



An Introduction to the CCA Safety-at-Sea Web Pages

We all love sailing - the joy of being on the water, making new decisions as each wave and gust changes conditions, and pursuing the goal of the journey as well as the destination. Our enjoyment is higher when we sail safer, as we feel more competent to sway nature to get us there in one piece.

Safety at sea should be part of your sailing being, and it can become part of your intuition. As you incorporate it in everything you do at sea, your comfort level and confidence increases. To build that sense of safety, you need to have: **Situational Awareness, Anticipation, Planning, Preparation, Seamanship Skills** and **Practice** to improve your safety while sailing.

The articles attached to this site are designed to help you learn more in the areas above. Some articles are “sea stories” or compilations of experiences by CCA members or others. These will give you new insights, especially to **Situational Awareness** and **Anticipation**, and suggest new **Seamanship Skills** for you to develop and practice. Other articles describe equipment and techniques to prevent or address emergencies. These you need to factor into your **Planning** and **Preparations**.

In most cases the application of safety at sea involves you balancing many factors, continually making decisions and juggling to minimize risks. This is the value of reading the experiences of others, to understand their judgments. To put it plainly, frequently **There Is No Book** to tell you a specific answer, **but you can learn how others have thought through issues**.

Beyond learning you need to develop skills through practice. No article delivers **Practice** – *you* have to get out on the water and do it.

We urge you to **Practice** safety in all its aspects. Yes, practice man-overboard drills; yes, wear lifejackets with harnesses and tethers. But practice the more subtle issues too. For example:

- Check the weather visually, and then listen to it on the radio, so you get a feel for it. Talk over a forecasted change in the weather with others aboard. Do you need to take any preparations? Do you want to put in earlier (or sail farther)?
- Debrief your crew after executing a task forward, and ask yourself and them how you could have made it safer: Could you have pointed the boat downwind or up? Could you have installed a pad-eye to provide a clip point near where they were working? Do you need hand signals as it is hard to hear? Should you re-lead a line to the cockpit to remove the need to go forward at all?

You get the idea. All these actions add fun to the challenge of sailing and the satisfaction of getting your boat to your destination. They improve your skills, and the interaction with your

crew. They make you feel better about going out for a sail. Please, read and learn, but then practice what you learn on this site.

Sail Safe!

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