



Mooring stern-to with a lazy line

Back in between the neighbours to the quay, get the stern lines ashore, then lead the lazy line up to the bow: once it is tight, it holds the bow well off the quay.

Arriving

1. **Prepare and pick your berth** Fenders on both sides, a little higher than for a pontoon, plus a roving fender. Two stern lines ready, gloves and boathook to hand. Motor along the row at tickover and slow down as you reach the berth.
2. **Line up, bow slightly to windward** Pivot the boat to bring the stern facing the berth, about a boat length from its entrance. Leave the bow slightly to windward: the wind will push it while you go astern.
3. **Go astern with momentum** Slow astern, started early enough to give you a long run in: the rudder only steers with speed, and prop walk has to be corrected before you get in. Neutral between the neighbours, then a short burst ahead to stop near the quay.
4. **Windward line first** The windward stern line goes ashore first and is kept a little slack. If nobody is ashore, step off with a single stride; never jump.
5. **Lead the lazy line forward** Wearing gloves, pick up with the boathook the lazy line that comes from the quay in the middle of your berth. Haul it hand over hand outside the guardrails and make it fast on the bow cleat. Then get the leeward stern line ashore.
6. **Tension and adjust** Haul the lazy line tight: it is what stops the stern hitting the quay. Adjust the stern lines to lie about a metre off the quay (some prefer 1.5 to 2 m) while still being able to get ashore. Put out the passerelle.

Leaving

1. **Get ready to leave** With the engine running, check that no line is trailing around the boat or the dinghy. Note where the wind is coming from: the leeward lines are let go first.
2. **Return the lazy line to the water** Let the lazy line go from the cleat and lower it gently along the side; don't throw it. Call out "lazy line gone".
3. **Wait for it to sink** Ahead at tickover to stay off the quay, and wait for the lazy line to reach the bottom, about a minute. Otherwise the propeller picks it up.
4. **Let go aft, leave straight** Let go the leeward line, then the windward one. Motor out straight and slowly, helm amidships, and only turn once the stern is clear of the neighbours.

The dangers

- **The lazy line round the prop** Going astern near the quay, or when leaving if it is still floating, the lazy line gets sucked into the propeller. Neutral as the stern passes over it; when leaving, wait until it is on the bottom.
- **Cut hands** The lazy line is covered in mud, weed and sharp shells. Always wear gloves.
- **Fingers between line and cleat** A line under load crushes fingers. Take a turn round the cleat before you pull, and never put your hand in the loop.
- **Jumping ashore** The boat is still moving and the quay is hard. Step off with a single stride when the stern is very close, or throw the line to someone.
- **A slack lazy line** At the first gust or with the swell at night, the stern comes back and hits the quay.

On the VHF "Marina, this is sailing yacht Alcyone, eleven metres. Request a berth for one night, stern-to. Over."



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