



Mooring bows-to with a stern buoy

Hook the buoy on the way past, motor towards the pontoon paying out the stern line, then hold the bow with two lines in a V.

Arriving

1. **Prepare and approach** Fenders on both sides, two bow lines ready at the bow, a long stern line with its buoy hook, led to a winch. Approach at tickover, at walking pace.
2. **Pass close to the buoy** Choose a berth whose buoy is free, ideally in line with the berth or a little to windward. Pass very close to it, leaving it to windward; the crew, amidships, hooks it as it comes level.
3. **Motor in paying out the line** The boat carries on slowly towards the pontoon. The buoy line pays out while kept slightly taut: without tension, the hook can drop off the ring.
4. **Stop half a metre off** Slow down about 5 m before the pontoon, then a short burst of astern stops the bow about half a metre off. Never stop the boat by hand, by foot or with the boathook.
5. **Bow lines in a V** The crew steps off over the bow (by the bow ladder if the boat has one) and makes the windward bow line fast first, then the second: two lines in a V stop the bow swinging sideways.
6. **Take up the buoy line** Take up the slack in the stern line so the bow stays clear of the pontoon. The boat is held between the buoy and the pontoon.

Leaving

1. **Start the engine first** The engine is running before the first line is let go. The evening before, you can rig the buoy line on a slip so it can be let go from on board.
2. **Keep one bow line** Let go the leeward bow line and keep the windward one, short or on a slip, to hold the bow while the buoy is dealt with.
3. **Let go the buoy** Let go the buoy line and bring it on board straight away. In a crosswind, first bring the buoy round behind the transom, to the windward side, if the berth allows.
4. **Go astern out of the berth** Let go the last bow line, or bring it in on a slip, and go astern at tickover. No line must trail in the water near the propeller.

The dangers

- **The buoy line round the prop** The stern line is long: the buoy is often 20 m or more from the pontoon. Slack trailing astern, when stopped or when leaving, goes into the propeller. A floating line reduces the risk.
- **A foot or hand between bow and pontoon** Never brake the boat by pushing off the pontoon with a hand, a foot or the boathook: the risk of injury is high. The engine stops the boat.
- **Stepping off a high bow** On a floating pontoon, the bow of a modern cruiser is well above the pontoon. Step off in good shoes, holding on, by the bow ladder if there is one, once the boat has stopped.
- **A crosswind pushes you onto the neighbour** As soon as the buoy line is on, a crosswind pushes the boat onto the leeward neighbour. Fenders on both sides, and be ready to go round again if the approach goes wrong.

On the VHF "Harbour office, this is sailing yacht Alcyone. Request a visitor's berth for one night, eleven metres, bows-to with a stern buoy. Over."



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