE	Linear longitudinal motion of a ship
SWAMP	To fill with water, but not settle to the bottom.
SWAY	Linear Lateral motion of a ship
TACKING	Altering course by bringing the bow through the eye of the wind
THWARTSHIPS	At right angles to the centreline of the boat.
TIDE	The periodic rise and fall of water level in the oceans.
TILLER	A bar or handle for turning a boat's rudder or an outboard motor.

TOPSIDES	The sides of a vessel between the waterline and the deck; sometimes referring to onto or above the deck.
TRANSOM	The stern cross-section of a square sterned boat.
TRIM	Fore and aft balance of a boat.
UNDERWAY	Vessel in motion, i.e., when not moored, at anchor, or aground.
V BOTTOM	A hull with the bottom section in the shape of a "V".
WAKE	Moving waves, track or path that a boat leaves behind it, when moving across the waters.
WAY	Movement of a vessel through the water such as headway, sternway or leeway.
WEATHER HELM	Vessel Luffs up with the helm amidships
WINDWARD	Toward the direction from which the wind is coming.
YAW	To swing or steer off course, as when running with a quartering sea.

**Table 1: General seamanship terms**

### 3 General Areas of a Vessel

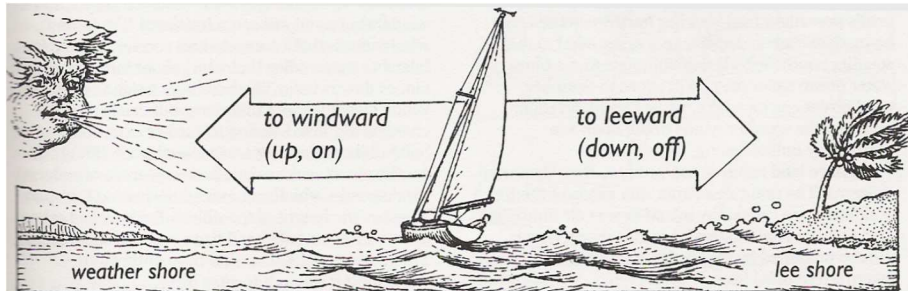


**Figure 1: General parts of a vessel**

## 4 Lee and Weather

The term "to weather" is defined as the direction that the wind is coming from. To lee is heading away from that direction.

If you are standing on a spit of land, the upwind shore is known as the weather shore. Correspondingly, the downwind shore is known as the lee shore. However, at sea, the shore upwind of your boat is called the weather shore being to your weather side. The shore downwind of your boat is called the lee shore being to your lee side.



**Figure 2: Lee and weather**

The weather shore will be in the lee of the land will offer shelter. The lee shore will be open to the full force of the weather and may be quite dangerous. If caught on open water, try to head upwind to approach your weather shore as you will find a measure of protection from the wind from trees, hills and the shore itself.

