

# Sydney Flying Squadron

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Hours 12 noon to 9 pm (closed Mondays)

Sailing every Saturday during the sailing season—October to March



Australian Historical  
Sailing Skiff Association Inc.  
Y1606-44

The Association formed in 1999 to promote  
wooden skiffs and traditional boat building  
skills.

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## SAIL WELL, STAY WELL

### *SAILING A SKIFF—a guide*



Historic 18 foot "Myra Too"

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#### Introduction:

This booklet has been produced to provide information to new and renewing sailors attending the Sydney Flying Squadron under the *Sail Well, Stay Well* programme implemented to train interested adults in the joys and challenges of sailing the very famous 18 footers—a rare and unique experience only available at the SFS. These skiffs have been an integral element of Sydney Harbour since the early 1900s.

Whilst some roles in the crew are specialised, these skiffs can cater for people with little or no expertise but who are able to contribute to the team effort. Crew weight is extremely important as without mechanical devices we rely on hands-on effort and crew weight to sail these boats well.

Your preference may be to assist the support crew, in which case you are enthusiastically welcomed.

In all instances newcomers are given free tuition; we ask you to be available regularly—once a week or every two weeks or once a month. It's so rewarding being a part of the total challenge and these boats are one of very few dinghy /skiff classes that can facilitate newcomers.

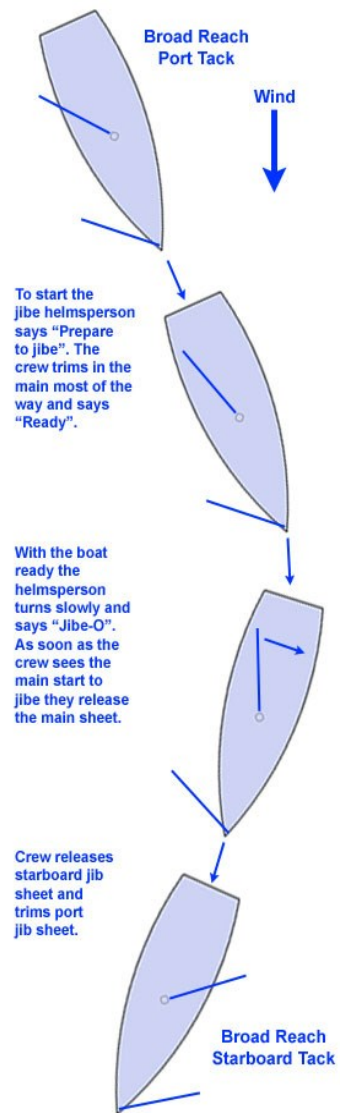
All crew must assist in the rigging and un-rigging.

It's fun, exciting, exhilarating on the best harbour in the world!

#### NOTES

## JIBING

Jibing is putting the stern of the boat through the eye of the wind. Here we must be vigilant about an accidental jibe. Unlike the tack where the boom is moving slowly, when we jibe the boom is given to violent movement and if we are not prepared, damage can be done to boat equipment and any bodies that get in the way. Below is description as to how this manoeuvre can be carried out.



Unlike tacking, where boat speed is needed to carry us through, in jibing it is better to do it slowly. The boom coming across the boat is dangerous and must be done in a controlled manner. Correct distribution of crew weight is vital as too the role of the main sheet hand and the helmsman.

Practice tacking and jibing often. A good way to do this is to practice lots of crew

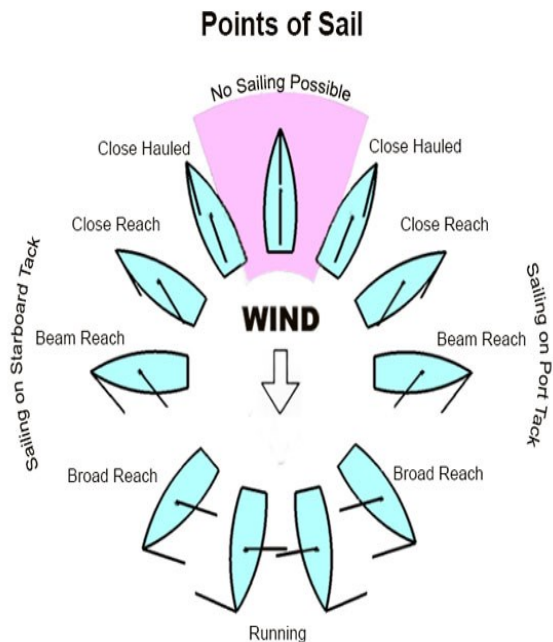
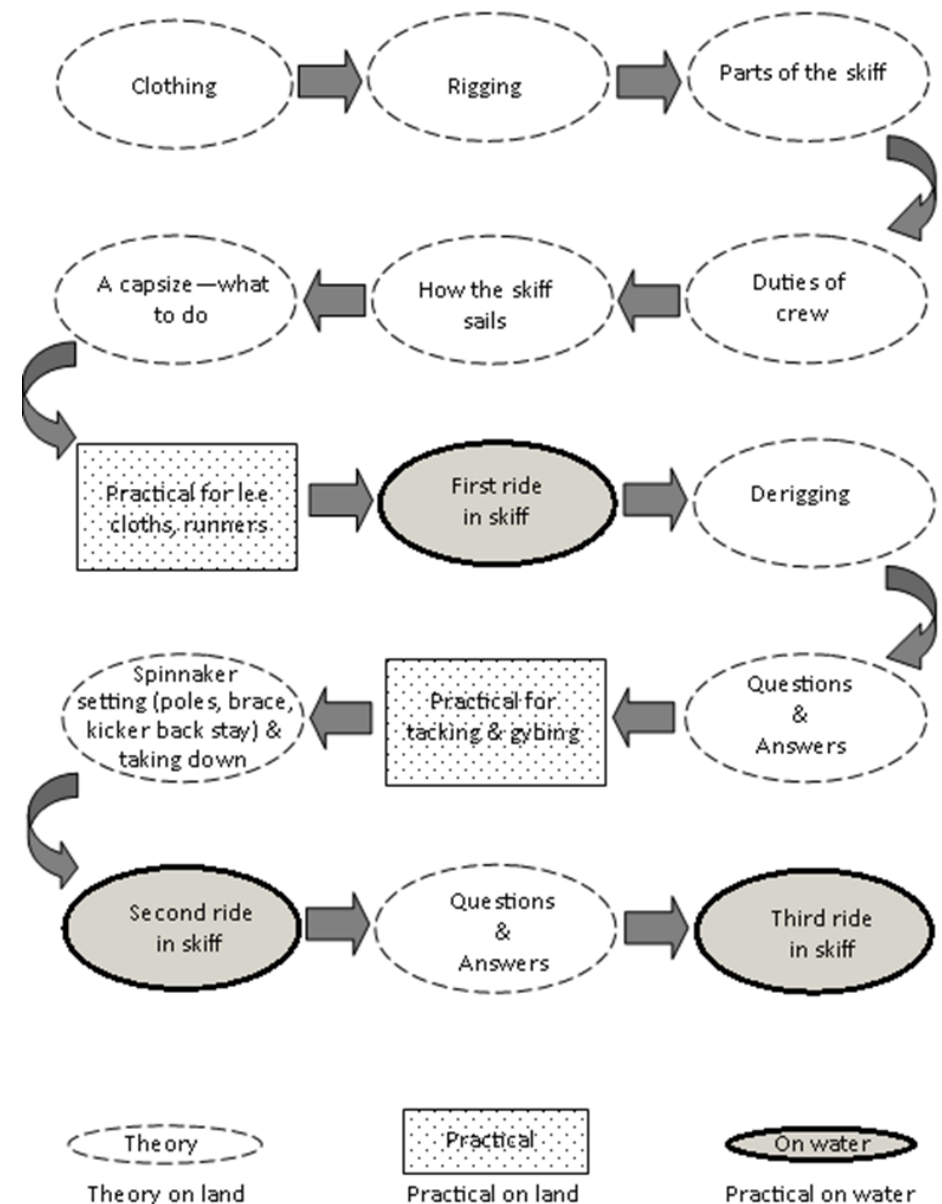
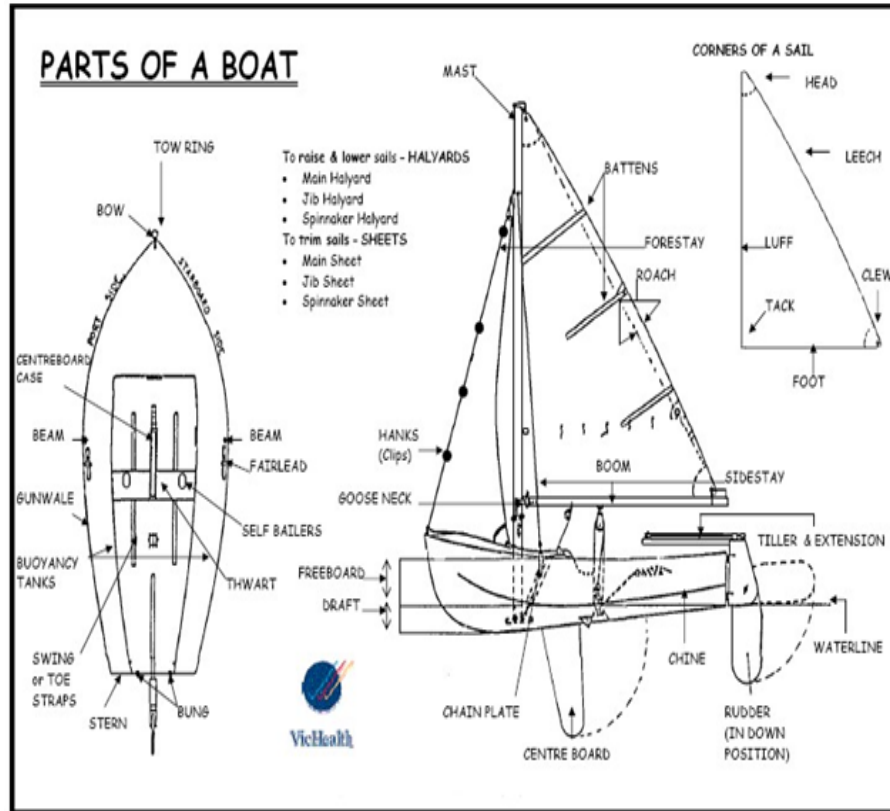


Illustration by SchoolofSailing.net

## FLOW CHART FOR TRAINING

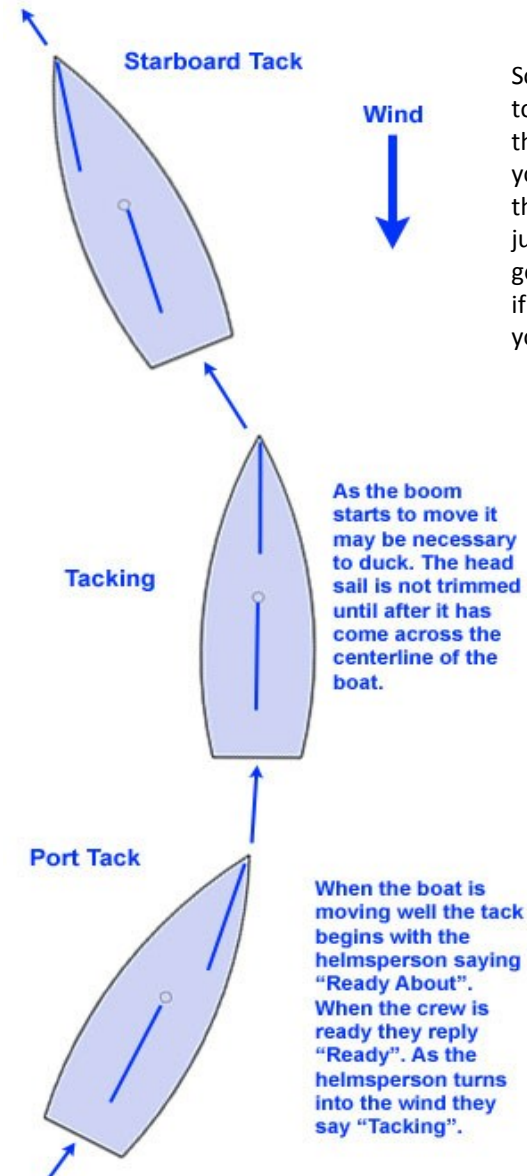


## PARTS OF A BOAT



## TACKING

Putting the bow through the eye of the wind. As the skiffs cannot sail directly into the wind to reach a rounding point upwind, a tacking course, going from a starboard tack to a port tack must be effected (also known as a “work”).



## USEFUL KNOTS

### REEF KNOT (ALSO KNOWN AS SQUARE KNOT)



Useful whenever you want to tie two lines together of equal diameter but will slip so never use it for critical loads. Instead, use a sheet bend or tie two interlocking bowlines.

#### How to tie

1. Hold one end of the rope in your left hand and the other end in your right hand
2. Cross the end of the rope in your left hand over the end in your right hand to form an "X"
3. Bring the end of rope in your left hand down behind the end in your right hand, then back up, so that the two ends are entwined—the left hand rope is now in your right hand and vice-versa
4. Use your right hand to pass the same end back over the end now in your left hand forming another "X".
5. Bring that end down behind the other end again and continue pulling it through the loop that forms.

### FIGURE EIGHT



This knot is ideal for keeping the end of a rope from running out of tackle or pulley.

#### How to tie

1. Make underhand loop, bringing end around and over the standing part.
2. Pass end under, then through the loop.
3. Draw up tight.

### CLEAT HITCH



A proper cleat hitch is easy to tie, very effective and can be released under load without issues.

#### How to tie

1. Take one full turn around the base of the cleat, leading the line so that its standing part runs clear of the cleat.
2. Take a figure eight turn around first one horn of the cleat, then the other.
3. On the final turn pass the line under itself and pull tight.

## SKIFF LINGO BASICS

<b>FORE</b>	To the front
<b>AFT</b>	To the rear
<b>BOW</b>	The front of the boat
<b>STERN</b>	The back of the boat
<b>PORT</b>	Left side of the boat (as viewed facing forward)
<b>STARBOARD</b>	Right side of the boat (as viewed facing forward)
<b>SHROUDS</b>	Fixed stays which support the mast
<b>LOWER SHROUD</b>	Supports the mid section of the mast & attaches at the spreaders
<b>UPPER SHROUD</b>	Supports the top of the mast
<b>RUNNERS</b>	Adjustable stays which provide additional support for the mast in a rear-ward direction
<b>BACK STAY</b>	Adjustable stay to support the top of the gaff when flying a spinnaker—attaches to the transom
<b>BOW SPRIT</b>	Extension spar out the front of the skiff for rigging the jib and kicker
<b>MAST</b>	Principal vertical spar used to support the sails
<b>BOOM</b>	Horizontal spar at the bottom (foot) of the Main Sail
<b>GAFF</b>	Upper spar to support the top section of the Main Sail
<b>MAIN SAIL</b>	Principal sail aft of the mast
<b>MAIN SHEET</b>	Line which controls the trim of the main sheet.
<b>JIB (HEAD SAIL)</b>	Leading sail forward of the mast
<b>JIB SHEETS</b>	Lines which control the trim of the jib
<b>SPINNAKER</b>	(Kite, chute, balloon) - balloon like sail for use down wind
<b>RING TAIL</b>	Extension to the aft section of the Main Sail for use down wind
<b>KICKER</b>	Forward control line for the Spinnaker Pole
<b>BRACE</b>	Aft control line for the Spinnaker Pole
<b>SPINNAKER POLES</b>	2 or 3 sections assembled as one pole to which spinnaker, brace and kicker are attached
<b>SNOTTER</b>	Rope fitting around mast into which end of spinnaker pole is fitted.
<b>LEE CLOTHS</b>	Shaped elements of canvas or similar material engaged on leeward side to prevent inundation of water., most important piece of equipment and never ever to be taken for granted.



## CLOTHING (not obligatory but recommended)

**WETSUIT**—long of short legs (personal preference) with either short sleeves or no sleeves (for freedom of movement) to provide buoyancy, sun protection, warmth and moderate protection against possible bruising

**THERMAL RASHIE or WOOLEN JUMPER**—for warmth. At the commencement of the sailing season the harbour water can be 17°, so retaining body warmth is essential.

**BOOTIES**—either as below or sneakers. To provide protection against damage to toes and feet and to give traction on varnished surfaces

**GLOVES**—protection for Sheet hand and Jib sheet hand preferably with tops of thumb and forefinger free

**CREW SHIRTS**—provided for purchase of each skiff

**HAT**—with restraint— sun protection for face, ears and back of neck

**SUNGLASSES**—with restraint. Eye protection from glare and injury

**SHACKLE KEY**—for rigging—to tighten and loosen pins etc.

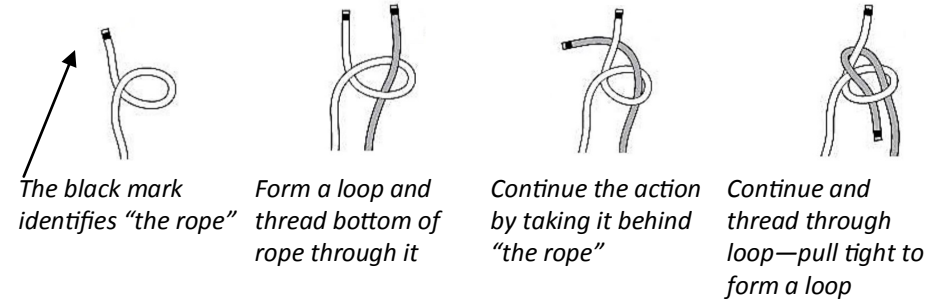


## USEFUL KNOTS

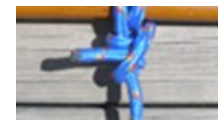
### BOWLINE

One of the most useful knots. The bowline forms a secure loop that will not jam and is easy to tie and untie. The Bowline is most commonly used for forming a fixed loop, large or small at the end of a line. It is reliable, strong and stable. Even after severe tension is applied, it is easy to untie.

To release or untie, simply “break the back of the knot” that is push the loop of the knot forward and pull “the rope” through.



### ROUND TURN & TWO HALF HITCHES



This is a great, highly useful and reliable knot. It is a constrictor knot meaning the tighter you pull on the line, the tighter the knot becomes. Also, it is one of the very few knots that can be tied or untied with tension in the line.

Doesn't jam—doesn't slip

#### Uses

1. Secures a dock line to a piling
2. Finishes a line to an object when you want to keep tension on the line



### CLOVE HITCH

Knot for securing a line to an object but will slip and jam so never use if for critical loads.

#### Uses

1. Tying fenders to lifelines. To increase strength, add two half hitches around the standing part or just tie a round turn and 2 half hitches to begin with.
2. Temporary mooring knot. Quick to tie but not to be trusted for any length of time.

#### How to tie

1. Wrap the end of the line around the post (or whatever you're attaching it to)
2. Cross the line over itself and wrap it around the post again
3. Loosen the wrap slightly and slip the end under, then pull it taut—this is a way of “locking” the knot
4. Give it a few tugs to make sure it's secure.