

ANCHOR RODE

Depending on the size and type of your boat, your choices are an all-rope anchor rode, combination rope/chain, or all chain.

Rope should be nylon, either three-strand or braided. Nylon rope is elastic, making it a great shock absorber for sudden loads caused by wind and waves. Three-strand line should be medium lay, which has more twists per foot than soft lay. This is particularly important for use with a windlass, as the soft lay strands can untwist and separate, fouling the equipment. Three-strand rope can become awkward to handle, especially when hardened by salt saturation. An occasional bath in fabric softener will help to keep it supple.

Chain, used alone or in combination with rope, offers great benefits: it decreases the angle of pull on the anchor allowing it to set and hold more effectively, it's unaffected by chafe from rocks or sharp surfaces on the bottom, its weight forms a curve that absorbs shock loads in heavy weather. Hi-Test chain is made from higher carbon steel that has been surface-hardened. It has a higher strength-to-weight ratio than proof coil and is favoured by the weight-conscious, as it can reduce the weight in the bow by up to 30% without sacrificing strength.

What is the difference between twisted and braided anchor rope?

When buying anchor rope, you are likely to encounter two types of nylon rope: twisted and braided. All nylon rope makes an excellent choice for anchor rope and the difference between braided rope and twisted rope really comes down to stiffness and whether you need to splice the rope or not.

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|---------------------|---------------------|
| Twisted Rope | Braided Rope |
|---------------------|---------------------|



More stiff and less flexible.
Fairly easy to splice.
Generally less expensive.
Has more stretch than braided.
Has a tendency to kink or heckle.



Less stiff and more flexible.
Difficult to splice.
Frequently stronger than twisted rope.
Looks better.
Easier on the hands.
Less stretch than twisted rope.

| Suggested Minimum Working Rode Sizes* (For winds up to 30 knots.) | | | | |
|--|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| Boat Size | Beam (Sail) | Beam (Power) | Rope (Nylon) | Chain (Hi-Test) |
| 10~15' | 5~7' | 5~7' | 150' -1/2" | 1/4" |
| 20~25' | 8' | 9' | 150' -1/2" | 1/4" |
| 26~30' | 9' | 10' | 200' -1/2" | 1/4" |
| 31~35' | 10' | 11' | 200' -9/16" | 5/16" |
| 36~40' | 12' | 13' | 250' -9/16" | 5/16" |
| 41~45' | 13' | 14' | 250' -5/8" | 3/8" |
| 46~50' | 14' | 16' | 300' -5/8" | 3/8" |
| 51~60' | 16' | 19' | 350' -3/4" | 1/2" |

Source: West Marine (www.westmarine.com), Anchorlift (www.anchorlift.com), ABYC(America Boat & Yacht Council, www.abycinc.org)