

6. When at the spot, stop the boat, and check that the boat will be free to swing in all directions. Slowly lower the anchor over the bow to the bottom, and then slowly back the boat away, downwind or down current.

7. Once the hook is on the seabed, put your engine in reverse until you feel the hook dig in. Back up steadily, paying out anchor rode until you reach the predetermined scope. Let out about seven to ten times as much line as the depth of the water, depending on the wind strength and wave size. **Scope** is the ratio of the amount of anchor line paid out to water depth plus freeboard. Anchors hold best when the pull on the anchor is parallel to the bottom. More line paid out also increases shock absorption by the anchor line. Anchoring experts recommend 7:1 scope when possible. Using a larger anchor or more chain to lower the angle of pull will compensate for shorter scope.

8. Tie off the line around a bow cleat, and pull on the anchor to make sure it is secure. After anchoring, check your position with local landmarks. While at anchor, recheck these landmarks periodically to make sure you aren't moving. Most GPS units have an alarm that will alert you if the boat moves. Be sure to use it if you are going to sleep aboard at anchor.

9. Periodically check connecting knots on your anchor line. When possible, use splices instead of knots. Knots weaken a line more than splices. Remember, when anchoring overnight, you must turn on an anchor light. Also, never anchor or otherwise obstruct passage through channels or areas such as launching ramps or any other high traffic areas.

Follow these guidelines when retrieving your anchor:

1. Always retrieve your anchor into the boat before leaving the area.
2. To retrieve the anchor, move the boat over the anchor while pulling in the line. Pulling the anchor straight up should break it free. If the anchor is stuck, turn your boat in a circle while under power.
3. When the anchor breaks loose, stop the boat, and retrieve the anchor. Never drag the anchor behind the boat.