
WHAT WORKS

Those of us fortunate enough to live on our boats are always looking for ways to make life aboard easier and more comfortable. Liveaboards know how to “think different” to find unique solutions to the challenges of living aboard. Here, fellow boaters share “what works” for them:

When Your Sailboat Is a Motor Boat

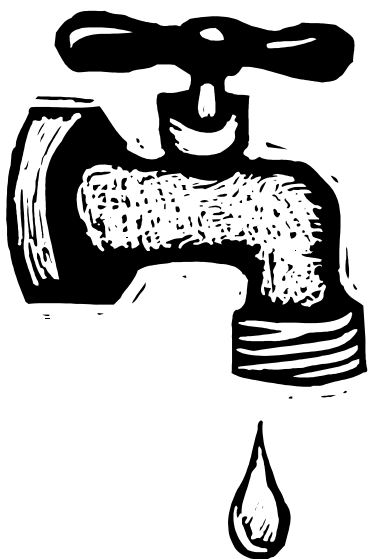
While taking *Great Reward*, their 40-foot O'Day sailboat, to Mobile Bay from East Chicago, Indiana, Barry and Elizabeth Edstene used their boom as a miniature mast to hold their VHF antenna, TV antenna, radar blipper and



windvane. They shipped the mast to make the trip easier, but still needed somewhere to store these necessary items. It also kept the boom off the deck and out of the way. Elizabeth added, “The trip south was spectacular, and we enjoyed every minute of it; we were, however, glad to have our mast stepped in Mobile and becoming a sailing vessel again!”

Squeeze Ball Technology

Norb Zebny, who has lived aboard *Rhapsody* in Punta Gorda for seven years, writes that a “squeeze ball” for use in line on outboard motor fuel systems, makes an excellent primer for diesel fuel when changing filters. Mount the squeeze ball in your fuel line between the tank and filter with hose clamps. Just pump the ball to fill the filter bowl



after changing, and keep on pumping to prime the engine. Although Norb says that he, fortunately, has not had to try it, he suggests that by using this squeeze ball technique you might be able to keep the engine running if the fuel pump takes a rest.

Crock Pot Solar Cooker

Nanci Whitley, aboard her Catalina 30, *The Journey*, says the crock pot will, in the full sun, cook anything unplugged that it usually cooks plugged in. She even bakes bread and cakes in it. And, yes, with a clear lid and a dark interior, it will work on cold, sunny days. Fill it with water, you'll be surprised how fast it gets hot enough for coffee.

Nanci, who is currently cruising the Florida Keys, says, “I've also cooked on my engine while underway. But I got the idea for the solar cooking from a news article about a woman who cooks this way, only with a very complicated foil-lined box. As I thought about it, I figured a crock pot would work, so I tried it, and it does! Since I have a 2-burner Origo and no oven, this “little oven” is perfect for me. It has the added benefits of not requiring supervision while cooking, and it doesn't heat up your cabin if you're in the tropics. Plus, it's impossible to burn anything.”

That's Using Your Head

Tammy Phillips and her husband, Bruce, are currently doing the Great Circle Loop aboard their 38' Vista motor yacht. They began in Geneva, New York, on June 15, 2001, and plan on returning this July. Tammy and Bruce sold their home before setting off and therefore have a lot of "stuff" on board — things that they didn't want to pack away for a great length of time. Tammy says, "Because of this, most of the lockers and closets are filled to capacity. And, while it is definitely a necessary item, I just hated to take up a whole locker with toilet paper, so I improvised. I purchased several spring-loaded curtain rods and put three in our forward day head. (We do not use this head for showers, so it stays dry.) I put curtain rods up over the side window in the sink alcove and over the head. By leaving the wrapping on the four rolls of paper and punching a hole through the ends you can hang two packages (eight rolls) in a rather small space. If you need to store more, just add more rods.

Cooking With a Thermos

Here's a recipe for cooking in a thermos. Doug Cooley's mom (a non-sailor) suggested he use this method aboard his Westsail 32. He says it's great for open sea, when the galley may not be the most comfortable place to hang out and prepare a meal.

Choose a glass-lined pint thermos with a narrow mouth (garage sales and thrift or second-hand stores are good places to look).

Fill the thermos with boiling water, then pour out.

Place $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of organically grown whole brown rice, oat groats, hulled barley, wheat berries, or lentils (either individually or in combination, e.g., lentils and rice) in the thermos.

Refill with boiling water.

Screw on cap (helps keep ingredients hot enough to cook).

Lay the thermos on its side. If you leave it standing up, only the bottom will cook. An old-fashioned lunch pail will hold two pint thermoses in the flat position for cooking and carrying.

By starting at night, you are assured of a hot breakfast the next morning (or next watch). It does not take eight hours to cook but will be kept ready to eat the next morning or even later. This simple recipe makes a good take-along lunch or supper and will cook in about three hours. If you fix it in the morning, you can have it for lunch, or you could fix it at noon and have nutritious food for supper.

If you add salt, do so only after the food has cooked (food salted first will not cook properly). Also, don't use more than $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of grain, or you'll find it hard to get out. You can also enjoy this simple dish with fruit, etc. After you have enjoyed your meal, wash the thermos bottle immediately, as it will be harder to wash after it dries.

Living Aboard offers a "Land Dwellers Scare Me" t-shirt to each contributor to "What Works." Submissions can be mailed, faxed, or e-mailed to: Living Aboard, P.O. Box 91299, Austin, Texas 78709-1299, fax (512) 892-4448, e-mail <editor@livingaboard.com>. Don't forget to give us your size and mailing address.