

Glossary of Sailing Terms

Battens - Plastic stiffener rods in the sail which help to give it shape

Bear Away - Turn the boat away from the wind

Beating - Pointing as close to the wind as possible with the sail pulled in

Boom - Horizontal spar attached to the mast and the foot of the sail

Bow - Front of the boat

By the Lee - Sailing downwind with the boom and sail on the windward side

Clew - Back lower corner of the sail

Crossbeams - Aluminium tubes laid across the hulls to hold them together

Cunningham - Control that tightens the front edge (luff) of the sail

Falls of Rope - The part of the rope hanging between two points

Foot - Bottom edge of the sail

Gudgeon - Bracket with hole in it for locating a pintle to form a hinge

Gybe - When sailing downwind, turning away from the wind and moving the sail across the boat and the wind so that it fills on the opposite side

Gybing Lines - Two Lines running from each side of the kicker boom to the sailor in the cockpit to pull out or gybe the sail

Head - Top corner of a triangular sail

Kicker - Other name, vang. Pulls the boom down to tension the sail leech

Leeward - The side of the boat that faces downwind

Luff - Front edge of the sail

Luffing - Turning towards the wind

Luff up - Turn the boat towards the wind

Leech - Back edge of the sail

Outhaul - Control line attached to the clew to tighten the foot of the sail

Painter - Rope attached to the bow, used for towing or tying up to a mooring

Port - Left hand side of the boat when facing forward

Pintle - Short vertical bar which mates with a Gudgeon to form a hinge for the rudder

Reaching - Sailing with the wind blowing across the boat

Rig - The mast, boom, sail and control lines

Running - Sailing with the wind behind the boat

Sheet - Rope that controls the boom and sail positions

Sponsons - Outer hulls of a Challenger trimaran

Starboard - Right hand side of the boat when facing forward

Stern - Back of the boat

Stock - Cheek-plates, hinged to the stern of the boat, holding the rudder blade

Tack - Front lower corner of a sail

Tacking - Turn the bow through the wind until the sail fills on the opposite side

Tell-tales - Strips of material attached to the sail at one end to show the wind flow

Tiller - A wood or steel pole the helmsman uses to control the rudder

Transom - Back surface of the boat's hull

Wake - Small waves made by the stern of the boat passing through the water

Windward - The side of the boat that faces the wind or, when running, the side opposite to the boom