

Anchoring Guide

Note: The following is meant as a guide only. If you're not sure then ask a few people and get an average of the difference.

With so much investment literally riding on your anchor, your boats anchoring system is no place to cut corners. Your choice of anchor depends on the size and type of your boat and the weather and anchoring conditions you generally encounter.

Boats with heavy displacements or superstructures that present a great deal of wind resistance need heavier gear. The same is true of cruising yachts that brave a wide variety of conditions and may sometimes have to anchor in open waters.

It is recommended that you carry one anchor of sufficient size and strength to hold your boat for an extended period, like overnight or in an emergency situation (like, for example, if you run out of fuel). When you are thinking of buying an anchor – bigger is better!

Also, there is safety in numbers. No anchor will work for you in every situation, so if you have space then it's recommended to carry two anchors, preferably different types. Many people choose to carry a small / lighter anchor and a larger working or storm anchor. The smaller to use in calm weather and when the crew is monitoring the anchor. Working and storm anchors are useful at times when the crew is asleep or ashore, and during heavy weather, when winds are 30 miles per hour and over.

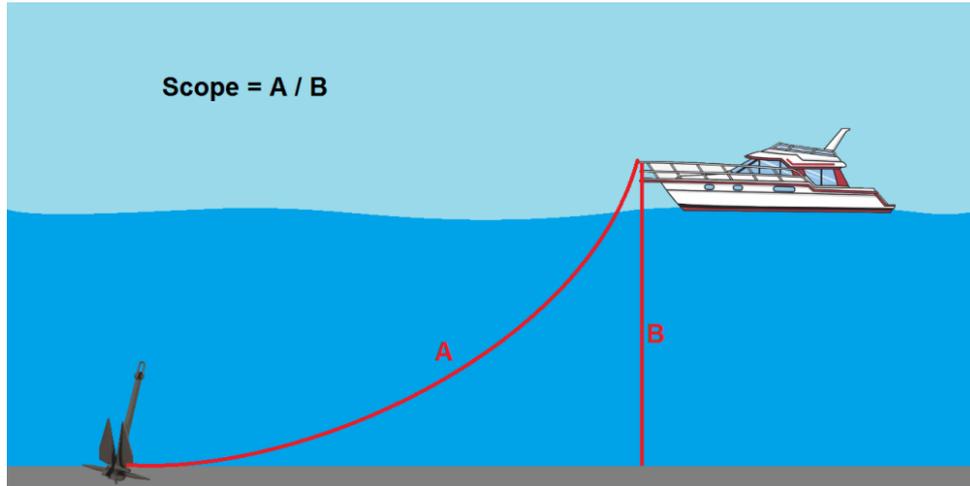
Generally, it is recommended to have either one foot of chain for each foot of boat length, or to have a pound of chain for each pound of anchor length. Whichever method you choose, having more chain than necessary is never a bad idea.

A Rough Guide

1lb a foot or 1.5kg per metre is a starting point and not too bad a one, but only a guide. From there you adjust for the varying factors.

Never, ever anchor a small boat by the stern! Your engine and the bulk of the boat's weight rests there. Stern anchoring is likely to result in swamping and flooding.

Anchoring Guide



Scope = Length of the anchor line / height of the deck cleat to the sea bed.

Before leaving the dock, you will need to determine how much anchor line, or “rode”, you will need (this is the line you send out with the anchor). It is recommended that you use a scope of 7:1, meaning that for every foot of water depth, you should use 7 feet of rode.

Anchor Cable Guide				
	Main Heavy Anchor		Lighter (Secondary)	
Boat Length	Chain Size	Rope Size	Chain Size	Rope Size
6m	6mm	12mm	6mm	10mm
7m	6mm	12mm	6mm	10mm
8m	6mm	12mm	6mm	10mm
9m	8mm	12mm	6mm	10mm
10m	8mm	14mm	8mm	12mm
12m	8mm	14mm	8mm	12mm
14m	10mm	16mm	8mm	14mm
16m	12mm	18mm	8mm	14mm

If using a rope anchor warp, we recommend a short length of chain (at least 5 metres) between the anchor and rope to stop the rope chafing on the seabed, and to give a little bit of horizontal pull along the bottom.

The rope should be nylon because it sinks and has a shock absorbing quality.

Anchor Types

Cruising or Danforth Anchor



Lightweight with two long pivoting “flukes”; designed to reduce clogging with mud and grass. Made of cast galvanized steel.

When dropped, flukes dig the anchor into the bottom and the anchor buries itself and part of the anchor line.

Commonly used on small recreational as they are relatively lightweight for the amount of holding power they provide in comparison to other anchors.

Best For: Hard sand or mud, where flukes can easily dig into the bottom.

Not Recommended For: Very soft or loose mud, which can ball up around the flukes. Also not recommended for rocky bottoms where the flukes cannot penetrate or for grassy bottoms, which the flukes tend to slip off.

Plough or CQR / Delta Type Anchor



The plough styles good holding power over a wide variety of bottom types, making it a top choice of cruising boaters.

Has either a fix (delta style) or a pivoting (CQR) shank.

When dropped in the water, a plough lands on its side. Then, when pulled, it buries itself.

Its shape allowed it to reset fairly easily should the wind or tide shift the boat position.

Best For: Most conditions

Not Recommended For: Soft ground (mud / soft sand)

Anchor Types

Jet / Claw, or Bruce Anchor



Unique shape of the Jet allows a 360 degree turn without breaking free.

Has similar performance to plough anchors at a lower weight.

Sets just like a plough, but curved flukes make it easier for a claw to right itself no matter how it lands on the bottom, or how much the boat gets swung around.

It won't penetrate deep so this anchor is not recommended for anchoring at night or above 6 Bft (Beaufort Wind Scale).

Best For: Good for most conditions

Not Recommended For: Anchoring at night or in conditions 6 Bft and over.

Folding / Grapnel Anchor



Very inexpensive, but not much holding power on larger boats.

Commonly used on smaller / lighter boats and the smallest sizes (0.7kg) anchors are often used by canoes and kayaks due to its small stowage size once folded.

Good for recovering items on the bottom, or for wreck reef anchoring.

Best For: Rocky ground

Not Recommended For: Doesn't perform too well on soft ground.