



Mooring stern-to on your own anchor

Drop your own anchor about four boat lengths from the quay, go astern paying out chain, then the stern is held by two lines and the bow by the anchor.

Arriving

1. **Pick your berth** At tickover, motor past the row, staying seaward of the spot where you will drop the anchor. Look at the free width, the depth on the sounder and which way the neighbours' chains run: usually straight out to sea.
2. **Line up, bow to seaward** Position yourself on the line of the berth, at right angles to the quay, bow to seaward, a little beyond the spot where you will drop. In a crosswind, offset a little to windward of the berth.
3. **Gather sternway, then drop** Gather way in slow astern. About four boat lengths from the quay (at least 40 m for an 11 m boat), the helm gives the signal: the anchor goes down and the chain pays out as soon as the boat is moving astern.
4. **Go astern paying out chain** Keep enough way to steer. At the windlass, pay out at the boat's pace, smoothly: too slowly and the anchor is dragged; too fast and the chain no longer holds the bow. The helm corrects for prop walk and the wind.
5. **Stop paying out a boat length off** About a boat length from the quay, stop paying out: the chain tightens, the anchor digs in and brakes the boat. If you can't go astern any further, pay out a little more chain.
6. **Lines ashore, windward first** Neutral for the last few metres. About a metre from the quay, the windward line goes first, then the leeward one, to a crew member who has stepped ashore without jumping, or to someone on the quay.
7. **Take up the chain** Take up the chain on the windlass and adjust the lines to keep the stern clear of the quay: ferry wash lifts the boats. Then put out the passerelle.
8. **Check the anchor is holding** Once the lines are made fast, and only if nothing is trailing in the water, go astern: the chain should come almost bar-tight. If you bring in a lot of chain without it tightening, the anchor hasn't set: start again.

Leaving

1. **Look at the chains around you** Before leaving, work out where the neighbours' chains run. Ideally, boats leave in the reverse order of arrival. Brief the crew and agree on hand signals: the windlass drowns out voices.
2. **Let go the leeward line** With the engine in neutral, bring in the leeward line first. Keep the windward one: it holds the stern while the bow starts to come up to the anchor.
3. **Heave in, motoring ahead at tickover** Let go the windward line, bring it in without letting it trail in the water, and motor ahead at tickover while the chain comes in. At the bow, the crew points to show which way the chain is leading; it should stay almost vertical.
4. **If another chain comes up with the anchor** Neutral, no propeller. Pass a line under the neighbour's chain, make it fast on board, pay out a little of yours to free the anchor, then let go the line so the neighbour's chain drops back quickly.
5. **Clear the row** Anchor stowed, motor straight out to sea, allowing for the wind pushing you down onto the neighbours' bows.

The dangers

- **Fingers in the chain** Never use your fingers to free a chain jammed in the windlass.
- **A line round the prop** Lines coiled on a winch, out of the water. No propeller in the last few metres, nor when leaving while a line is trailing, and no long burst ahead near the quay.
- **Your anchor over a neighbour's chain** Dropped at an angle or too close to another, your anchor lands on its chain. When leaving, one of the two boats lifts the other's anchor.
- **The transom against the quay** Ferry wash moves the boats on the quay; at Poros, a sudden storm damaged many boats in 2016. Keep your distance, a big fender on the transom and a well-set anchor.
- **Jumping onto the quay** The crew steps off when the stern is close enough, without jumping.

On the VHF "Poros Coast Guard, this is sailing yacht Alcione, eleven metres. We are entering the harbour to berth stern-to on our own anchor on the north-west quay. Over."



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