



# **An Introduction to Safe Sailing**

# ROYAL BOMBAY YACHT CLUB

## An Introduction to Safe Sailing

*“SAILING IS NOT JUST A SPORT, IT’S MORE A WAY OF LIFE” .....*

### **BASIC SAFETY:**

When going out sailing on the water the following guidelines for safety will be in order and should be followed:

- Protection for your eyes – Sunglasses and a Cap or Hat
- Protection for your skin – Sunscreen
- Always wear a personal floatation device
- Shoes with a non-slip sole are essential
- Gloves to protect your hands
- Always carry sufficient drinking water to keep hydrated
- A waterproof pouch for your cell phone and wallet

When booking a boat to sail, always check with the Sailing Room Staff on the **wind** and **tide** conditions, for the time of day you would like to go out.

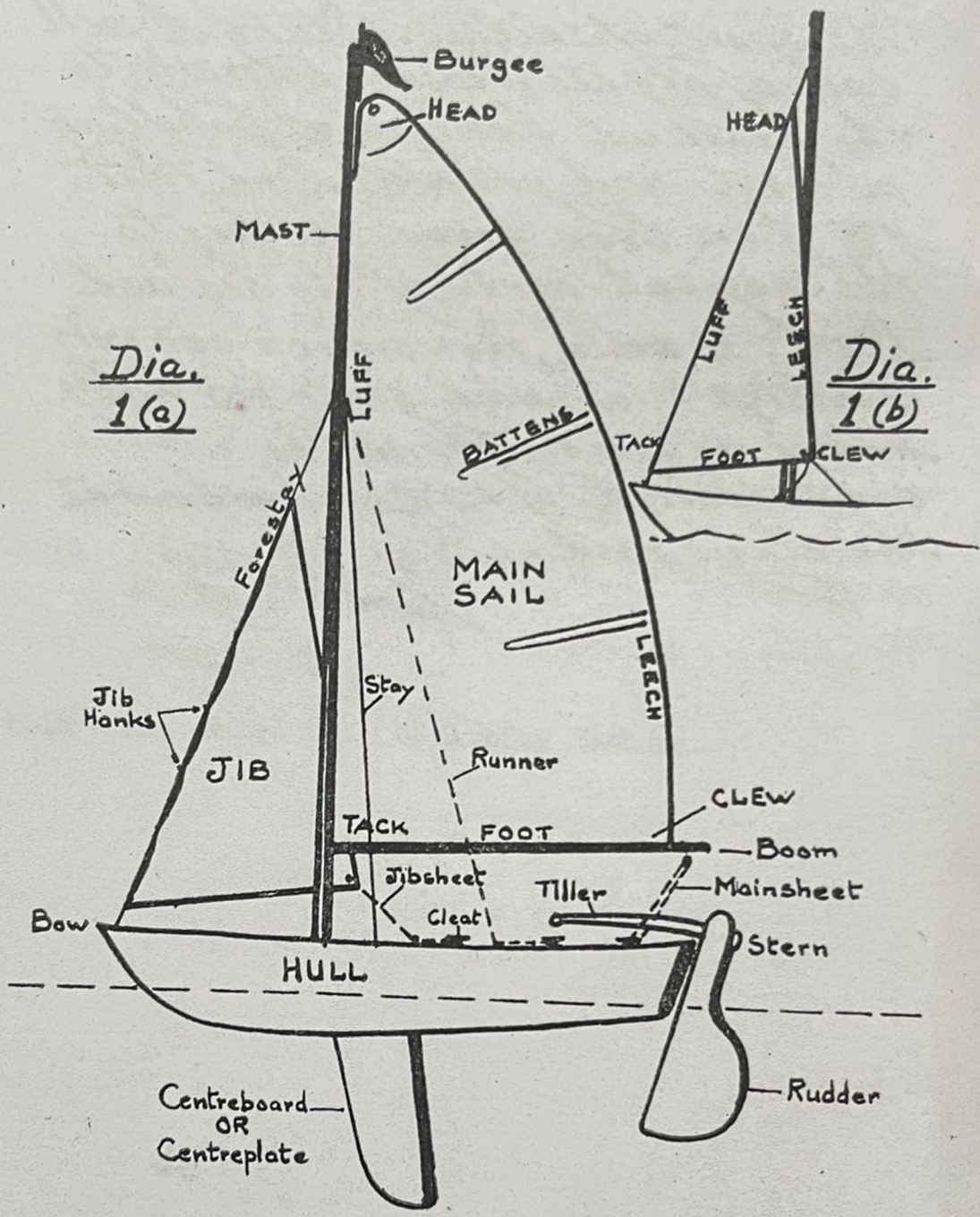
Whenever boarding / stepping on to a small rowing boat or a motorboat, always remember to step onto the middle and not on the edge the boat.

The same practice should follow when stepping off onto a dock or jetty, i.e. not stepping on to the edge of either.

### **Parts of a Sailing Boat:**

For sake of good order, you must familiarize yourself with the nomenclature of the parts of the boat. The diagram below refers with some basic sailing terminology, listed there under. The basic parts are the:

- Hull
- Rigging
- Sails
- Spars
- Keel
- Rudder & Tiller



## Parts of a Sailing Boat

The **Main Sail** (the larger sized sail) sail, is held between the vertical 'Mast' and the horizontal 'Boom'.

The **Jib or Fore Sail** is the smaller one attached to the bow (front) of the boat and the other end towards the top of the mast.

The **Tiller** is the steering toggle that fits into the **Rudder**.

The **Centre Plate or Retractable Keel** is the steel plate that hangs down thru a slot in the centre of the hull just aft of the mast. This is best left hanging fully down (provided the water is of sufficient depth), which ensures that the boat sails in the forward direction and does not slip sideway to leeward.

The **Rigging** consists of:

- a. **'Standing Rigging'** (fore, side and backstays) which are wire ropes that hold the mast in place against the force and pressure of the wind on the sails.
- b. **'Running Rigging'** of polyester ropes that haul the sails up and control the setting / angle of the sails depending on the wind direction.

Each sail has a halyard to haul the sails up and lower them.

The **Main Sheet** is attached to the **Main Sail**, which controls the setting/angle of the sail to the wind.

The **Jib Sheets** control the setting/angle of the Jib to the wind.

## BASIC SAILING TERMINOLOGY:

**PORT:** The Left side of the boat and all the area to the left of the boat.

**STARBOARD:** The right side of the boat and all that you see up to the horizon on the right side of her.

**WINDWARD:** It is the side from where the wind blows, upwind to your boat, also known as the weather side.

**HEADING UP**  
**-LUFFING**  
**-BEARING IN:** } All mean turning the boat towards the wind or to windward also -  
termed as going up-wind-

**LEEWARD:** It is the opposite side, downwind of your boat

**HEADING DOWN**

**-BEARING AWAY** } All mean turning the boat away from the wind or to leeward, also  
**- BEARING OUT:** } termed as turning downwind.

**STARBOARD TACK:** A boat is said to be on a starboard tack when the wind is blowing from the starboard (right) side of the boat and the sails are on the port (left) side of the boat.

**PORT TACK:** A boat is said to be on a port tack when the wind is blowing from the port (left) side of the boat and the sails are on the starboard (right) side of the boat.

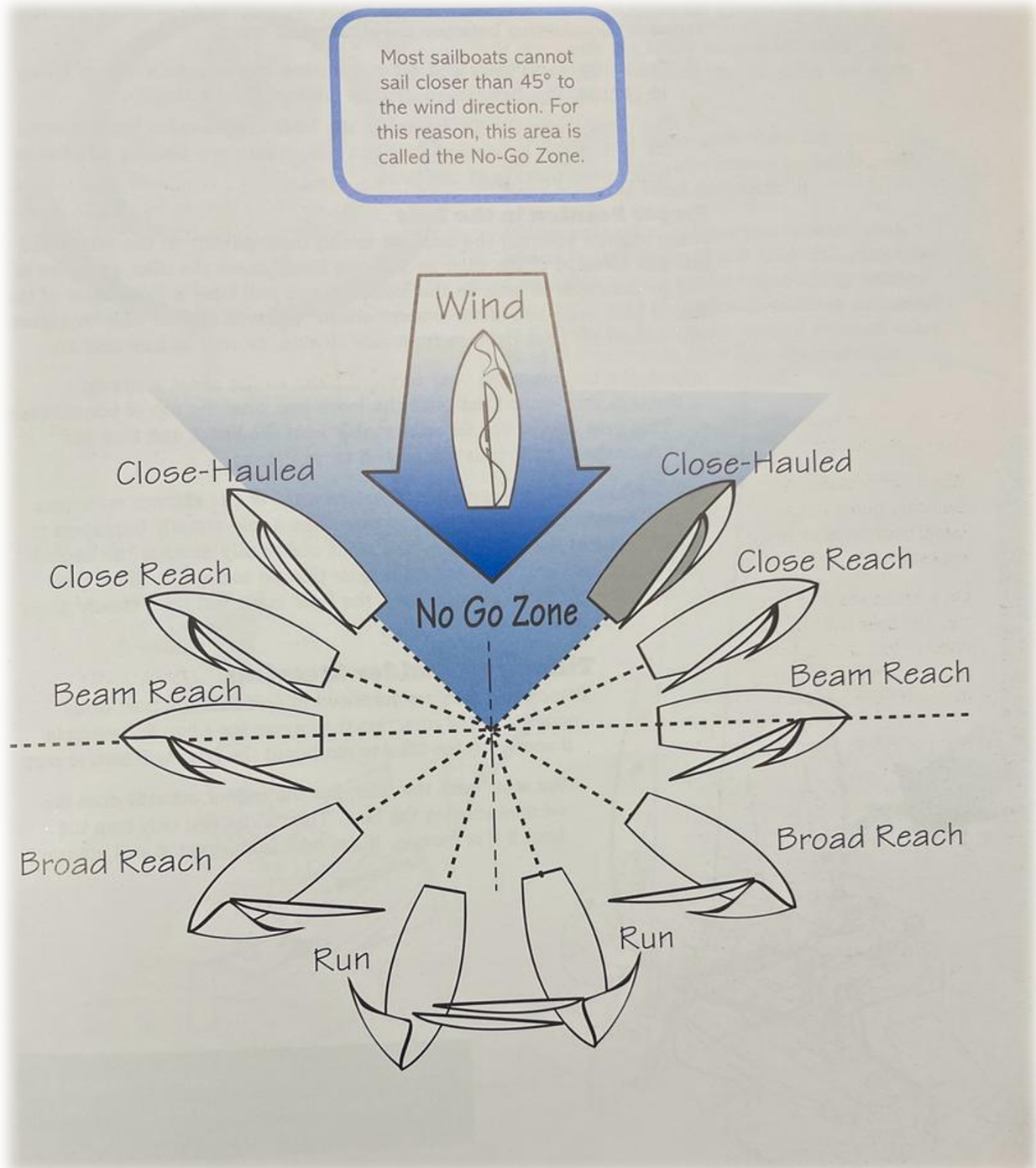
**FLOOD TIDE:** It is the tidal flow into our harbour from the Southwest mouth which leads to the depth of water increasing in the harbour.

**EBB TIDE:** The flow in the opposite direction, towards the mouth of the harbour which leads to the depth of water in the harbour decreasing.

In the Fair Season: **November to May** we have **North Westerly** sea breezes in the afternoons and **North Easterly** land winds in the mornings from the end of the SW Monsoon up to **February**. After **May** the winds turn **South Westerly** in sync with our South West Monsoon season.

## THE POINTS OF SAILING:

These are best illustrated in the diagram below:



## RIGGING UP YOUR BOAT:

There is a sequence of rigging up boat, which must be done correctly.

- a. Remove the sail cover off the main sail.
- b. Ship (fit) the rudder
- c. Un-cleat the main sheet at the stern'-aft end of the boat.
- d. Remove the sail ties and fit in the battens
- e. Haul on the halyard to hoist the Main sail
- f. Unfurl the jib sail from the fore stay (the one attached to the 'bow'/front of the boat)
- g. Fit in the tiller, ensure the retainer pin is inserted.
- h. Lower the Centre Plate (also known as the retractable Keel, some yachts have fixed keels)
- i. Untie the mooring ropes / anchor rope and your boat is ready to sail off.

## A FEW TIPS ON SAILING:

### Leaving the Mooring Area/Anchorage Safely:

- Always be aware of the tidal flow / direction and depth of water available around your boat.
- It is always best to sail up-tide so that you have the tidal flow helping you on your return to the anchorage/mooring area.
- Note the wind direction by observing the 'tell tails' (threads or ribbons attached to your stays/ standing rigging) or observe any flag flying on a nearby anchored / stationary fishing boat. Your boat whilst anchored will normally be lying pointing head to wind i.e. into the wind.
- Observe the sea room available nearby the boat and head out in the direction whereby you have enough room without coming into close quarters with any other boats anchored nearby.
- On your **first few sails**, it is best you have an experienced boat man/tandel or someone to guide you to ensure a safe passage out of the usually crowded mooring area.
- Once you are out of the mooring area, clear of anchored boats, lines, floating mooring lines and fishing nets, you can try your hand at steering and changing course of your boat. It may be confusing at first: pushing the tiller to the left makes the boat turn to the right and vice versa, unlike a steering wheel.
- Always sit **opposite** the boom / sails (i.e. on the windward side), forward of the tiller with your back to the wind facing forward and holding the tiller with your back hand.

- For upwind sailing, try pushing the tiller away from you towards the boom and you will notice the boat heading up (turning towards the direction from where the wind is blowing from). You will notice the sails fluttering / flapping and the crew or tandel will need to pull in the main and jib sheets in just enough to stop the flapping.
- Always remember, you can only head up to a certain extent and not get in to the 'No-Go' zone.
- A sailboat can move in all directions except directly into the wind or even too close to the wind direction.
- When you want to return to your original course you will pull the tiller towards you, i.e. away from the boom, by the right amount and let out the sheets just enough not to let them flap.
- For Downwind sailing, pull the tiller towards you and let the sails out sufficiently until they just begin to luff / flutter.

### **ADDITIONAL TIPS FOR SAILING:**

1. Practice sailing a steady course to a particular point with the sails set correctly.
2. Altering Course-changing direction and trimming i.e. setting the sails for that particular direction.

Referring to the 'Points of Sailing' diagram, there are **Three (3)** main points:

- a. **'Close Hauled'**: also referred to 'beating' with wind at approximately **45** degrees to your boat
- b. **'Reaching'**: with wind coming from the side-on the beam
- c. **'Running'**: -wind from dead astern, that is from behind the boat

In **'Close Hauled'**: as the term suggests you need to have the sails pulled in fully.

In **'Reaching'**: the sails are approximately half out.

and

In **'Running'**: the sails are full or nearly full out to catch all the wind available.

**TACKING:** You can turn a boat around-by heading up/ bearing in / luffing until the bow of the boat crosses the wind arrow/direction, the sail swings across and the wind is on to the boat from the opposite side to what it was earlier and you cross over to the new windward side.

**GYBING:** This is by heading down, that is bearing away / bearing out till the stern of the boat crosses the wind arrow/direction and again the sail flips across but a bit more forcefully. This should be practiced at first in light winds only.

### **A few Best Management Practices to ensure Safe Sailing:**

- Always communicate with your crew before making any major change of course or heading.
- Always keep a good look out and stay clear of other boats. In case of boats heading towards each other, **the boat on a starboard tack has the right of way over the boat on a port tack.** The boat on the port tack must take evasive action well in time by turning to it's right . In a cruising situation, it is advisable that both boats should turn to it's right in case of boats heading towards each other and take evasive action well in time.
- With both boats on the same tack, the boat on the windward side (upwind) has to give way to the boat on its leeward side.
- Stay well clear of Merchant Ships and Naval vessels in the harbour.
- Be aware of the reefs, rocky areas, and shallow patches along the shoreline, remember a light house or a beacon is always built on a rocky patch, so stay well clear of them. Initially do not venture out too far.
- Rendering assistance to another boat or person in need is the primary duty of a sailor.
- Do have handy the numbers of the Club Sailing room staff in case you need assistance. If in trouble wave your hands above your head as a signal to a nearby boat requesting help.
- Always be concerned with preserving the marine environment by not throwing waste items like plastic bottles, bags, tins, etc. overboard.

### **RETURNING TO YOUR MOORING AREAS:**

- Sail in carefully, avoiding anchor lines and other boats, making allowance for tidal drift, specially in very light winds where the drift would be greater.
- Come to a dead halt at you mooring by slowing down well in time by letting go the main sheet and letting your sails flap; and pointing your boat head to wind.
- Unrig your boat after securing your mooring lines, lowering your sails, remove the battens if required and rolling them as neatly as possible without any creases. Remove the tiller and unship the rudder, and stow all gear in a seaman like manner, coiling neatly all the lines.

## **FAIRWINDS & HAPPY SAILING ALWAYS**

### **PROCEDURE FOR BOOKING OF BOATS**

You may send your boat booking request earlier but all bookings will be confirmed at 1900 hrs, five days prior to the day for which the booking is required. Booking can be done either by in person or through an email at [rbycsailing@gmail.com](mailto:rbycsailing@gmail.com) by providing following details:

1. Member's Name
2. Membership Number
3. Date of Sail
4. Time of Sail
5. Mobile Number
6. Type: Keel Boat – 6 person + 1 Tandel  
Searbird – 4 Person + 1 Tandel

However, bookings done by telephone will have to be re-confirmed by the Members via email within 24 hours failing which the booking will not be held.

Cancellation of bookings will have to be intimated by email only and verbal cancellations will not be entertained

**Please Note: Full boat hire charges applicable if cancelled less than 24 hours to the sail timing or NO SHOW.**

### **Contact Details**

Address: Royal Bombay Yacht Club, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Marg, Apollo Bunder, Mumbai 400 001, India

Landline Number: +91 22 6752 7245

Email id: [rbycsailing@gmail.com](mailto:rbycsailing@gmail.com)