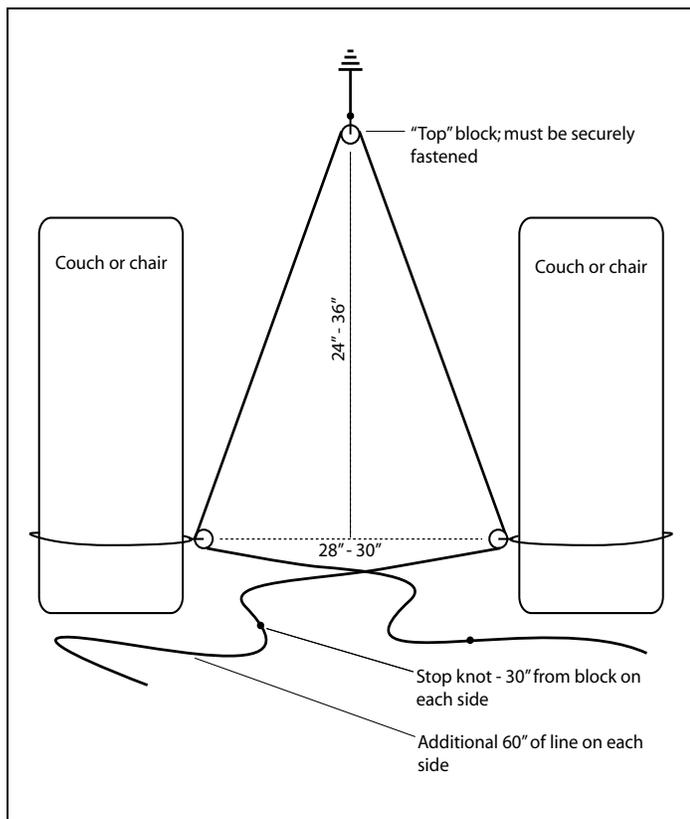


Snipe Sailing 101:

Basic Two-Stroke Tacking

In an article in the Fall 2007 issue of US Snipe Sailor, Gene Soltero mentioned a device he set up for his crew Mallory McGroarty to practice basic "two-stroke" tacking. Several readers have inquired about it, and we thought some other less experienced or out-of-practice crews might find it useful as well. Here is a diagram of the set-up, and a description of the basic maneuver, courtesy of Gene Soltero:



- Set up according to diagram (measurements are important to get the correct feel of distances). The top of the diagram is the front of the boat.

- Start by sitting on the port side of the "boat" just forward of the port block, with the port sheet running under your legs.

- Trim the starboard sheet until the port knot hits the port block. This simulates going upwind on port tack with the jib set.

- Clear your sheets by placing the tail of the starboard sheet in a bunch on the floor just aft of the starboard block while you continue to hold the sheet to control the sail. Pull the slack out of the port sheet and loosely bunch its tail on the floor just aft of the port block.

- Prepare to tack:
With your forward (left) hand, grab the starboard sheet and get ready to pop it out of the starboard cleat.
With your aft (right) hand, grab the port sheet aft of the port block and take out the slack in the sheet.

- To tack:
Pop and drop the starboard sheet.
Step across the centerboard trunk with your forward (left) foot and stand, so you're facing aft. At the same time, pull the port sheet as far as you can across your body with your aft (right) hand while staying balanced in the center of the boat (this is the "first stroke").

Reach your left hand across your body and grab the port sheet as close to the block as you can.
Step over the centerboard trunk with your right foot, so you are facing the port side. As you sit down on the starboard side, pull the port sheet straight back with your left hand in a long "second stroke", until stopped by the starboard knot. Make sure to finish the stroke low, so that the port cleat would automatically engage the sheet.

- Clear the sheets on the new side right away so you are ready for the next tack.

- Repeat lots of times.

Submitted by Merrill Varn

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