

Buying The Right Anchor

The right way to use an anchor is probably one of the least understood areas of boating. If you are new to boating, you may be thinking - how hard can it be? You simply throw the anchor in the water, wait until it hits the bottom, then tie it off, correct?

Anyone who is experienced with boating has probably seen the types of problems that type of attitude can cause. Just like everything else in boating, anchoring requires the right equipment, careful thought, and a lot of practice.

The starting point is selecting the right ground tackle (the proper term for the anchor, line, chain, shackles and swivels) for your boat and your style of boating. There is no single anchor that will do everything perfectly. Each style has its own unique benefits and drawbacks, and each one performs best under its given conditions.

The Danforth anchor

The Danforth anchor is one of the most popular, being easily identified by its two long, sharp pivoting flukes and long shank. The Danforth is also a great choice for small to medium sized boats as well. The anchor is light and easy to store, digs well into sand and mud, and releases easy when pulled from different directions.

The flukes on the Danforth pivot so that the shank can be pulled at a more vertical angle. It's ideal for fishing, which requires quick release and moving around to different locations. If you fish overnight a lot or travel to different areas of water you may want to consider a different anchor, which will hold better in changing conditions.

The plow anchor

The CQR, or plow anchor, features a single shaped fluke that pivots at the end of the shank. This design works well on many bottoms. The plow shank

pivots from side to side, while remaining parallel to the fluke. This design also makes releasing a snap when the anchor is pulled vertically.

The Bruce anchor

This anchor was originally created for offshore gas and drilling rigs. The more scaled down version of this anchor is popular with boaters. The anchor holds fast, yet it will still come loose when pulled vertically.

Always make sure to select an anchor system that matches the length of your boat, displacement, and the windage. If your looking for strength, elasticity and durability, you should use only top quality braided nylon anchor line.

It's very important that the size and length of your anchor line is appropriate for your boat and it's requirements. Small or medium boats should use a section of galvanized steel chain between the line and the anchor.

If you are new to boating, anchoring is something you should become familiar with. As you use your boat more, you'll pick up the proper anchoring techniques. Or, if you prefer, you can always take classes and learn everything you need to know about anchoring from a qualified professional.

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