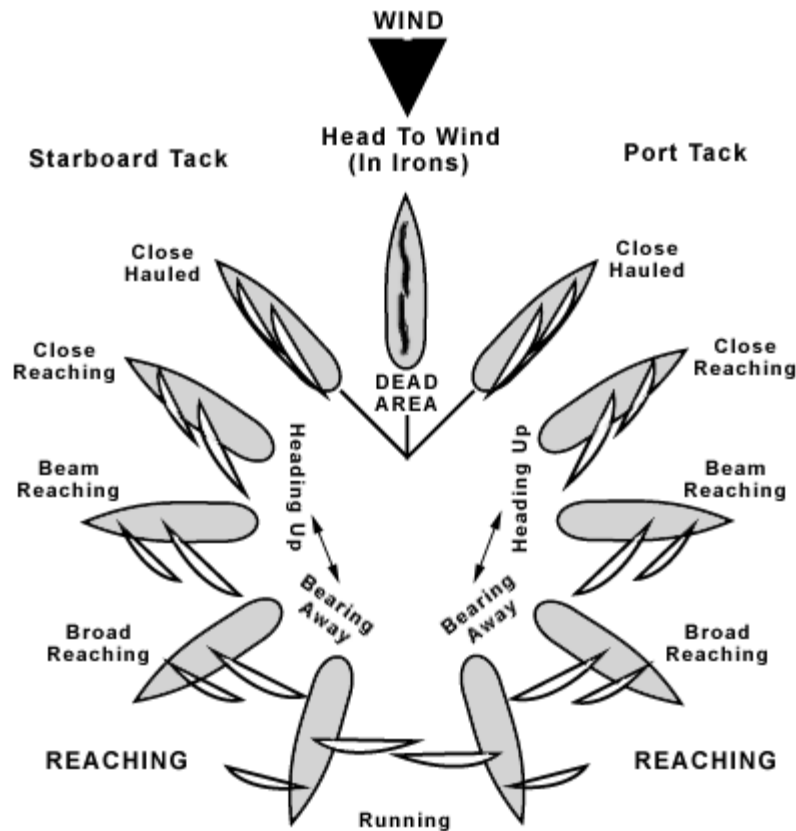


How to Sail

POINTS of SAIL



The **points of sail**, sometimes called sailing positions, relate to the angle between a sailboat's heading, or course, and the direction of the wind. There are three basic courses:

- **beating** (wind is from ahead)
- **reaching** (wind is from the side)
- **running** (wind is from astern)

When sailing on a **beat**, the boat is as close to the eye of the wind as possible, about 45 degrees. The mainsail is pulled in, with the boom slightly over the transom. If the boat is pointed too close or high to the wind, the forward part of the sail will luff and flutter, causing a loss in speed. Progress when sailing windward is done by tacking, changing the direction of the boat from one side of the wind to the other. The boat is close-hauled on the port tack when the wind is coming from the left, and is close-hauled on the starboard tack when the wind is coming from the right.

The boat is on a **reach** when the wind is abeam, or at a 90 degree angle. If sailing on a reach, you are at an angle between close-hauled and running. The sail is out at about 45 degrees, making it one of the most pleasant (and most efficient) ways to sail.

When **running**, or sailing before the wind, the wind is blowing from astern, and the sail is out at 90 degrees.

Just to complicate things a little more, there are intermediate points of sailing. These are:

- **close reach** which is between a beat and a reach
- **broad reach** which is between a reach and a run.

It's a good idea to become familiar with these points of sail and how the wind acts on the sails. If you do, you will always know how to trim your sails, and hopefully make it to your destination.

Changing Direction

- In order to get anywhere, you also have to know how to turn the boat and change course. There are basically two maneuvers that let you do that. To reverse the course you can do a come about, which is relatively slow since the bow passes through the eye of the wind. During a come about the skipper calls out ready about, and then hard-a-lee since the tiller is being pushed to the leeward side of the boat. The boat turns into the wind, and the sail, the skipper, and some of the crew change sides.
- Another way to turn, is a faster maneuver called a jibe. This is where the back of the boat turns across the wind. Since the wind is behind the boat, the sail flies from one side to another. You have to be careful to control the sail during a jibe, making communication especially important between the skipper and the crew. The commands for a jibe are; ready to jibe, and jibe-ho!