

Dinghy stowage and security

£20

Peter Davies' transom flap has two uses

My Fairey Duckling was designed to stow upside down on the stern deck of an Atalanta sailing cruiser.

The top part of the transom hinges out of the way of the stern hatch, and the dinghy then provides headroom for the stern cabin – an idea that can be copied for deck-stowed dinghies that foul the companionway hatch.

The hinging portion of the transom also allows the oars to be secured by sliding them under the thwart and then locking the transom behind them by means of two security bolts.

These bolts are strong enough for an outboard motor to be used, and the only drawback is that the escutcheons rusted after six years – but the actual bolts still work perfectly. To make the oars really secure I made a frame under the thwart to prevent the oars being wiggled from side to side.

If you don't fancy a transom flap, another approach is to pass a chain through holes in the oar blades and thwart. To make a workmanlike job of the holes, line them with copper tubing. Cut it



Oars with holes can be chained and padlocked to the thwart (inset) or use a hinged transom to slide them through a bracket under the thwart

about four millimetres longer than the thickness of the wood, anneal it by heating to a dull red heat, and allow to cool. Drill the holes, coat liberally with varnish and push the copper tubes into place. Then with two large ball-peen hammers, flare out the protruding ends of the tube to make a really neat-looking fitting.

Rowlocks can be made secure by pushing them through holes in the thwart. These holes can also be lined with copper or plastic pipe. U-bolts are fitted either side and a short length of chain locks them all together.

Nothing is theft proof, of course.

The 'universal key' – bolt croppers – will quickly remove chains but casual mischief-makers rarely carry them so a securely locked dinghy is unlikely to be removed.



Lock and chain the rowlocks in between two strong U-bolts



Despite the rusty appearance these security bolts still work after six years

Sieves will save an electric bilge pump

£4

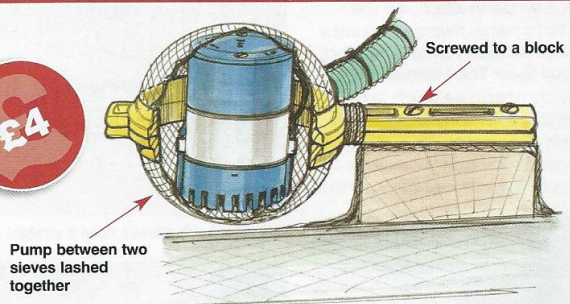
Ian Nicolson makes a practical pump filter

An electric bilge pump has a whirling impeller at the bottom which swooshes the water up the delivery tube and overboard. They are reliable EXCEPT when a tiny bit of debris gets caught in the impeller. An almost-fully-burned-out match-stick or the corner of a sweet paper is death to an electric bilge pump. The rubbish gets caught between the impeller blade and the outside casing, then the impeller cannot rotate and the electric motor is liable to burn out.

These handy labour-saving pumps need proper protection from every sort of gash, and there is a wonderfully simple way of

preventing anything getting into the works. All that is needed is a couple of cheap plastic cooking sieves. One sieve goes under the pump and one on top, and their handles are lashed together.

The smallest possible hole is made for the discharge pipe, and for the pump's electric cable. To keep that pump in its place the handles of the sieves are screwed to a chock of wood which is fixed at a suitable point in the lowest



part of the boat's bilge.

The idea can also be used as a strum box for a hand-operated pump. There's a theory that a diaphragm pump does not need any sort of filter. A famous maker of diaphragm bilge pumps used to demonstrate this efficiency by pumping neck-ties through his

pump at boat shows, to show how invulnerable his product was.

However, anyone who has accidentally pumped the end of a jib sheet through a diaphragm bilge pump and then not been able to tack (yes, it's happened!) will know that all pumps need strum boxes.

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