

Some Nautical Terms

Words and their meanings



Anchor

Used to hold the boat in one place

Bow

The front of the boat

Block

A block of wood or metal with a wheel inside which a rope runs over, used to increase your pulling power

Brails

Ropes for reducing or stowing the sail by drawing it up to the mast a bit like a curtain.

Crab Winch

Used to wind up the leeboards on a barge

Fathom

A measure of length (based on an arm-span) used for the depth of water. One fathom equals 6 feet, or 1.8 metres.

Galley

The kitchen

Halyard

A rope used to pull up and lower the sails

Heads

The toilet

Horse

The mainsail is sheeted to the horse which runs across the width of the deck. There is a forehorse for the foresail.

Leeboards

These are dropped stop the barge being pushed sideways through the water, like a keel on other boats

Oilskins

Waterproof clothing

Port

Left side of the boat

Starboard

Right side of the boat

Stern

The back of the boat

Sheets

The ropes used to set the sails

Tide

The rise and fall of the sea level as a result of what the sun and moon are doing

Underway

This means the boat is moving through the water

Voyage

A journey undertaken at sea

Windless

Used to pull up the anchor

Windward

The windward side is where the wind is coming from, i.e. the opposite to leeward

