

# Riverside Yacht Club Jr Sailing

## Common Sailing Glossary



**Abeam** Off to the side of a vessel at right angles to the boat's centerline.

**Aboard** On or in the boat

**Anchor** A device used to hold a boat to the sea bottom

**Aft** At, near or towards the stern.

**Apparent Wind** The wind that flows over a moving boat, which is a result of the "true wind" affected by the movement of the boat.

**Appendage** An underwater fin such as a centerboard dagger board, leeboard or rudder.

**Astern** Behind the boat

**Backing** Pushing out a sail so that the wind fills it from the opposite side. Used to slow a boat or turn the bow away from the wind when in irons.

**Back winding** – a sail backwinds with the wind funneling on the wrong side.

**Bailer** A device used to remove water from the boat. A bailer is required equipment for a Optimist.

**Batten** Thin fiberglass or wood slats that are inserted in the leech (outside) of the sail for added support.

**Beam** Maximum width of a boat

**Beam Reach** Sailing at approximately 90 degrees to the wind with the wind coming from abeam and the sails eased about half way.

**Beat** Advance to windward on alternate tacks

**Beating** To sail to windward, close-hauled, tacking to make way to windward.

**Bitter End** End of a line.

**Block** A pulley that is encased in its own housing. A block will help to add purchase when pulling on a line. It is important to use the correct size line with the blocks on your boat.

**Bolt Rope** Sewn around luff and foot of sails to give added strength to sail where it attaches to mast or boom.

**Boom** Horizontal spar that supports the foot (bottom) of the sail. Named for the sound it makes when it hits someone's head.

**Boom Vang** A line that runs from the boom to the base of the mast. The vang helps keep the boom down and tighten the back (leech) of the sail.

**Bow** The forward part of a boat, the pointy end.

**Bow Line** Also known as a painter. The bow line is used to tie the boat to the dock or to a tow line.

**Broad Reach** Sailing with the wind coming over the rear corner of the boat (quarter), or with the bow approximately 120-160 degrees from the source (eye) of the wind.

**By-the-Lee** Running with the wind on the same side as the boom, increasing the possibility of an accidental jibe.

**Burgee** A flag, often triangular, that serves as the unique emblem for each yacht club.

**C420** The C420 is a two person boat. It is a primary junior training boat, often used in high school and college sailing events.

**Capsize** A boat turned over on its side or upside down (turtled).

**Cast off** To untie a line and let it go, or remove a line from a cleat and let it go.

**Catamaran** A boat with two parallel hulls.

**Centerboard** A thin, wide blade going down through the bottom of the hull in the center of the boat. This blade helps to keep the boat from going sideways in the water. It serves the same purpose as a leeboard or a dagger board.

**Center of Effort** Center of sail area, the focal point of the forces generated by the sail area.

**Center of lateral resistance** Center of underwater hull profile, the focal point of the forces generated by the underwater foils.

**Cleat** A fitting where a line can be secured.

**Clew** The aft lower corner of the sail is the clew. It is where the foot and the leech of the sail meet.

**Close-hauled** Sailing as close to the wind as possible.



**Close reach** Sailing with the wind forward of the beam, or with the bow approximately 60 degrees from the eye of the wind.

**Clove Hitch** Similar to two half hitch knot. Most often used to hang fenders over side of boat for protection.

**Course** The direction a boat is steered to reach a destination; or the compass heading; or the angle a boat is sailing relative to the wind.

**Crew** The people who help the helmsperson sail a boat.

**Cockpit** Open part of boat.

**Cunningham** A control line used to tension the forward edge (luff) of a sail, similar to a downhaul.

**Daggerboard** Foil raised and lowered vertically used to reduce leeway, different from centerboard which is pivoted instead of raised.

**Dinghy** An open boat, or one partially decked over without a cabin.

**Dolly** A lightweight trailer that is used to move boats from their storage rack to the launch dock.

**Downwind** 1) In the direction to that in which the wind is blowing; against the wind. 2) Situated or moving in the direction to that in which the wind is blowing.

**Ease** To slack a line or sail, ie. To “sheet” out.

**Eye of the Wind** From the source of the wind; directly into the direction from which the wind is blowing from, the no-sail- zone.

**Fairlead** Block or fitting used to change the direction of a running line such a jib sheet.

**Feathering** Sailing upwind so close to the wind that the forward edge of the sail is stalling or luffing, slightly thus reducing the power generated by the sail and the angle of heel without stalling completely.

**Fenders** Cushions to reduce the chafe between a boat and the dock or other boats

**Fiberglass** Most modern boats are made of fiberglass. It is a woven material impregnated with a liquid resin that is very stiff when the resin dries.

**Figure 8 Knot** Stopper knot in the shape of an “8” used for the end of a line to prevent it from passing through a fairlead or eye.



**Fleet** For racing purposes, sailors are grouped in fleets according to experience or age.

**Flying Junior** The FJ is a two person boat. It is a primary junior training boat, often used in high school and college sailing events.

**Foot** The bottom edge of the sail between the tack (front corner) and the clew (back corner).

**Forestay** Forward support of mast, usually wire lead from bow to mast, part of the standing rigging.

**Give Way** The boat which must alter course to avoid another boat, the burdened boat in the Rules of the Road.

**Gooseneck** A hinged fitting on the mast that connects the mast to the boom.

**Grommet** A metal ring in a sail that allows lines to be connected through or to the sail. Both the clew and the tack have grommets.

**Gudgeon** A “U” shaped fitting on the back of a boat used to connect the rudder to the hull. Most sailing dinghies have two gudgeons.

**Halyards** Lines that are attached to the head of a sail and used to hoist sails up the mast.

**Head** The top of the sail.

**Header** A wind direction change “shift” that brings the wind closer to the bow.

**Heading** The direction the boat is travelling at any given moment.

**Head Up** Turn the bow of the boat toward the wind.

**Heel** To lean a boat over, generally away from the wind.

**Helm** 1) the tiller; 2) the tendency of a boat to turn toward the wind (weather helm) or away from the wind (lee helm)

**Helmsperson** The person who steers a boat, ie. skipper

**Hiking Out** The action of hanging over the side of the boat in order to keep the boat flat on the water.

**Hiking Boots** Special boots made of thick rubber that protect and support a sailor’s ankles when using the hiking strap to hike out.

**Hiking Strap** A strap, usually stiff, sometimes padded for comfort, attached to the bottom of the cockpit under which a sailor places his/her feet in order to hold the sailor in the boat while hiking out.



**Hobie Wave** A small catamaran sailboat measuring 13ft.

**Hull** The actual body of the boat.

**In irons** A boat head to wind with all sails luffing and no maneuverability.

**Inspection Port** A hole in the hull of the boat that allows the skipper to reach inside the hull to make repairs, or sponge out water.

**Jib** The front sail on boats with two or more sails. It is small and triangular in shape.

**Jibe (Gybe)** Turning the boat away from the wind so the stern passes through the wind and the sail(s) switches sides.

**JSA of LIS** The Junior Sailing Association of the Long Island Sound.

**Laser** A popular 14 ft. high performance single hand boat. Used in the Olympics for men's and womens single hand event.

**Lee** The area sheltered from the wind, downwind

**Leech** The aft edge of the sail. The leech connects the head and the clew of the sail.

**leeward** (pronounced loo-ward) the direction away from the wind, the side of the boat opposite the windward side.

**Life jacket** A jacket type device that provides flotation when sailors are in the water. A Coast Guard approved Personal Flotation Device (PFD) must be worn by all Junior's while on the docks or the water. Only the vest type jacket is acceptable.

**Luff or Luffing** 1) The forward edge of the sail nearest the mast, between the tack and the head of the sail; 2) when a sail is waving back and forth as the sail is "eased" out too much or the boat is heading into the wind, the sail is said to be luffing, like a flag flying in the breeze. 3) when the boat turns its bow toward the wind the boat is said to be luffing.

**Mainsheet** The line attached to the boom that controls the Mainsail in and out.

**Mast** The vertical spar that supports the sail.

**Mast blocks** Small pieces of wood or plastic used to support the mast in a forward or aft position.

**Mast Step** The cup that the mast fits into and supports the mast.



**One-design** Any class of boat that has specific requirements for size and shape of hulls, sails and equipment to keep them equal, ie. Optimists, C420, and Lasers.

**Optimist** A small single-handed dinghy also known as an Opti, intended for use by children up to the age of 15, measuring 7ft 9in.

**Outhaul** A line attached to the clew of the mainsail and used to stretch the sail out along the boom. The outhaul controls the “depth” of the sail.

**Paddle** A small board or device used to move the boat in case of emergency or lack of wind. Paddle is required equipment on Optimists and many small boats.

**Peak** On a quadrilateral sail, the peak is the upper aft corner of the sail, at the top end of a gaff, a sprit or other spar.

**Pintles** The pins on the rudder that are inserted into the gudgeons on the transom of the boat to connect the rudder to the hull.

**Planing** When a boat accelerates enough to break loose from its bow wave and ride on top of the water.

**Port** Refers to the left side of the boat as well as to which tack a boat is on. If a boat is on “port tack” the wind is coming over the left side of the boat.

**Ratchet Block** These are special blocks that rotate in only one direction. They grip the line passing through the ratchet block, relieving some of the “pull” on that line.

**Reach** Sail with the wind over the side. i.e A Beam reach is the wind approx. 90 degrees from the bow, broad reach 130-170 degrees from the bow, or close reach with the wind 55-80 from the bow.

**Rudder** The movable, underwater blade on the transom of the boat used for steering.

**Run** Sail downwind, with the wind aft or nearly so, ie. Sailing with the wind.

**Sail** The part of the boat’s equipment which is usually made from cloth and which is attached to the mast and is the boat’s primary reason for movement.

**Sailing Instructions** At each regatta, these are made available to all competitors. They tell the sailors important information about the schedule for the day, starting order, courses to be sailed, etc.

**Sea breeze** Wind from the ocean caused by warm air rising over the land and the cool ocean wind replacing it.



**Shackle** A U shaped metal ring with a pin to close the “U”. It is used to connect objects together, such as connecting the jib halyard to the head (top) of the jib.

**Sheets** All lines on a boat which are used to control the in and out motion of sail.

**S-Hook** A stainless steel “S” shaped hook used on the end of many control lines that allows for quick hook up and disconnect.

**Sprit Pole** The light, slim third spar, the sprit, extends through a loop at the peak of the sail; the bottom rests in the eye of a short cable or string which hangs along the front edge of the mast. Raising and lowering the sprit and adjusting the boom vang allow for adaptation of sail trim to a range of wind conditions.

**Stand On** To hold course, the privileged boat in the Rules of the Road.

**Starboard** Refers to the right side of the boat. A boat is on a “starboard tack” when the wind is on its starboard side (coming over the right side of the boat).

**Stern** Aft (back) end of a boat.

**Stopper knot** A knot on the end of a line to prevent it from passing through a block, like the Figure 8 knot.

**Tack** 1) If a boat’s bow passes through the eye of the wind, then it is said to be tacking. 2) The direction the boat is sailing (see starboard and port). 3) The lower front corner of the sail where the luff and the foot of the sail meet.

**Telltails** Small lengths of lightweight material attached to the sail near the luff or batten pockets of main sail to indicate the airflow over the sail.

**Throat** On a quadrilateral sail, the throat is the upper forward corner of the sail, at the bottom end of a gaff or other spar.

**Thwart** A structural board in the center of a boat. You should typically sit next to the thwart when sailing.

**Tiller** The long piece of wood that is connected to the top of the rudder. It changes the boat’s direction when moved from side to side.

**Shrouds** Wires that hold the mast to the sides of the boat and support the power of the sails. Part of the standing rigging.

**Skipper** The person in charge of the boat, usually the person steering the boat.



**Skippers Meeting** All regattas begin with a Skippers Meeting. The meeting reviews the Sailing Instructions, special rules and to answer questions. Check Notice of Race (NOR) or Sailing Instructions to determine the time and place.

**Tiller Extension** A hinged extension attached to the tiller that allows the skipper to steer the boat while sitting forward or hiking out.

**Transom** The very back edge of the boat is called the transom. It is where the name of the boat is often painted.

**Traveler** A line or track that controls sideways movement of the boom and mainsail.

**Trim** 1) Pulling or “sheeting” in a sail. 2) Fore and aft balance of a boat or 3) can be used to refer to the adjustment of sails to take the best advantage of the wind.

**True wind** The speed and direction of the wind felt by a stationary object.

**Turtle, Turn Turtle** When a vessel is capsized and completely inverted so that its hull is above the water and its mast is submerged.

**Upwind** 1) The opposite direction to that in which the wind is blowing; against the wind. 2) Situated or moving in the opposite direction to that in which the wind is blowing.

**US SAILING** The United States Sailing Association. All sailors should belong to this organization. US Sailing sponsors all Junior National Sailing Championship events.

**Weather** Toward the wind.

**Windward** The general direction the wind is coming from.

**Wing and wing** Running before the wind with the main sail and jib on opposite sides of the boat.

