

Lowering and Raising the Mast - Day Boat

The mast must be lowered to pass through bridges.

Lowering the mast

Secure the boom in the short crutches – it is a good idea to have the crutches leaning forward at the point.

Halyards should be secured to the belaying on the pin rail. There is a good change of them getting in a muddle if they are left on the spars or looped onto the shrouds. The jib does not have to be lowered completely but the top should be lowered to at least $\frac{1}{2}$ way down the mast.

Undo the luff line (the lacing holding the sail to the mast) if fitted. Undo the parrel line holding the gaff onto the mast. **Undo the gooseneck holding the boom to the mast** – this is often forgotten and can result in a broken gooseneck or boom - and lay the boom and gaff to one side. Check that there are now no spars attached to the mast to get broken – it is too late once the mast starts to be lowered.

The mast is heavy and has no counterweight – two or more people are needed. One should control the forestay and the others catch to mast as it is lowered.

Ensure that the topping lift is not tight. Undo the 'gate' at the foot of the mast.

Undo the forestay and pull the mast back until it starts to move. If there is some reluctance, another person can help it to move by pulling on the topping lift near the end of the boom. Lower the mast slowly. As the forestay becomes less effective the second (and third) person must take the weight and help to lower the mast into the crutches.

Once the mast is secure in the crutches, gather up all the shrouds and halyards and use sail ties to hold them neatly to the mast. This will leave the boat clear for the helmsman and rowers/paddlers.

Raising the Mast

Raising the mast is done in the reverse order.

Remove the ties holding the shrouds and halyards. The first person should be ready with the forestay. The second (and third) person should give the mast an initial lift: they should then keep a good look-out to ensure nothing gets hooked up. Do not force the mast if it will not go up smoothly - find out what is obstructing it.

Once the mast is up, secure the forestay and lock the gate. Pull the gaff jaws to the mast and re-tie the parrel line. Refit the gooseneck and remember to re-tie the luff line, if fitted, when the mainsail is raised.