



Berthing in a box between piles and leaving it

Go in bows to the pontoon, drop the stern line over the windward pile on the way past, then hold the bow at the pontoon by motoring against that line.

Arriving

1. **Read the box** Slowly down the fairway. A green sign at the end of the box means it is free, a red one that it is taken. The box should be about a metre wider than your beam. Note where the wind is coming from.
2. **Turn into the box** A positive turn into the box, allowing for leeway from the wind. Keep enough way to steer: with no speed, the helm stops answering. Fenders ready on deck, never over the side.
3. **Windward pile first** As the widest part of the boat passes between the piles, the crew, amidships on the windward side, drops the stern line over the windward pile. The second crew does the same to leeward.
4. **Brake and pay out** Carry on straight towards the pontoon and brake with the engine. The windward stern line pays out, then the helm holds it on a winch near the wheel. Once past the piles, the fenders go over the side.
5. **Bow to the pontoon** The bow stops close to the pontoon. The crew takes the windward bow line to the pontoon cleat. Slow ahead against the stern line holds the distance while the leeward lines go on.

Leaving

1. **Prepare** Bring all the fenders in: hanging over the side, they catch on the piles. Let go the leeward lines first. The windward stern line goes on a winch near the helm.
2. **Hold the bow to windward** In a crosswind, take in a little of the windward bow line, then ease it as the boat goes astern: the bow doesn't fall onto the neighbour.
3. **Go astern between the piles** Slow astern, straight down the line of the box. The helm takes in the stern line as you go. No line must trail in the water: the propeller will suck it in.
4. **Let go the windward pile last** Once out of the box, let go the line on the windward pile and bring it in quickly. Put the stern to windward: the bow falls off and the boat turns into the fairway.

The dangers

- **A fender caught on a pile** A fender hanging over the side gets trapped between the hull and the pile and swings the boat round in the box. Keep them on deck until you are past the piles.
- **The boat pushed along the piles** Stopped at the wrong moment in a crosswind, the boat goes sideways onto the row of piles and the neighbours. Keep way on until the windward line is holding.
- **A line round the prop** Going astern out of the box, a line that has been let go and is trailing in the water gets sucked into the propeller. Bring it in at once.
- **Falling while throwing** A missed throw at a pile carries the crew over with their own momentum. Hold on firmly before you throw.
- **The line slipping off the pile** A simple loop over the pile can work loose and slide off the top, especially as the water rises. If you are staying, replace it with a knot that holds even without load (two half hitches).

On the VHF "Harbour office, this is sailing yacht Alcyone. Request a box berth for one night, length eleven metres, beam three point five metres. Over."



Do this manoeuvre again in the app, as many times as you need, without scratching a hull.
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