“Showboat Condition”

You’ll hear this term tossed around at LAMI. It means we keep our boats neat and tidy and looking professionally run at all times. Doing so shows that we have respect, not only for ourselves, but for anyone who boards our vessels. It also contributes to safety – no unnecessary hazards.

There’s another factor: we never know who will drop by for a visit, so we always want to be ready. That quiet guy who wanders onto the dock, curious about the boats, could be the secret millionaire who falls in love with our program and funds us for the next twenty years. If our boats are a mess or we’re rude or short tempered with him, we could lose the potential major donor – and damage our reputation.

So we are prepared at all times – we make our boats look great and we conduct ourselves as professionals always. This guide will show you how to do that, as well as teach some basic tasks you’ll do daily when we sail.
Below Decks

All compartments **must** have:

- Heads clean
  - Showers are part of the heads and should be cleaned at the same time (directions are in the heads)

- Tables wiped down

- No trash in the trash cans

- Soles swept (and several times a week Murphy’s oiled)

- All curtains uniform – either all at the aft end of the bunk, all at the forward end of the bunk, or all closed completely

- No clutter
Nav

- No clutter
- Cushions and pillows should be arranged neatly
- The table should be completely clean or have a chart and nav instruments ready for use
- The desk should have nothing on it but the ship’s log and the manifest
- Radios should be easily accessible and stored in their chargers
- Boat phone should be easily accessible or on the mate (pocket or somewhere)
Galley

- All dishes, flatware, pots, pans, and drinking vessels are washed and put away.

- The drying rack does not live in the sink. It lives in the cabinet below the sink, and as soon as dishes are put away, it should be, too.

- Use a full sponge on dishes; a one corner sponge on counters.

- Counter tops, backsplashes, the stove top, and the tops of the day reefer get cleaned as well as sinks.

- Trash is emptied **daily**. If the bag is not full, combine its contents with those of trash cans throughout the vessel. This cabinet will contain food scraps we can’t allow to rot and stink.

*Should look this way every day – no exceptions!*
What is the reasoning behind our mandate for an exceptionally clean galley?

1) We deal with food in the galley. Clutter and a mess do not lend themselves to sanitary food preparation. (Tall ships have been shut down by the Health Department for unsatisfactory galley cleanliness.)

2) We should be sea stowed every time we leave the dock, even if we’re not going outside the harbor. It’s a good habit. Sea stowed means everything should be stored in a way that keeps it from being thrown around the compartment by the motion of the vessel.

3) Showboat condition.
Coiling

Every organization has its chosen length and style of coiling. LAMI prefers its coils (except for long heavy lines like the main or course sheets) a middle school student’s arm length. That works out to about the space of four deck boards. Another good reference is about the size of a large pizza. All should be coiled clockwise.

**Note: While it is acceptable to drop a line and coil it to a more preferable standard, please use discretion when doing so. Make sure the person (especially a student!) who coiled that line does not sense that his/her work is unsatisfactory. It is ok to encourage those who sail with us to join our quest for a high standard. It is not ok to make anyone on board feel inferior because his/her coils are not ideal.**
Proper Stowage of Sheets: Fore Staysail and Flying Jib

**Fore staysail sheet**: pulled tight, lead around bottom cleat, coiled, and hung from top cleat. Coil does not touch deck.

**Flying jib sheet**: led through the knight’s head as far outboard as possible, gasket coiled neatly, and stowed behind downhauls.
Proper Stowage of Sheets: Jibs

1) Sheets are led together through the knight’s head.

2) They are then pulled tight and led behind the overflow.

3) Each sheet makes one full turn around its norman pin.

4) Finally, coils are hung from the toggles on the lifelines. Inner jib lives further aft near the pinrail.
Proper Stowage of Sheets: Main and Main Staysail

**Main sheet**: coiled and hung from line on gallows.

**Note that the block is pulled tight and not banging on deck.**

**Main staysail sheet**: coiled and hung from the toggle over its pin.
How to Make a Gasket Coil

A gasket coil is a method of stowing a line to keep it from tangling when it’s not in use. Demonstrated here on a fender. Other common places they’re used on the boats: sail gaskets for the main, the square sails, or on the head rig. Gasket coils are fairly difficult. Use the seven steps detailed here, practice and be patient with yourself, and you’ll soon be coiling like a pro!

1) Always coil from the standing or fixed end. In three-strand line, when the coil starts from the bitter end, you work against the lay of the line and it will twist.

2) Leave about a foot between the fixed end and the start of the coil.

3) Coil till you reach the bitter end of the line.
4) When you reach the bitter end, it's time for the frapping turns that hold the coil in place. Squeeze the coil in half. Wrap the fixed end of the line around the entire coil (this is why we left a foot of line free – you may need more).

When you come back to it, cross over it to make an X. The X creates friction to keep these frapping turns from slipping. Ensure the bitter end is captured within the fraps.

5) Continue putting fraps on the coil. Work in the same direction as the turn that made the X – in other words, make the X, then keep going toward the end of the coil nearest the overlapped part of the X.
How to Make a Gasket Coil

6) When you’re just about out of line (a judgment call that will become easier with experience), pull a loop (or bight) through the center of the coil. This loop should be comprised of the end you’ve been frapping and the fixed end.

7) Pass the loop over the end of the coil, again working toward the same end of the coil. Push that loop toward the rest of the fraps and tighten. Finished product should look similar to this photo.

Note: The fixed end of the line is used for fraps so we don’t go against the lay, but also because the weight of the coil then hangs from the fixed end, and that weight makes the coil tighter, less likely to unravel.
A “dog bone” is a method of faking longer lines so they take up as little room as possible, and are easily reset after having been used. Dog bones are a bit tricky to learn. The key is to go **clockwise at all times**. Another feature of a dog bone is that they are one of the few instances where a coil **begins with the bitter end** of the line. This coil is used for the main and fore staysail sheets (shown here).

1) Begin by laying the bitter end near a bulkhead. Fake the line against the bulkhead for a few feet, then create a small loop.

2) Continue in the opposite direction, making sure the center passes touch one another and lie flat, then create another loop.

3) Repeat pattern, ensuring each loop lies flat and advances forward of the previous one.

Completed dog bone. Note how little room it occupies on deck.
How to Dog Bone the Main Staysail Sheet

We use a dog bone faked around the main mast to keep the main staysail sheet compact, out of the way, and ready to run.

1) Begin by laying the bitter end to one side of the mast. Create the first small loop on the opposite side.

2) Continue back to the other side and create the second loop, ensuring the sections across the front of the mast lie beside one another, not in a single line. Repeat.

Completed main staysail dog bone.
The inner and outer jibs are their own little world, and their sheets are among the most dangerous lines on the brigantines. Be extremely vigilant in this area of the vessel at all times, but especially when students are involved. Notes here are on coil placement and belaying.

Notes:
- Sheets are made off on the norman pins, outer jib on the forward pin. We do three turns and bury the fourth as always. Ensure the final turn is around the forward end of the pin.
- The person tailing is responsible for resetting the coil after every tack.
How to Make a Ballantine

A ballantine is a coil that ensures a very long line (such as a halyard) will run free when a sail is taken in. Before beginning a ballantine, it is advisable to make a working coil. Ballantines are among the few exceptions to the never-coil-from-the-bitter-end rule: they start from that end. Follow these five steps:

1) Start with a simple circle, not too big and placed in a protected spot out of the companionway. As ever be sure the bitter end is outside the coil.

2) Create a smaller, teardrop-shaped circle within the larger circle.
How to Make a Ballantine

3) Create a second small circle within the large circle that overlaps the first.

4) Create a third smaller, teardrop-shaped circle within the larger circle.

5) Trace the pattern till you’re out of line.

Note: When the coil is completed, you should be able to put your fist down its center.