



Tying Up at the Hillsboro Club Dock By Chuck Purse

After a full year of using our new dock, I've learned the hard way on how best to tie up. This article and the accompanying video share this experience.

Early in the learning curve, I quickly discovered that proper fender selection is critical to managing the ocean swell and boat wakes that impact our current dock configuration. My original fenders, Taylor cylinders with 8" diameters were not big enough to keep the boat from hitting the posts.

In response, I purchased 18" buoy type fenders that have a larger diameter than the posts and work very well. A further breakthrough was determining that the fenders should be attached to the posts and not to the boat. This method provides consistent protection over the course of a normal tidal cycle.

The average tide in March is about 2.5 feet. At full moon, the amplitude increases to 4.2-4.9 feet. Extra care and line adjustment visits are required when the tides reach these limits. It may be necessary to add an additional set of fenders to deal specifically with the lowest tides as the boat's side can drop below the fenders that are attached to the posts. At super high tides care should be taken that the bow doesn't come down on the top of the forward post causing hull or rub rail damage.

With regard to dock lines, a traditional side tie configuration with bow, stern and two spring lines work well. Be sure to use plenty of scope with these lines to allow for the tidal movement in between adjustment visits.

The video below summarizes these observations.

Happy boating!