



John Goode's Masterclass

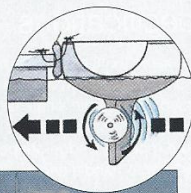


In the final look at escaping stern first into wind and tide, John's chief instructor, **James Murrison**, shows how warps can be used to overcome the poor reversing capability of any boat.

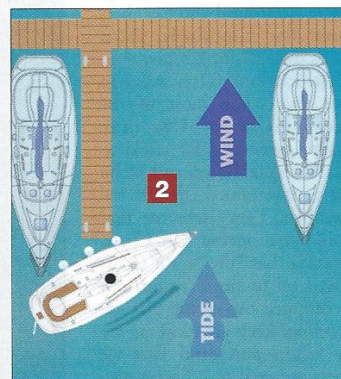
1. If steerage is doubtful get a line to up-tide pontoon

AS DEMONSTRATED OVER the past two months, backing out of a finger pontoon into a strong wind and tide is one of the most demanding manoeuvres that we're likely to encounter. While we've so far shown how to achieve it on easily reversed boats – and some that need a bit more coaxing – this month we look at those boats which can't be steered astern with any certainty whatsoever. Whether this is because we've an unwieldy long-keeler or simply because we don't fancy attempting the manoeuvre in a more easily steered boat, the best way to 'play it safe' is to warp across to an upstream pontoon – from where we can escape (with another warp) much more easily.

Boats with a moderate or long keel (especially those with a strong initial prop-kick) risk being pivoted across the stream and ending up being swept on to the end of a finger pontoon or the extremity of another moored boat.

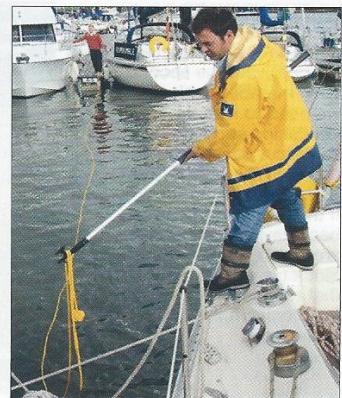


PHOTOS RICK BUETTNER AND JOHN GOODE. TEXT JOHN GOODE.



If we're not confident that our boat can be reversed out (and waiting for the tide to slacken or turn isn't an option) all risk can be eliminated by warping out in several stages – starting with getting a line across the stream.

2. Either first bridge the gap with a heaving line...

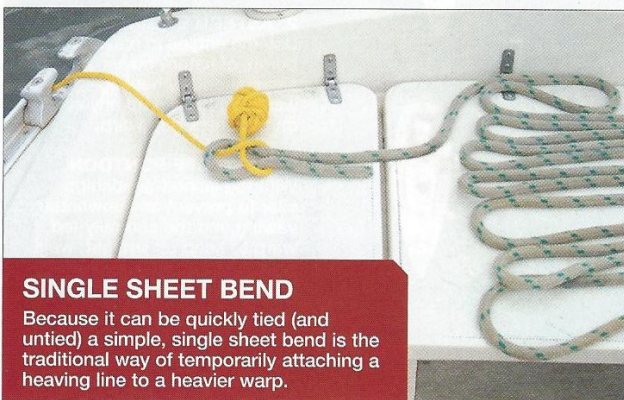


HEAVE THE LINE...

ALTHOUGH IT'S POSSIBLE to throw a warp over short distances, larger gaps are more easily spanned by first throwing across a buoyant light heaving line with a monkey's fist tied into its end. After coiling the line, split it in two with about a third of the whole held in the 'throwing' hand. Then, ensuring there's sufficient bight between the two coils to get a good swing, throw the smaller coil towards the target. To achieve maximum distance aim as high as possible and try to lay the line over the top and slightly to one side of the 'catcher' – not directly at them. The weight of the thrown coil (with its monkey's fist giving extended trajectory) will draw the rest of the neatly coiled and loosely held line from the non-throwing hand.

...HAUL WARP ACROSS

Once the gap has been spanned with the heaving line, the heavier warp can then be attached and pulled across and secured to the upstream pontoon.

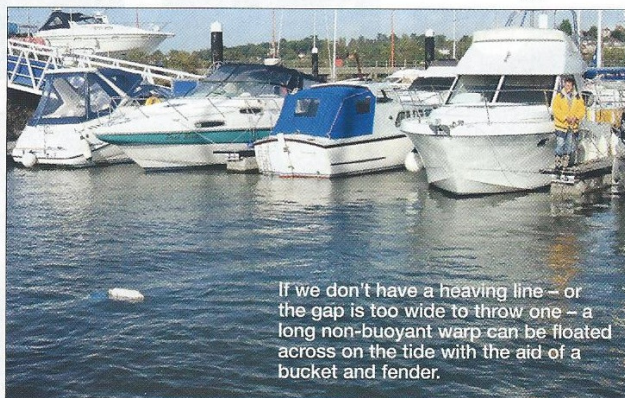


SINGLE SHEET BEND

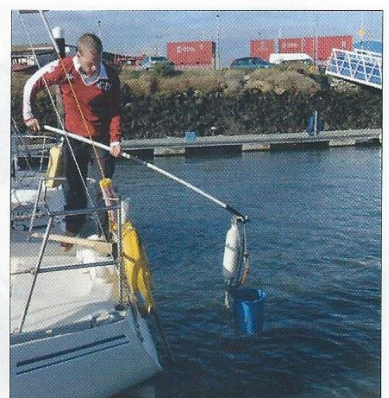
Because it can be quickly tied (and untied) a simple, single sheet bend is the traditional way of temporarily attaching a heaving line to a heavier warp.



...or float a long warp across using a bucket and fender

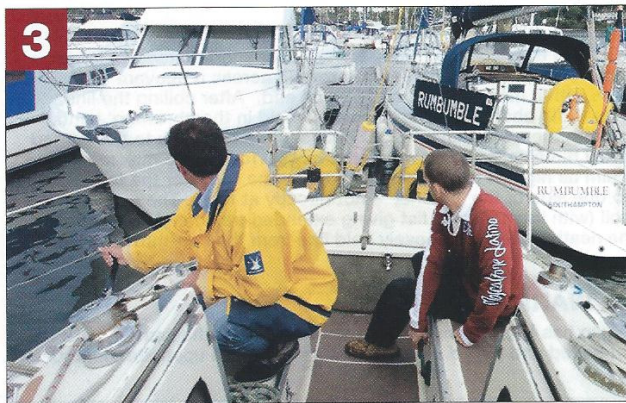
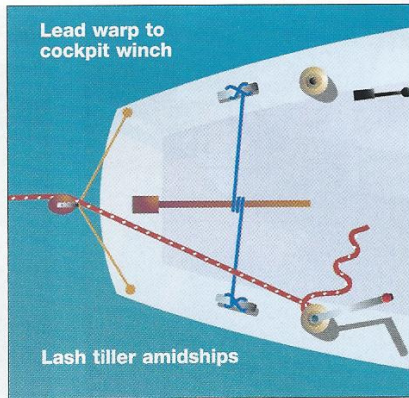


If we don't have a heaving line – or the gap is too wide to throw one – a long non-buoyant warp can be floated across on the tide with the aid of a bucket and fender.

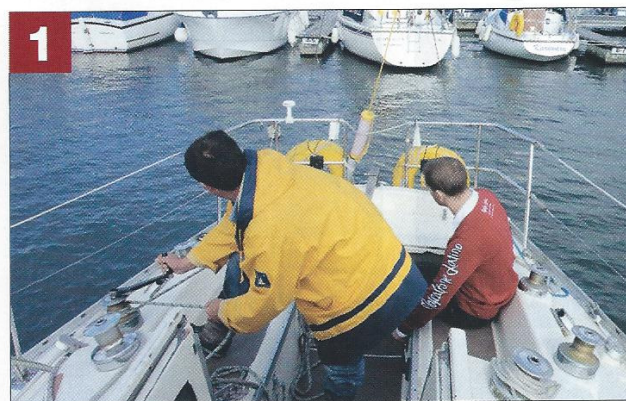
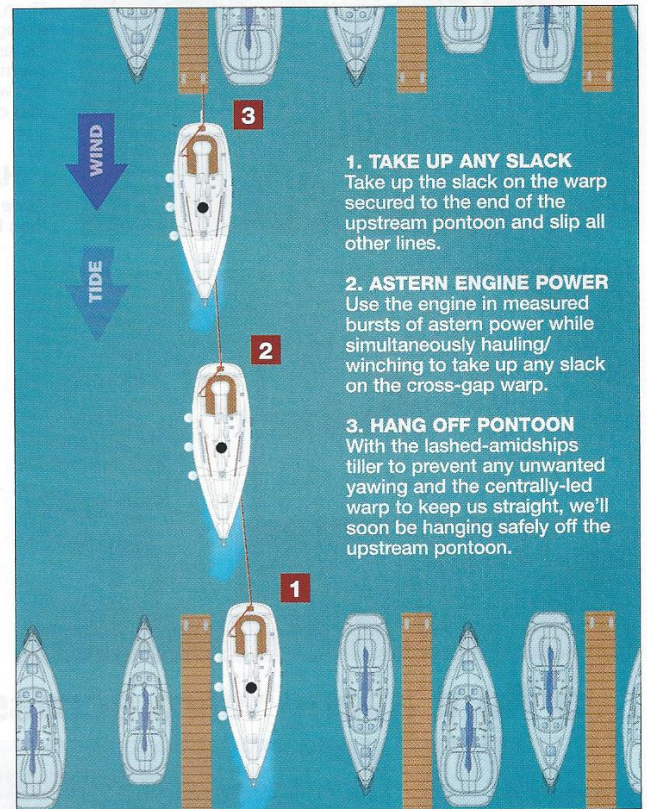
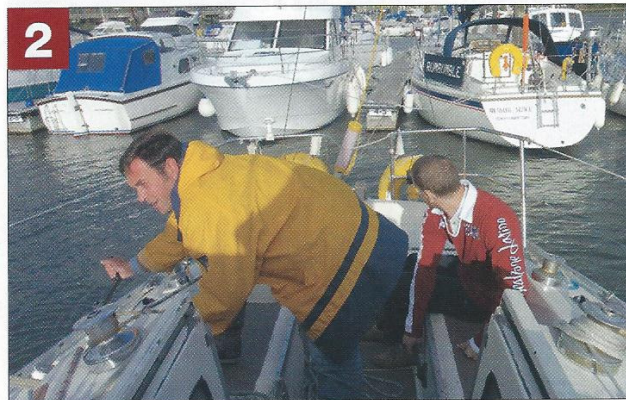


3. Rig a turning block and lead warp to a cockpit winch

WHEN THE WARP has been secured to the upstream pontoon and (if only two-handed) with the second crew member back aboard, we need to lash the helm amidships and lead the warp to a cockpit winch that's on the opposite side of the boat to the throttle. If there isn't a central backstay base to lead it around, rig up a turning block (as shown right) so that the load will be taken up evenly on the centreline of the boat.

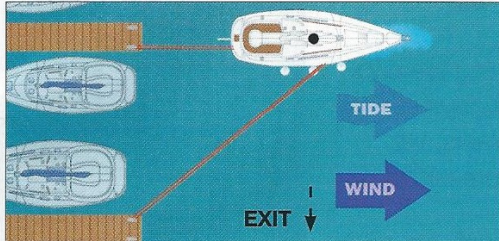


4. Use engine power / winch & warp to up-tide pontoon



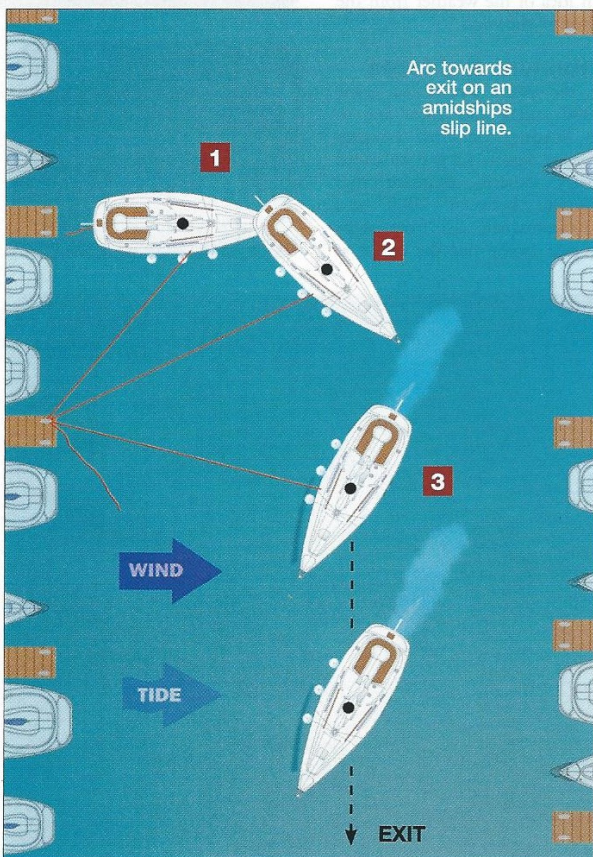
5. Set up stern slip & another to offset turning point

WITH OUR BOAT hanging off the stern warp on a short scope and our bow safely trailing downstream, all we need do now to prepare for the final stage of our departing manoeuvre is to repeat what was illustrated in greater detail in the most recent Masterclasses. This entails setting up a single stern slip line – and another one that's rigged from just forward of amidships and led as far as possible towards the side that we need to turn.



6. Finally, let go aft & pivot forward towards the exit

While we could have rigged the amidships slip to a cleat on the same pontoon as our stern line or (while observing the usual seamanlike courtesies) to an empty one on the adjacent boat, the further off to one side we can lead it the smoother our arcing turn towards the exit will be. On this occasion we passed the line across two other boats to the end of the next pontoon. Then, after letting-go the stern line (1), we steadily snubbed the amidships slip line and allowed our boat to arc around it in a gradual turn (2). When our bow was angled across the wind and tide (3), we let go of the slip line and ferry-glided across the stream to the exit.



THANKS TO MDL FOR ALLOWING US TO CONDUCT THESE MANOEUVRES IN THEIR MARINAS.

John Goode's Southern Sailing School teaches sailing and navigation in the simplest possible way.
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