Port & Starboard: FINDING YOUR WAY ON BOARD

Student Introduction

Much of the language of the sea and of boats is different from that on the land. Many words and terms used by people on ships and boats may be centuries old and have come from other languages. Words and terms used by boating people and sailors have very precise meanings. When a vessel is in danger, time can be saved if all on board know and use the correct terms for the tools and actions needed to save the vessel. Using the right term may avoid long explanations and can reduce confusion.

There are words that have to do with directions on board a ship or a large boat. Terms used for directions can usually be matched in pairs. Each pair has opposite terms. For example, the opposite of “up” is “down.” What is the opposite of “left”?

Below is a list of terms that refer to directions on board a vessel. How many do you know? Place a check by the ones you know.

_____ aft
_____ aloft
_____ below
_____ bow

_____ forward
_____ port
_____ starboard
_____ stem

One pair of terms has to do with the front end of a vessel (the bow) and the back end of the vessel (the stern). A sailor moving toward the bow is moving forward. A sailor near the stern is aft. If a sailor is below the deck, he is below. A sailor above the deck in the rigging is aloft. Sailors have special words for right and left. The right side of a vessel is the starboard side and the left side is the port side.

Port & Starboard
1. Opposite Pairs

Sailors use words and terms with special meanings. The list below includes eight terms that have to do with directions on board a large vessel. The terms can be grouped into pairs of opposite but related terms. Can you match the pairs? Place the correct opposite terms in the blanks below.

aft    forward    aloft    port
below    starboard    bow    stern

Aft is the opposite of ________.
Aloft is the opposite of ________.
Bow is the opposite of ________.
Port is the opposite of ________.

2. Match the Meaning With the Term

_____ port  (a) the forward end of a vessel
_____ bow    (b) the rear of a vessel
_____ aft    (c) above the deck
_____ below  (d) below the deck
_____ starboard (e) the left side
_____ stern  (f) at or moving toward the stern
_____ forward  (g) near or moving toward the bow
_____ aloft  (h) the right side

WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the scrambled letters to form words.

Near the stem  _____ 1
F A T

Produced by vessel’s boiler
M A T E S 8 9

Body of a vessel  2 3 4
L U H L

Up in the rigging  10
F O T A L

Rear of vessel  5 6 7
S N E R T

Room for a toilet  11 12 13 14
D E H A

Place the numbered letters in the spaces below

Port & Starboard
How Boats Are Shaped

The basic part of a boat is the hull. The hull gives shape to the vessel. It can be made of wood, metal, fiberglass, or concrete. The hull may be open at the top or covered with a deck.

The hulls of small pleasure boats can be any of three basic shapes: flat, round, or vee. Some modern boats have a cathedral hull, a version of a vee hull.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FLAT</th>
<th>ROUND</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VEE</td>
<td>CATHEDRAL</td>
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Some sailboats have two or three hulls. A sailboat with one hull is called a monohull. One with two hulls is a catamaran and one with three hulls is a trimaran.

Inside the Hull

The inside of most large boats is divided by walls called bulkheads. The bulkheads are used to make rooms, compartments, or cabins. Here are some names of rooms on a large boat:

- Engine Room
  - Main cabin (a large room for crew or passengers)
  - Aft cabin (a room near the stern for crew or passengers)
  - Head (toilet)
  - Forepeak (small room in the bow for storage)
  - Galley (kitchen)
  - Hold (where cargo is stored)
  - Locker (a closet or cabinet)

There are openings in both the hull and deck. The hull may have small round windows called portholes to let in air and light. The deck has openings called hatches that allow crew and passengers to go below. Most hatches leading below also have steps called ladders.

On the Deck

Large motorboats have a room on deck called the bridge. The bridge is the location of the boat’s steering and speed controls. Vessels are steered by a tiller or a wheel. The tiller or wheel controls the rudder. The rudder is below water near the stern. Both the rudder and the tiller or wheel are called the helm. The deck may have one or more cabins including the bridge. The structures on or above the deck are called the superstructure.
1. Match These Terms

___ galley  (a) the main body of a vessel
___ bulkhead (b) an opening for light or air
___ hull     (c) a stairway on a boat
___ locker   (d) kitchen
___ porthole (e) part of the helm
___ hatch    (f) a doorway
___ ladder   (g) a closet or cabinet
___ rudder  (h) a wall or partition

2. Locate These Parts of A Boat

D  on or above deck  B  below deck
___ bridge  ___ engine room
___ head    ___ rudder
___ wheel   ___ forepeak
___ hold    ___ hull

3. Complete These Statements

A sailboat with one hull is a ____________________.
A sailboat with two hulls is a ____________________.
A sailboat with three hulls is a ____________________.