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## CAPTAIN'S **HANDBOOK**



River and Canal boat holidays





## DEAR TRAVELLER,

We would like to thank you for choosing to holiday on one of our Nicols boats. We hope you will have a fantastic cruise and that the weather is great too.

To help you prepare and make the experience even more enjoyable we have produced this handbook which should hopefully answer any questions that you might have before setting off to collect the boat from our Nicols base.

We would advise you to read the handbook. For ease it's arranged in the order of what will happen on your holiday from picking up the boat and returning it and covering everything in between!

**Warning:** the information provided in this document is not contractual. Characteristics may vary depending on the boats and the areas where you'll navigate.



Self-drive boating holidays - No experience needed!

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1

# GET READY **TO ENJOY THE WATERWAYS**

## → **WHAT'S ON BOARD**

Our boats come fully-equipped with everything you'll need during your boating holiday.

### **KITCHEN**

Our boats have a vast living room with a 360° panoramic view. The kitchen includes lots of equipment and has everything you'll need: wide work top areas and plenty of storage space, 220l fridge with a freezer compartment, ring-hob, oven / grill depending on boat model.

*(Fridge 220l except on: Riviera range, N800 and Primo®. Oven: except N800).*

The kitchenware supplied on board will be enough for the number of passengers travelling.

### **CABINS**

The bedding (sheets, duvets, pillows) provided will be sufficient for the number of passengers travelling on board.

### **TERRACE**

Make the most of these outdoor areas thanks to the on board garden furniture and either a sun awning or parasol depending on the boat model.

### **CLEANING KIT**

A cleaning kit is provided, consisting of most necessary items (rubbish bag, washing-up liquid...).

**FIRST AID**

Before you depart, we will give you a first aid kit which contains the basics such as plasters and compress, but no drugs/medicines.

If you use anything from the kit don't forget to tell the base on your return so that it can be re-stocked.

**INVENTORY**

An inventory list highlighting all external equipment on the boat as well as internal equipment (for example kitchen, bedding, safety) should be given to you in addition to this handbook. Don't hesitate to ask for it if you've not seen it.

**WHAT YOU SHOULD BRING****DOCUMENTS**

Make sure before you leave home that you take with you:

- A passport or valid identity card, your driving license and all your car documents.
- For European residents, medical and prescription charges have to be paid for, but can be reclaimable providing you are in possession of your "European insurance card".

**CLOTHES**

Bring practical, comfortable, easy-to-clean clothes. Don't forget a thick pullover and waterproof clothing in case of cooler weather or rain, and of course swimming costume for sunbathing as you drift along.

**SHOES**

Bring comfortable non-slip shoes (trainers, tennis shoes) so you can move about easily and of course avoid heels, metal tips and all other slippery-soled shoes on the boat!

**SUITCASES**

Bringing your luggage in soft bags is better than suitcases as they can take up a lot of space. Alternatively you can unpack before embarking and leave your suitcases in the car.

**SLEEPING-BAGS**

Our boats are equipped with warm duvets (or blankets) but for those who particularly feel the cold, you may bring your own sleeping-bag.

**LINEN**

- Bring your household (tea towels) and toilet linen (hand towels);
- For those who don't want or cannot bring towels with them, most of our Nicols bases offer packs for rent (including a bath towel + a hand towel and a facecloth). Please feel free to contact your departure base for rental conditions.

**LEISURE**

- Bring some **books, crosswords, a pack of cards and board games** for your entertainment in the evening.
- Remember a **pair of binoculars** for observing the rich wildlife found around the waterways. They will also be useful for when approaching locks and seeing the signals.
- Do not forget **your camera** because the landscapes, villages and animals you will see certainly deserve to be in your photo-album.
- Some of our models are equipped with TV with DVD player, or CD player. Remember to bring your CDs or DVDs if your boat is equipped with these.

**RUBBISH**

- Bring some bin-bags which you can drop into bins at ports or locks when full.
- Respect the sorting of recycle-able materials such as glass, plastic and cardboard.
- Don't pollute the river banks or waterways, protect nature.

**FISHING**

- Your boat is a great vantage point for fishing from. You can fish in the canals and rivers providing you hold a fishing licence. These can be purchased from local fishing tackle shops or on the web ([www.cartedepeche.fr](http://www.cartedepeche.fr)).
- We wish you good fishing: **roach, carp, perch and pike await you.**
- Please also respect those who are fishing when you are cruising. When passing others who are fishing you should reduce your speed in order to avoid making wake and try to keep away from the bank.

**PROVISIONS**

In terms of food supplies, bring enough for the first day - after that you can take advantage of your stops in the villages on your route to buy fresh supplies. Some lock-keepers can also sell you local products (honey, wines etc) or fruit, vegetables, eggs and more...

**ANIMALS**

They are welcome on board along with their equipment : feeding bowl, blanket etc... Watch over their safety and make sure they cause no harm or damage in the boat and when passing through locks.

## → EVEN MORE TO ENJOY...

Our Nicols® bases offer you a number of additional optional services and items of equipment for while you're on your cruise...

**PRIVATE CAR PARK OR GARAGE** (private but not supervised), available on most of our bases. This can be organised on arrival at the base, or to guarantee securing parking space we would recommend contacting us before your cruise.

### **BICYCLES**

And now for some exercise! You will be glad to have bicycles **for shopping trips or little outings**. Baby/Child seats are available to rent from most Nicols bases.

**Warning: A helmet is mandatory for children under 12 years of age and visibility vest is obligatory for night time riding, outside urban areas. We even recommend them during the day!**

*Take care that they are not stolen (you will be given a lock on your day of departure), and that they are always securely attached to the boat's guard-rail. Check that the bikes are working properly on collection and make sure they are returned in the same condition as they were when you picked them up. Any damage may be result in the loss of your deposit.*

*In case of loss or theft, each bike will be charged to you (please ask for conditions at your base departure).*

### **BARBECUE**

Hire all of the equipment you'll need to enjoy a barbecue, then simply pick up your food fresh from the many mooring places you'll find on route. Take it on board with you...most of our bases even offer rental of gas bottles. As with all barbecues please be careful and familiarise yourself with all the equipment before departure.

### **WATERWAYS GUIDES**

A comprehensive guide is vital for planning your cruise. It provides detailed information of the waterways on which you will navigate highlighting **useful information** such as the location of locks, quays, water fill-up points in addition to **tourist information** such as places to visit and their opening hours, market days, good restaurants and much more.

### **CONVERTER**

Some Nicols bases offer an **electricity converter** (12 Volts / 220 Volts) which can be used via the cigarette lighter that is included on most of the boats. Do not hesitate to contact your base of departure to enquire about the hire and use conditions.

### **WiFi**

Stay connected! You can rent a Wifi device to take on board with you which has a certain number of GB to start you off. Then you can pay for extra GB as required. These are available from most Nicols bases, however note that there is variable network coverage depending on the region.



### DECK MATTRESS

Enjoy additional onboard comfort with our deck mattress. **Foldable and easy to store**, the mattress is great for relaxing on the roof terrace or front deck of your Nicols® boat.

### POOL

An exclusive to Nicols! Add the finishing touch to your boating holiday with **our heated splash pool**, which is convertible into a terrace thanks to two sliding covers. It's towed behind your boat and can be added to all Nicols boats (except the Riviera range).

Please note however that **a boat licence** is required **if you book a boat that is more than 13 metres long** and have the splash pool as the overall length will exceed 15 metres.

**Do not hesitate to ask for advice** concerning cleaning and keeping water quality and remember **to book it before your arrival** at the base because the preparation requires up to two hours.

### CAST OFF WITH CONFIDENCE!

A collaboration between AXA INSURANCE and NICOLS offers peace of mind before and during your boating holiday.

Contact us for more information.

### EARLY DEPARTURE

Arrange to collect your boat from 10am instead of 2pm/4pm at the beginning of your holiday and enjoy even more time on board! Contact us to check if possible and for a price.

### LATE RETURN

Keep your boat until 11am instead of 8am/9am on the last day. For weekend holiday bookings, instead of returning the boat in the evening at 5pm enjoy a last night on board and stay until 9am the next morning!

These two options are offered at almost all our bases, regardless of the boat model chosen. This can only be confirmed a few days before your cruise as the Nicols base will need to check if the boat is needed for the next booking immediately. Contact us to check if possible and for a price.

### LINEN

Maybe you forgot to pack them or it could be simply a lack of space in your suitcases. Not to worry, it is possible to hire our **kitchen towels kit** (1 hand towel + 2 dishcloth) and **bathroom towels kit** (1 glove + 1 towel + 1 bath towel)

### CLEANING

There are different levels of **cleaning package** available (complete clean, inside cleaning only, outside cleaning only) and the prices vary depending on the size of the boat. Contact us for more information.



## ON ARRIVAL **AT THE BASE**

### **!** IMPORTANT - BEFORE YOU GO

One week before embarking, it is absolutely vital to telephone the departure base in order to have confirmed to you the direction of your journey in the case of one-way trips. If for any reason you cannot arrive at the base during hours of office opening (variable according to bases), please let us know so that suitable preparations can be made.

### **→ FORMALITIES**

You have been dreaming about this cruise for weeks. Just a little patience and you'll be able to embark. We only ask you to go through a few formalities, which are vital to your departure and the success of your holiday.

- Show your invoice or voucher to reception at the base.
- You can leave the deposit in cash, cheque or by visa. At some bases, two cheques will be required, one for the insurance deposit and one for the cleaning deposit (see conditions and prices in our brochure).
- Pay for whatever rentals you require : bicycles, garage or parking, animals, vehicle transfer if required, waterways map/guide (if you didn't order it before leaving), towels pack, hiring of converter...
- If you are expecting mail or urgent messages during your cruise, tell to the base team. Give them your mobile number so that they may contact you.

- Now you just have to get your luggage on board and park your car. At each base you may choose between a free car park or a lock-up garage (closed but not supervised) which is not included in the price of your cruise. The company accepts no responsibility in the case of any offence or damage committed to your car.
- Check that the equipment on board corresponds to the inventory you received. Point out immediately any possible errors.
- Your boat will be ready from 4 p.m. Do not get on board before maintenance personnel have finished or without authorisation. Use the time to do a bit of shopping for the first day. Everything is ready, and your cruise is about to start!!!

**DO NOT LEAVE THE BASE OF DEPARTURE:**

- without having had a hand over demonstration run by a member of the base.
- without receiving the "Boarding Card" from the base Manager.



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## SERVICES OVERVIEW OF THE BOAT

In order to get the most out of your boating holiday, here is a little advice concerning the operation of the boat and its equipment. These points will help with on board comfort but please note that some equipment may vary depending the boat and the area where you cruise. Remember that before you leave the base, the staff will be available for any further information you may need.

### → ENERGY

#### FUEL

Our boats have Diesel engines.

- Our boats have enough fuel on board for the length of your cruise. Nevertheless, for long cruises, fuelling points are shown on the guide-maps. We will give you a fuel key to open the filler cap.
- All our boats are fitted with a meter which is read on your departure and on your return. The number of hours of engine fuel use will be invoiced according to the rate displayed at the base.

Please stay safe and take appropriate precautions when handling fuel:

- Don't smoke when filling tanks.
- Don't store any inflammable materials near tanks.

#### HEATING

All our boats are fitted with pulsed air, gas-fired heating or fuel heating. How to use the heating and its operation will be communicated to you at boarding and is also explained in a manual found on board. When the heating is on it is important to make sure you circulate

the air around the boat and remember not to put objects (such as bags) in front of the hot air outlets.

### **AIR CONDITIONING**

Some boats are equipped with air conditioning system. Your base team will explain how this works when you pick up the boat.

### **GAS**

This is not dangerous if a few elementary precautions are taken.

Our boats are equipped with 1 or 2 bottles of gas "Butane" or "Propane" which last varying lengths of time according to the season and the use of the heating system : between one and three weeks per bottle.

These bottles are already connected which avoids you having to manhandle them.

#### **If you run out of gas:**

Some boats are fitted with a coupler which connects the 2 bottles of gas.

- When one bottle is empty, turn the coupler tap towards the second bottle.(normally the coupler will switch back from the empty bottle to the full bottle).

#### **Your bottle(s) is(are) empty:**

Telephone the base. Do not buy bottles without asking the base.

- If the technician tell you by phone that you can replace an empty bottle, you have to : Turn it off, unscrew the relief valve (careful : not a left-hand thread) and screw it onto the new bottle, which you then turn on. Check for leaks!
- If you can smell gas, stop the engine, turn off the gas and phone your base. Don't light matches and don't smoke!

### **GENERATOR**

Some boats are equipped with a generator that can supply air conditioning and the dishwasher. Refer to the manual for operation.

## **KITCHEN**

### **LIGHTING THE RING**

Select the appropriate burner. Put a lighted match to it.

Turn the corresponding knob to maximum. Keep the knob depressed in this position to override the safety cutout.

### **LIGHTING THE OVEN**

Use the knob on the left, indicated by the oven symbol. Put a lighted match to the hole at the front of the oven. Turn the knob to maximum. Keep the knob depressed to override the safety cutout. Before closing the oven door, make sure the burner rack is lit.

Before using the oven, leave it to heat up for 15 minutes.

Some boats are also equipped with a **microwave**.

### FRIDGE

Most of our boats are fitted with gas fridge or electric fridge. When it is hot in summer, do not keep opening the fridge and do not put too much in it. Operation instructions are explained in the manual of each boat.

## → WATER

Your boat has water reserves of between 200 and 1150 litres, according to the model. We advise you to top-up your water reserve every day. During your cruise you will have ample opportunity to top up your water reserve (locks, ports, mooring points, campsites on the river's edge). To find these places, consult your waterways guide. Check carefully-at some places you may have to pay.

To this end the boat is equipped with a water-pipe and a water-key to open the filler cap.

**Be careful not to fill the water tank with fuel by mistake: make sure the cap is the one nearest the front of the boat and is marked "EAU" or "WATER".**

Drinking water is relayed to the taps by an electric pump fed by the battery. Remember to switch off the pump when you have finished with the water-the switch can be found on the boat's control panel.

### If the water doesn't run?

Check that you have not run out of water. If you have, refill the tank. It may be necessary to bleed the pipes when you refill ; to do this turn on all the taps and switch on the pump. Turn off the taps when the water starts to run again.

### If the water still doesn't run:

Telephone us and a repair-man will come.

### HOT WATER

All boats are equipped with a hot water tank of 20 to 100 litres.

- In order to obtain hot water the engine will need to have been running for between 15 minutes to 1 hour.
- On some boats, the hot water tank also has an electric heater.

When moored where there is an electric hookup point connect to the hot water tank.

## → ELECTRICITY

### CONVERTER

Once onboard, the only power source available is the boat battery (except model 1350 VIP, Estivale Sixto Prestige C & Octo Fly C which have an extra generator) which is used to power the boats lighting, water supply pump and systems etc.

If you want to take electrical equipment on board the following options are available:

- A cigarette lighter in the cockpit means, for example, it is possible to connect a mobile phone. You will need to bring the appropriate cable for the cigarette lighter though.
- You can rent a converter from the Nicols base. This allows you to convert electricity from the battery of 12 volts to 220 volts. You still need to be careful not to flatten the battery though - devices with low power consumption (150 watts max) such as telephone, laptop, tablet, will be fine but for devices and equipment that requires more power (over 150 watts) or electric resistance (hairdryer, electric coffee maker) you will need to remember that you are always supplied by the battery which is a limited source.
- If you think you'll need 220 volts consistently or continuously (for example CPAP machine during the night) then it is possible to plug into electrical terminals that are available in some mooring points and marinas using the extension cord supplied onboard. These terminals are usually listed in your waterways guide. Some of our newer boats allow you to connect directly.

### LIGHTING

Your boat has sufficient overhead lights with switches.

If one of these lights does not function or one or other of the electrically-operated services does not work (water pump, shower drainage pump etc.) check that the battery disconnectors (big red keys) situated in the rear cabin (Riviera or Confort Range) or in external area, under the terrace (for the Estivale and Sedan Range) are in position.

## → SECURITY

### EXTINGUISHERS

Your boat is equipped with at least 2 or 3 extinguishers (depends on the model). The technician will show you their location.

## → BATHROOM

### SHOWER

All our boats are equipped with a shower supplied with hot and cold water. The water is drained automatically by an electrical pump.

**If the water does not drain:**

Check if the drainage filter situated in a corner of the shower tray is blocked; clean it if necessary.

**If the electrical drainage pump is not working:**

Contact the base team and a technician will come and check it for you.

### **TOILETS**

Our boats are fitted with "marine toilets" manual or electric.

The operation of these toilets is explained in the manual of each boat.

In both of these cases (marine toilets or electric toilets) we would ask you to use thin toilet paper and not to put cotton wool, sanitary towels or other materials into the toilet which could block it.

All repairs by our technicians due to your negligence will be charged to you at the end of your cruise.



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## MECHANICAL OPERATION OF THE BOAT



And now here is some advice concerning the mechanical operation of the boat. Be careful to follow it and don't hesitate to ask for more information from the base team who will introduce you to your boat and often take you through your first lock.

### → STARTING-UP / SWITCHING OFF THE ENGINE

Follow exactly the recommendations which will be given to you on the day of departure by your instructor.

**Very important: each time you start up, make sure the engine cooling water is coming out of the exhaust.**

**If not, switch off immediately and telephone your base.**

### → AUDIBLE ALARM

All our boats are fitted with an audible engine protection alarm. It operates automatically when the engine overheats due to lack of cooling and when oil pressure is insufficient (lack of oil in engine). **Stop the engine immediately and phone the base.**

## → PROPELLER

The propeller can cause a breakdown. If the engine stops, the boat vibrates abnormally or makes slow progress, the propeller may be entangled (plastic bags, vegetation, ropes...). If this occurs, do not touch and telephone the base.

## → STEM PROPELLER

- Some of our boats are equipped with a stem propeller - a propeller placed crosswise at the bows allowing easier sideways movement of the boat whilst manoeuvring.
- **Be careful, the device must be not used more than 10 seconds at a time.** Do not use when you go through the bridges, but only to help you for mooring.

## → BREAKDOWNS

Engine will not start:

- No water is coming out of the exhaust: contact the base.
- The alarm goes off and the oil-light comes on. Stop the engine and phone the base.

For any other trouble:

- Never try to repair them yourself. You'll probably make it worse and then have to pay for it. Moor into the towpath side. Then telephone your base immediately, explaining the problem, its causes and its effects.
- Give the name of your boat, its exact position (including the kilometric point noted on the waterways guide). If a replacement part is needed, we will try to be on hand as soon and as efficiently as possible.
- Outside of your base's opening hour, leave your message on the answering machine in the briefest possible terms.

## → ACCIDENT

Despite following all of the safety precautions on board, accidents can happen: alert your base.

- Don't make any repairs without consulting us.
- Fill in the accident report form given to you before your departure.
- Make a note of the name and address of the captain of the other boat, also of witnesses and the name of the other captain's company.
- Wait until the base manager arrives before signing the accident report form!

 **THEFT**

- When you leave the boat, don't forget to lock it up and padlock all bicycles.
- Don't leave anything in sight.
- We advise you to contact your insurer about your personal belongings which are not included in your cruise insurance.

 **FIRE**

In case of emergency, call 112 (international number).



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## NAVIGATION ADVICE



There's nothing better than enjoying the slow pace of life as you gently cruise along the waterways. While watching the world go by remember these useful navigation tips...

- **Maximum authorised speed on canals is 6 to 8 km/h and on rivers is 10 km/h and 3 km/h in the marina.**
- **It is forbidden to navigate after sunset.**
- When you are alone, you can navigate down the middle of the canal or river, but when you meet another boat, keep to the right but avoid any underwater roots which may stick out from the banks.
- **Commercial boats always have priority over you.** Do not try to overtake them (unless a crewman signals you to do so) especially at the approach to a lock : you are on holiday but they are at work.

### → MOORING

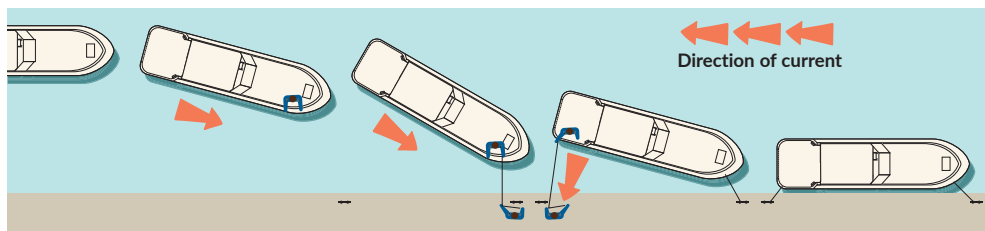
- You may moor wherever you like along the towpath unless a mooring sign forbids you.
- Please do not obstruct the right of way of pedestrians or cyclists on the towpath ; they can injure themselves badly and do not obstruct the passage of other boats on tight bends, near locks or under bridges.

### → COMING ALONGSIDE

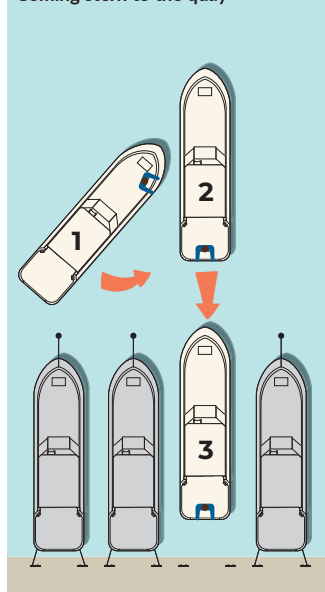
**When coming alongside parallel to the quay or bank:**

- Always manoeuvre at very low speed because the boat takes time to respond and reverse gear is your only brake.

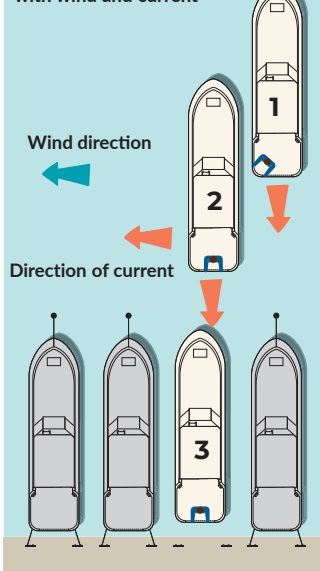
- Always tie up in front first : one crewmember stands at the front of the boat with a boathook, making sure there is no underwater obstacle preventing your landing. He must not use his feet or legs to slow the boat because of the severe risk of accident.
- Once the front of the boat has made contact with the bank, the crewmember gets down onto the bank with the mooring-rope, ties it, and ties the rear mooring-rope which you have thrown him.
- On a river, always tie up against the current. On a canal, tie up on the towpath side.



Coming stern to the quay



Coming stern to the quay with wind and current



### When coming stern to the quay:

- Come in forward as close as possible to the place you wish to moor, turn around making sure you allow for wind or current and finish in reverse gear.
- Be careful to ensure that the depth of water is sufficient at the quay and to avoid any hidden danger (tree stump, rock...) could damage the hull or propeller.

### How to turn around:

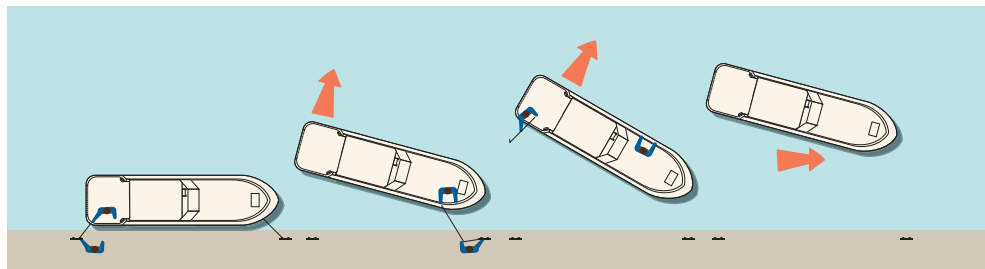
- Take position in the middle of the canal; check that no boat is coming in the front or rear.
- Turn the wheel fully to the right or left; pull forward and then reverse and so on until you have completely turned around.
- You can continue your cruise.

**In case of wind:**

- Moor on the windward bank
- At night, put your stern to the wind
- Don't tighten mooring ropes

**When you leave your berth:**

- Detach your mooring-rope, move the stern of the boat into deep water to protect the propeller, then let go forward and off you go. Roll up your mooring ropes and don't forget your mooring pegs.

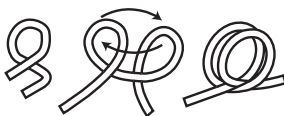


## → MOORING ROPES

- On board your boat you will find several mooring ropes each about 25 metres; coil them clockwise, ready to be used.
- Make sure they are never caught up in the propeller and never let them trail behind the boat.

**BASICS KNOTS**

Bowline



Clove hitch



Round turn &amp; 2 half-hitches



Securing to a cleat

**Never wind them around your wrist.**

**Never tie up a rope when passing through a lock (it could be broken in half) and never try to tow a boat which has run aground.**

## → ANCHOR

- All boats are equipped with an anchor for safety reasons. It is in no way a method of mooring and should only be used in an emergency.
- On a river, in case of mis-manoeuvering near a dam or in case of engine failure, throw the anchor overboard, letting go the anchor line (chain + mooring rope + anchor). Never use the anchor on a canal.

## → MANOEUVERS

Driving a boat is completely different to driving a car as our table below shows:

	CAR	BOAT
Brake	yes	no
Gear change	yes	no
Mirror	yes	no
Wind factor	weak	very important
Current factor	non existent	very important

- Use the wind and the current for ease of manoeuvring.
- Always manoeuvre calmly, without panicking.
- Use forward gear to propel the boat and reverse to brake.
- Be patient and courteous!

## → BRIDGES

- Some bridges are very low : make sure that no crew member or no part of the boat risks being hit (bicycle, umbrella, upper rails...).
- Pay close attention to the signals.



## 6

## THE LOCKS

Passing through locks is a very simple and pleasant manoeuvre if you respect all the elementary advice given.

The courtesy greeting is to call "Bonjour" to the lock-keeper on arrival and to say goodbye with "Au Revoir" As you exit the lock. Bear in mind though, that passage is made with the help of a lock-keeper who will appreciate your help in opening and closing the lock-gates.

Don't forget that commercial vessels have priority over pleasure boats in passing through locks. Respect timetables and working days of lock-keepers. Consult waterway maps or ask Nicols for them.

At certain times of year (drought period), the lock-keeper groups several boats together before working the lock. Be patient and understanding!

Lock passage is free. Although optional, a tip or other gesture of gratitude would nevertheless be appreciated by the lock-keeper. There is no obligation on his part to help you to moor your boat.

Where the lock has a telephone, the lock-keeper will warn the next lock-keeper of your arrival. Tell him if you intend to halt between his lock and the next one, so that the lock-keeper does not prepare the following lock for your arrival for nothing!

Before you get to a lock, at about 150 to 200 metres away, whether you are ascending or descending, slow down and warn of your arrival with one or two blows of the horn.

If the gates are open on your arrival, you can go in straight away and moor.

If there is a boat in the lock on your arrival, wait until it has left before entering. To do this, moor your boat 100 metres from the lock in order not to obstruct the gates, to allow the boat leaving room to manoeuvre in safety and to avoid creating wake.

**In all cases:**

- Manoeuver slowly.
- Never jump from the lock onto the roof of a boat.
- Once you have passed through a lock, coil up your mooring ropes onto the boat.

According to different regions, locks can be manually operated, electrically operated or automatic but the principle remains the same.

## → MANUAL LOCKS

- Check that the water level has returned to normal on your side, if so, open the gates; if not, the lock chamber will need to be filled or emptied using the sluice gates. Before operating gates, make sure that sluice gates are firmly closed.
- When the gates are open, enter the lock slowly and moor up fore and aft.
- Open the sluice gates when the boat is properly secured. Open the lock gates only when the level has returned to normal, otherwise it will strain the opening mechanism.
- After leaving the lock, close the lock gates and lower the sluice gates.

## → MECHANISED LOCKS

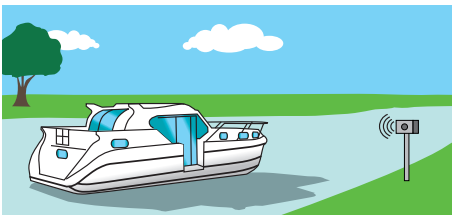
These locks are always operated by a lock-keeper.

## → AUTOMATIC LOCKS

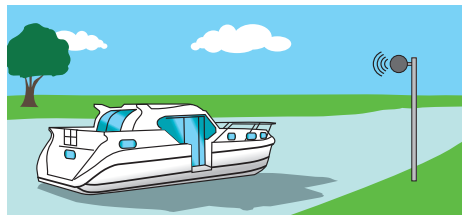
There is no lock-keeper to operate.

They are electric locks and operate in several different ways:

- 1- An automatic detector placed on the bank: pass the detector very slowly in order to allow it to detect your boat because these systems are designed to recognize the passage of big barges.(fig1)
- 2- A radar sensor fixed on the bank 2 m above the ground.(fig 2)
- 3- A pole placed on a suspended cable above a canal.(fig 3)
- 4- A remote control box which will have been given to you: triggered at about 300 m from the lock. Follow the instructions that will appear on the screen.(fig 4)

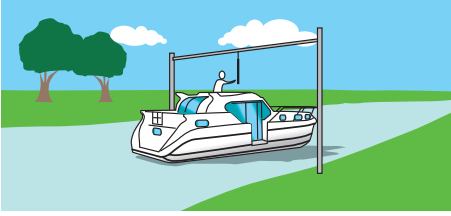


1

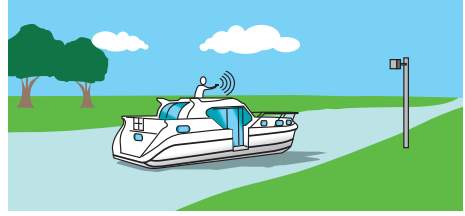


2

# 6 THE LOCKS



3

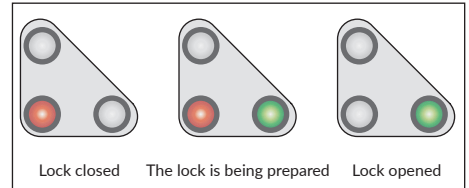


4

Carefully enter the lock when the signal is green (and the red signal is off). The light turns to red once the first boat enters. If there are several boats going through the lock together, the others can still go on.

When all the boats are moored, lift up the blue knob for 5 seconds. The gates close automatically and the cycle begins. In general, keep clear from the lock gates so as not sustain damage.

- If you are in a descending lock, the rear of the boat could be stuck on the sill.
- In an ascending lock, the bow could get stuck in the gate mechanism.



At the end of the cycle the gates open. Move out of lock slowly so that you can be detected by the lock exit system. If there are several boats, leave in group to avoid closure of the automatic gates.

- In case of emergency, the red lever allows you to stop the cycle.
- In case of breakdown, use the interphone placed on the platform of the lock to warn the service attendant.

In certain areas (Alsace, Doubs...), locks are organised in series, which means that the passage of one of them prepares the following one. Once you are in a chain of locks, you should continue to the end or warn by interphone of your intentions to stop. You should also let them know when you intend to set out again.

The beginning and end of a lock chain are indicated by the following symbol.

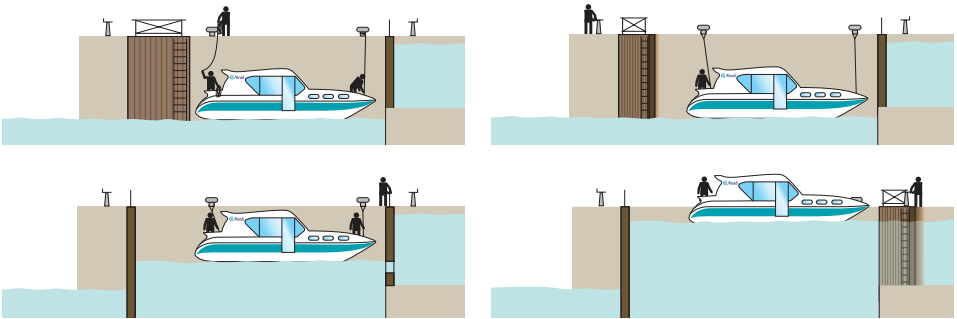


## → POINTS TO REMEMBER FOR SAFE PASSAGE OF LOCKS

### ASCENDING LOCK

You arrive at the downstream gate (lower level) to ascend with the water to the upper level:

- 1- The boat enters the lock gently, 1 or 2 crew-members having disembarked either onto the bank. **Warning:** The safety ladders found in locks **should never be used** by boaters unless required in an emergency.
- 2- Once in the lock, moor your boat first in front then at the rear by throwing the mooring ropes to the crew-members on land who loop them round the bollards then, without knotting them, throw the end to the crew-members on board.
- 3- Downstream gates are closed by the lock-keeper with the help of a crew-member on land.
- 4- Upstream sluices are opened. The forward and aft ropes are held by the crew-members. Keep the boat against the wall.
- 5- While the lock fills, the wake means that the mooring ropes must be kept taut (so that the boat doesn't move backwards and forwards). Tighten the mooring ropes as the boat rises.
- 6- Gates are opened once the water levels are equal.
- 7- Mooring ropes are unhitched and crew-members re-embark, the boat gently leaves the lock.



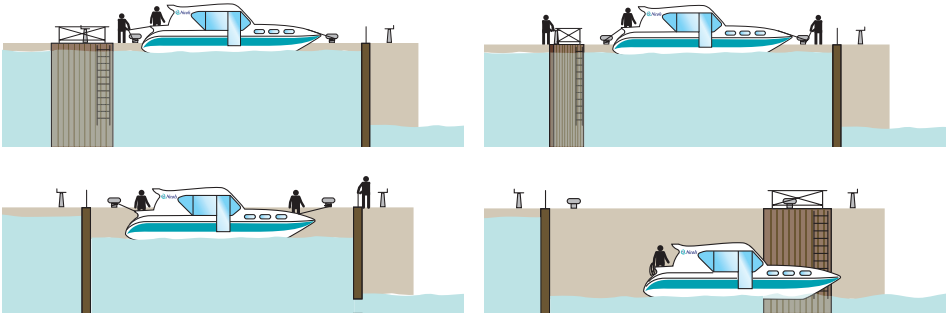
### DESCENDING LOCK

You come to the crown-gate to descend to the lower level:

- 1- The boat gently enters the lock.
- 2- The crew-member jumps onto the bank and loops the forward and aft mooring ropes around the bollards, **without knotting them**. He throws the ends back to the crew-members, leaving enough slack for a descent of 3 to 4 metres.
- 3- Don't let the boat get too near the crown gate. to avoid damaging the propeller.
- 4- Crown gates are closed by the lock-keeper with the help of a crew-member.

## 6 THE LOCKS

- 5- Opening of descending sluices. Adjust and slacken mooring ropes.
- 6- Gates are opened once water levels are equal.
- 7- Coil up your mooring ropes, crew-members return on board and gently leave the lock.



Negotiating locks may seem complicated at first, but you'll soon find that the more you go through the more familiar and quicker you and your crew become.



# 7

## ON RETURNING TO BASE

We would be grateful if you would return your boat by 9am at the latest (or 5pm for week-end) so that we can clean it and make all checks necessary so that it is ready for the next crew.

With this in mind, we advise you to return to base on the eve of your return date.

- Bring back all hired or rented equipment.
- Be ready to pay for the fuel.
- After going through the inventory, we will return the deposit if the boat and its equipment are returned in clean, working order at the time and place agreed on.

We hope that you enjoy the complete Nicols experience and have a cruise that allows you to relax with friends or family, maybe explore a region you didn't know much about before and enjoy life on the waterways.

On your return you will be an expert sailor so why not think about the other Nicols bases in different regions for future adventures on the rivers and canals of Europe?

Lastly, in order to help us continually improve our holidays please complete and return the customer satisfaction questionnaire.

# A BOATING GLOSSARY

## ANCHORAGE

Depth of a waterway (for example, this canal or that river has 1.4 mof anchorage).

## ASCENDING/UPSTREAMING

Boat navigating towards the river-source, that is say sailing against the current. On a canal, this means that the boat approaches locks in an ascending direction.

## BOATHOOK

Long wooden or metal pole with a hook at one end. Use it when drawing alongside or drawing away and in locks to facilitate manoeuvring and avoid collisions.

## BOLLARD

Metal or concrete cylinder, sealed into a bank or quay, for mooring purposes.

## BOW

Front of boat.

## CLEAT

Metal fitting on boat to which mooring ropes can be attached. In general, boats have two cleats at rear and one or two in the front.

## DESCENDING / DOWNSTREAMING

Boat navigating towards the river-mouth, that is, travelling with the current. On a canal, this means that the boat approaches locks in a descending direction.

## DOWNSTREAM

Lower part of the river, towards its mouth.

## DRAUGHT

Vertical distance between the lowest part of a boat (in general the keel) and the waterline.

## FENDER

Of oval or round form, inflated with compressed air, arranged in series around the boat's hull in order to protect it from knocks. Generally numbering 6 to 10, solidly made, bursting only under violent collision, and should be left in place even if you find them unattractive.

## HEADROOM

Height between the water-level and the crown of a bridge or other construction. For a boat, the vertical distance between the water-level (water-line) and the highest point of the boat.

## HELM/TILLER

The helm is similar to a steering wheel, the tiller is like a long bar situated at the rear of the boat. Both serve to steer the boat.

## LOCK CHAMBER

Part of lock between upstream and downstream gates.

## LOCK PASSAGE

Passage of a boat through a lock ; the time required depends on the difference in water levels as well as the size of the lock. In general, you should expect it to take a quarter of an hour.

## LOCK SILL

Sort of step on upstream lockgate side in a lock where great care must be taken (see chapter on manoeuvres with sketch).

## LOCK-WALL

Lateral wall of a lock, whether vertical or slightly inclined.

## LOWEST WATER LEVEL

Lowest level of waterway or canal.

## NAVIGATION CHANNEL

This is the navigable zone shown on waterway Maps which must be kept to in order to avoid all Danger such as rocks, sandbanks, underwater Posts, etc...

## OVERHAULING

The act of overtaking a boat following the same route as you.

**PORT** Left side of the boat when facing the front.

**REACH** The part of a waterway or canal between two locks.

## STARBOARD

Right-hand side of the boat when looking towards the front.

**STERN** Rear of boat.

## TO GO ASTERN

To put the boat into reverse in order to stop it.

## TOPSIDE(S)

Part of volume of boat above the water-line (see head-room). The greater volume of your boat above water, the greater the wind resistance always bear this in mind when manoeuvring.

## TOWPATHS

Paths along the canal or river and used until the beginning of this century for barge-towing by horses and men.

## UPPER REACH

Highest point of canal where the water division is.

## WAIST RAIL

Strip of rubber or wood around the hull for protective purposes. Almost all boats are equipped with a (often just one, sometimes two or three) augmented with fenders.

# SIGNS AND SIGNALS

These are the main signs which you will come across during your cruise. Learn them off by heart: respecting these signs will contribute to your safety and that of others.

## INDICATION SIGNALS



E1 passage allowed



E2 Electric cable crossing



E4 Ferry crossing with cable



E5 Stopping allowed



E6 Anchoring allowed



E7 Mooring allowed



E8 Turning point indicated



E13 Drinking water



E14 Phone box  
for boat-users



E15 Water-skiing  
course



E9a



E9b



E9c

Main waterway /  
secondary waterway



E10a



E10b

This waterway is classed as a  
tributary of the waterway you are  
approaching



E11

End of restriction or obligation

## PROHIBITION SIGNALS



A1 Navigation forbidden



A1 Passage forbidden  
except for small  
engineless crafts



A2 Passing and crossing  
forbidden



A3 Does not affect  
pleasure



A4 Passing and  
crossing forbidden



A10 Passage forbidden  
outside marked space



A5 Forbidden to remain in  
area indicated



A6 Anchoring forbidden



A7 Mooring forbidden



A8 Turning forbidden



A9 Forbidden to create wash

## OBLIGATION SIGNALS



B1 Take direction of  
arrow



B2a Turn towards side  
of channel indicated



B2b Turn towards side  
of channel indicates



B3a Stay on side of  
channel indicated



B3b Stay on side of  
channel indicated



B4a Turn towards side  
of channel indicated



B4b Turn towards side  
of channel indicated



B5 Obligation to stop in  
certain circumstances



B6 Maximum speed  
allowed km/h



B7 Sound your horn



B8 Be especially careful

## RECOMMENDATION SIGNALS

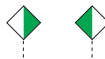


D1a

Passage allowed from both  
directions



D1b Passage allowed for  
your forbidden from the  
order side (one way only)



D2 Passage requested  
through marked space



D3 Direction  
recommended

## RESTRICTION SIGNALS



C1 Depth limited



C2 Height above water  
level limited



C3 Width limited



C4 Special limitations



C5 Channel is situated at  
distance indicated from bank

## HORN SIGNALS



Attention (4 seconds)



I am coming towards  
starboard (1 second)



I am coming towards port



I am going into reverse



I am out of control



Danger of collision



Self-drive boating holidays - No experience needed!