

Jib halyard: On W3854, I still have not found the nerve to replace the jib halyard wire which loops over the same old magic box I found for \$10 in the remainder bin at Tom Taylor's 1978 going-out-of-business sale. My magic (muscle) box and halyard rack are mounted on my mast below the goose-neck where the halyards used to exit from the mainsail groove on the Proctor golden oldies. The newer masts are far better rigged with beautifully versatile exit blocks at the mast foot so that nowadays, most people just put their halyard hooks and their tensioning system along the centreboard box as shown in photos on page 10.

Vital #5: functional sheets and cleats

Cleats that work perfectly and **stay angled up (below)** are essential if you want to race well. And the right sheets (main, jib, spi) are equally vital. Most dinghy main and jib sheets that I see are obese: The maximum diameter needed on most dinghies is 6mm (1/4"). "My hands!" do I hear you cry? Well, that is why we have the functional cleats. Sailing schools may say never cleat the main but no - what is better is to always be ready to uncleat fast. Have your hand on your mainsheet and your mind on the job - especially in capsized weather! In most races, I cleat/uncleat the main hundreds of times. Ask your chandler for rope that is hands-friendly with low stretch and high resistance to wear.



Vital #6: jib leads

Chafe-resistant leads (*above*) and quality cleats are vital, but no moveable lead is needed. A fixed lead-and-cleat combination is good enough (*#20 earlier*). Since I last adjusted my jib lead position in 1992, W3854 has won 16 North American championships. I rest my case.

Why is fixed OK? Once the jib is close-hauled, the upper sail comes in far faster than the foot as you sheet in: 150 mm (6") of the upper leech per 25 mm (1") of sheet tightening on a Wayfarer. Therefore, it is easy to bring your entire luff to a consistent and correct angle to the wind merely by sheeting in until the telltails indicate that the upper and lower sail are both at the same angle to the wind. This works from anywhere on a normally placed jib track.

You can achieve this balance by trimming and re-trimming the jib until upper and lower (to which the helm steers) telltails show luff at the same time. However, a simpler, more fool-proof way to check this is a telltail about 3/4 up the jib leech: sheet in until the telltail is on the verge of getting sucked behind the leech. *Never further!!*

The only benefit of a movable lead would be that the bottom quarter of your jib can be made a bit flatter/fuller by sheeting from further aft or further forward. I have tried this type of adjusting but was unable to detect any performance difference. More details in chapter 5, p. 59.



Vital #7: pin shroud adjusters

Use these adjusters (*above*) to connect shrouds to the hull. Turnbuckles/bottlescrews are dangerous, being prone to sheering off without warning after repeated contact with docks, etc. Or they will work themselves loose and fall apart unless properly secured with wire or duct tape. Shroud plates also make shroud length adjustment simpler. Moving the pin one hole on our boat (*above*) decreases/increases masthead-to-transom rake measurement by about 10 cm (4"). With the more high tech two-holer (*inset above*), a diagonal move reduces that change in rake to 5 cm (2"). So, do yourself a favour and lose the turnbuckles. You'll never, ever regret it.