

# It's an old rule among sailors – always moor your boat for a storm

Your own skills and the right gear can be the difference between a smooth mooring and a disaster, so here is a practical guide with essential knowledge and handy tips.

### Piers and marinas

Yacht clubs and insurance companies encourage using compensators on your mooring lines because they protect the pier and its fittings as well as the boat and the lines.

When mooring at a pier, fasten your mooring line at the height of the pole that best suits the water level. Observe that changes in water levels may cause the lines to slack, so you need a certain distance between the pier and the boat to prevent damage.

When mooring at floating pontoons, it's crucial to use high-quality mooring compensators, as the boat and pier constantly move due to wind, sea and surf.

### Mooring lines

Mooring lines must have high tensile strength and resistibility against tears, tugs and sunlight. There are several different synthetic mooring line materials – always use a long fiber line made of polyester or polyamide for long-term mooring and ensure the line diameter matches your fittings.

### Fittings

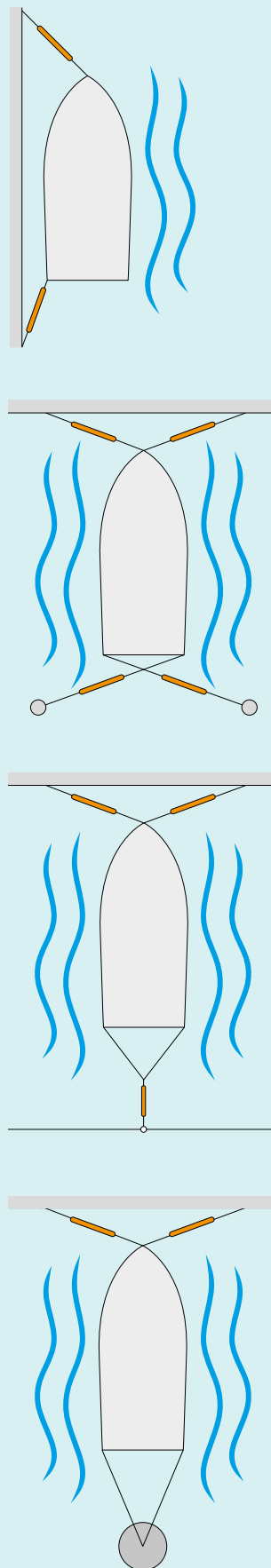
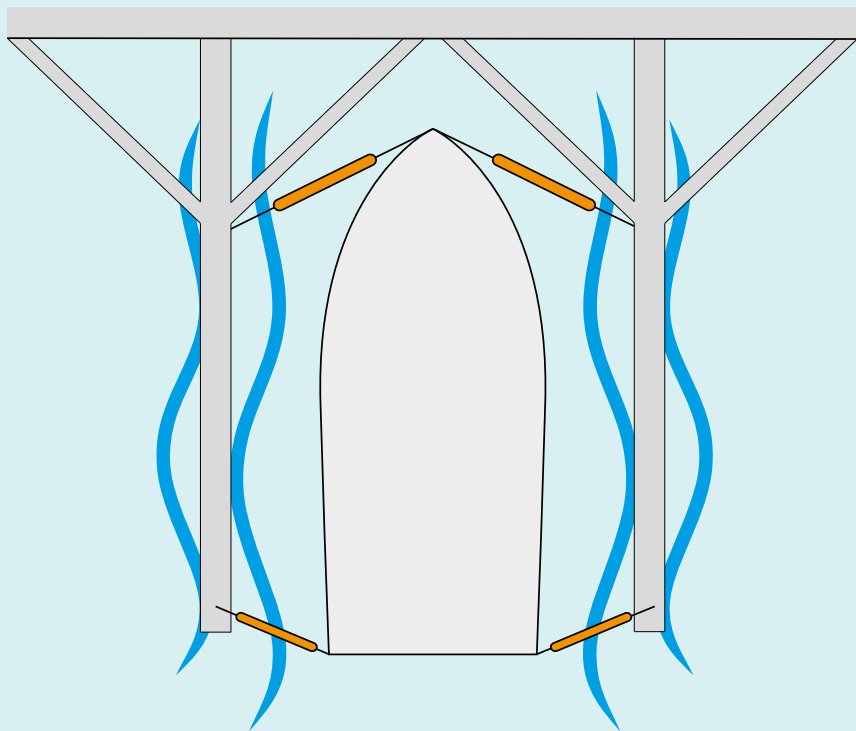
Proper fittings are essential to a safe mooring. Therefore, all fittings, such as boar cleats and eye- and ring bolts, must be sturdy and properly fitted to endure larger than regular strains, for example, when towing or mooring in extreme weather.

### Compensators

High-quality mooring compensators absorb tension and relieve line, deck and pier fittings from sudden tugs. Remember that the compensator must match the size of the mooring line. (See the millimeter-to-inch converter).

Traditional mooring compensators are made of a large steel spring. The spring is prone to rust and squeaking and requires a safety wire in case the spring should break. Most modern compensators are made of rubber with good elasticity and tensile strength without losing its original shape and don't rust or squeak.

Today, most rubber compensators are made of EPDM rubber, a synthetic material with excellent weather resistance.



Most rubber compensators on the market must be threaded when fitted to the line. However, some products – such as Unimer’s U-Cleat Mooring Compensator and Smart Snubber – do not require a free end, giving you plenty of options over a conventional compensator. The compensator can easily be repositioned after fitting, transferred to another line, or attached to a line with eye splices or thimbles on both ends. Smart Snubber can even be connected to already fastened lines.

So, what type of compensator should you use? It all comes down to how you use your boat, its weight, and the conditions where it’s typically moored. Remember that compensators are especially important when mooring:

- where there’s a risk for sea and surf
- where the effects of tide are strong (significant water level differences between high and low tide)
- at floating pontoons, as they will move in a different rhythm than the boat

Use this ruler to convert millimeters to inches or the other way around.



The figures above show five everyday mooring situations with their recommended line and compensator configuration.