

How To Properly Set Boat Fenders



Okay, first things first...they're called **fenders**. Not bumpers. Yes, they do perform a bumping action to protect your boat from slamming into hard things. But the correct term is fenders. Whew! Glad we got that out of the way.

Learning when and how to properly use fenders is one of the simplest and easiest ways to protect your fiberglass, aluminum or wooden boat from the wear and tear of docks and pilings, and can add plenty to your boating experience when used to separate yourself from other boats when rafting up (tying multiple anchored boats together).

Just like putting a new roof on your house provides lots of protection, buying fenders is really not the sexiest item you can put in your shopping cart when at your local marine retailer. Cool electronics, funny t-shirts and wild watersports gear can turn your head. Fenders, well....not so much. Since they're relatively inexpensive, you might as well get at least four high-quality, matching fenders along with dock lines about three feet long. While there's not hard-and-fast rule about what size you need, 5-inch diameter by 20-inch long will serve you well on just about any boat under 30 feet.

When coming into a dock, get started early setting up your fenders, depending on how you will be pulling in. This is especially important if **speed efficiency** is an issue (such as pulling into a crowded fuel dock) or wind or current will be a factor, demanding your complete attention during the actual docking process. Remember, you don't have to deploy all the fenders, just the ones on the dockside.



Generally, you'll tie off your dock line to the dockside cleats a few inches above the waterline or so the fenders cross your rub rails about mid way. This will provide the best protection for your boat, especially if boat traffic and/or windy conditions have the water choppy. Once you've actually pulled up to the dock and tied off, double check that your fenders are right in the middle where your hull meets the dock and that you've used a **cleat hitch knot** so they'll stay put. To tie a cleat hitch, slip the dock line under one end of the clear and start a "figure 8," ending your last turn by turning the line under itself and pulling the line tight to lock it in place.

When leaving the dock, just keep the fenders in place until you've released the dock lines and you're safely away from the dock and other boats. Then remember to untie and properly stow the fenders before you get underway. Not only does it look pretty silly to have fenders still attached while you're running, but you run the risk of dropping them in the water and not noticing until you are long gone. Make sure you stow your fenders in the same place every time, with **dock lines still attached**, so they'll be ready to deploy the next time you head back to the dock.

Click on below for knot tying info:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=01paDemDYrU&inf_contact_key=a793a45f53804f9d5919a87b8228fa1d671622732ccb2f48d1510be3aea2d65f