

# Glossary

Abaft	Nearer to the stern of the ship or to the rear of the ship.
Abeam	Directly at right angles to the fore and aft line; also referred to as 'on the beam'.
Abreast	Two vessels at sea, steaming along close to one another and on parallel courses, with stems in line or nearly in line.
Abwehr	German military intelligence organisation from 1921 to 1944.
Action stations	The highest degree of readiness in a warship, in which all crew members are at a state of alert, weapons are manned and all major watertight doors are shut.
Admiralty	A British department of state. The ministerial head was known as the First Lord of the Admiralty.
Aft	Near the stern; toward the stern. Also referred to as after, as in 'after-steering' a steering compartment at the aft end of the ship.
Ahead	Directly in advance.
Amidships	Halfway between the stem and stern of a ship; the middle of the breadth of a ship anywhere in her length; an order to the helmsman. Often abbreviated to 'midships'.
ASDIC	Radio device for detecting underwater objects, particularly submarines; precursor to sonar.
Astern	Directly in rear. Also used with reference to the movement of a ship's main engines when required to reverse from going ahead.
Athwart	Across the ship; from side to side.
Athwartships	At right angles to the fore and aft line.
Australia Station	A Naval command area, consisting of the waters around the Australian continent and established in 1859, after the Crimean War. The Australia Station became the responsibility of the Commonwealth of Australia from the foundation of the Royal Australian Navy in 1913.
Australian Commonwealth Naval Board	The Australian counterpart of the Board of Admiralty, established in 1905, charged with the administration of all matters relating to the Australian Navy, in accordance with the policy laid down by the Australian Government and directed by the minister responsible for the Navy. Disbanded in 1976.

Avast	To stop; hold fast. The order to stop pulling or heaving on a rope.
Awash	Level with the surface of the water. The decks of a ship are awash when seas break onto them.
Beam	That part of the ship's side that lies between bow and quarter; can also denote the breadth of a ship.
Bearing	A relative direction from the source. 'Bearing green 45' means 45 degrees on the starboard (right) side from the source.
Belay	To secure (as a rope) by turns around a cleat; also to stop, to case, ignore the last instruction.
Bilge	That part of the ship near the keel. If a ship's bottom is stove in, she is said to be 'bilged'.
Board of Admiralty	An internal unit of administration of the Admiralty, charged with the control and administration of all matters relating to the British Navy, in accordance with the policy laid down by the Government and directed by the First Lord.
Boatswain	The boatswain, or bosun, was traditionally responsible for the rigging, sails and sailing equipment in a ship. Now the boatswain looks after the general working of the ship, especially with regard to maintenance and cleanliness of the ship's hull, superstructure, decks and holds. (Pronounced bo'sun)
Bollard	Circular metal or stone posts around which ropes are belayed.
Bow	The front part, or fore end, of the ship, immediately abaft the stem.
Bulkheads	Vertical partitions going across the ship or fore and aft.
Cable length	A nautical unit of measure equal to one-tenth of a nautical mile.
Carvel built	A boat built with its side planks meeting flush and not overlapping, giving smooth sides.
Cleats	A metal or wood fitting on a base with a projecting horn on each side of the centre for making ropes 'fast' by wrapping them under the horns.
Clinker built	A boat built with its side planks overlapping at their edge.
Coamings	The vertical plates built around a hatchway.

Compass points	<b>Compass point</b>	<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>True heading</b>
	North	N	0.00° or 360.00
	North by east	NbE	11.25°
	North-north-east	NNE	22.50°
	North-east by north	NEbN	33.75°
	<b>North-east</b>	NE	45.00°
	North-east by east	NEbE	56.25°
	East-north-east	ENE	67.50°
	East by north	EbN	78.75°
	<b>East</b>	E	90.00°
	East by south	EbS	101.25°
	East-south-east	ESE	112.50°
	South-east by east	SEbE	123.75°
	<b>South-east</b>	SE	135.00°
	South-east by south	SEbS	146.25°
	South-south-east	SSE	157.50°
	South by east	SbE	168.75°
	<b>South</b>	S	180.00°
	South by west	SbW	191.25°
	South-south-west	SSW	202.50°
	South-west by south	SWbS	213.75°
	<b>South-west</b>	SW	225.00°
	South-west by west	SWbW	236.25°
	West-south-west	WSW	247.50°
	West by south	WbS	258.75°
	<b>West</b>	W	270.00°
	West by north	WbN	281.25°
	West-north-west	WNW	292.50°
	North-west by west	NWbW	303.75°
	<b>North-west</b>	NW	315.00°
	North-west by north	NWbN	326.25°
	North-north-west	NNW	337.50°
	North by west	NbW	348.75°
Counter stern	A cut-away or elliptical type of stern in which the underside overhangs the rudder.		
Course	A compass direction steered by the helmsman of a ship; the angle in degrees between the north-south line of the compass.		
Crew	Although it is usual to refer to ratings as the crew, officers are also members of a ship's crew.		
Crow's nest	A small steel hut built high in a ship's superstructure and from which a seaman keeps his lookout.		

Cruiser	Best defined as the largest warship-type ship that could be built in numbers. It was in some ways a general-purpose warship designed to escort and assist battleships, protect merchant shipping and support destroyers, as well as bearing a part of the normal Naval burdens of shore bombardment, patrolling and scouting. The term originated in the 18th century, when a cruiser was any warship on detached duty. By 1939 international treaties had defined two separate types – the 10,000-ton (maximum) ‘heavy’ cruiser, which was armed with 8-inch guns, and the ‘light’ cruiser, which could equal the heavy cruiser in tonnage but had guns not larger than 6 inches.
Cruiser stern	A rounded stern; a much fuller underwater section compared with a counter stern.
Cutter	A small boat used by ships of war. A ship’s cutters are broader, deeper and shorter than the pinnaces; they are fitter for sailing and are commonly used for carrying stores, provisions, passengers, and so on, to and from the ship.
Damage control	The term used to describe the emergency control of situations that might cause the sinking of a ship. A common example is the isolation, by means of securing all hatches and openings, of a damaged compartment to prevent flooding into other compartments.
Davit	A curved steel column with a tackle fitted at its head and used in pairs for lifting lifeboats and swinging them over the side for lowering into the water.
Dead lights	A round steel cover that can be screwed down over a porthole to protect the glass from being broken by the force of heavy seas in a gale.
Dead water	The water in a vessel’s wake, close to her stern.
Department of Defence	A Commonwealth department continuously in existence since 1901. It was named the Department of Defence Co-ordination from 1939 to 1942. Its minister was president of the Naval Board from 1905 to 1915 and from 1921 to 1939. During these periods the department was responsible for Naval administration through the agency of Navy Office.
Department of the Navy	A Commonwealth department in the years 1915 to 1921 and 1939 to 1973, responsible for Naval defence. Its minister was president of the Naval Board at those times.
Derrick	A steel or wooden boom fitted to the lower end of a ship’s mast or to the deck for hoisting cargo into or out of the hold.

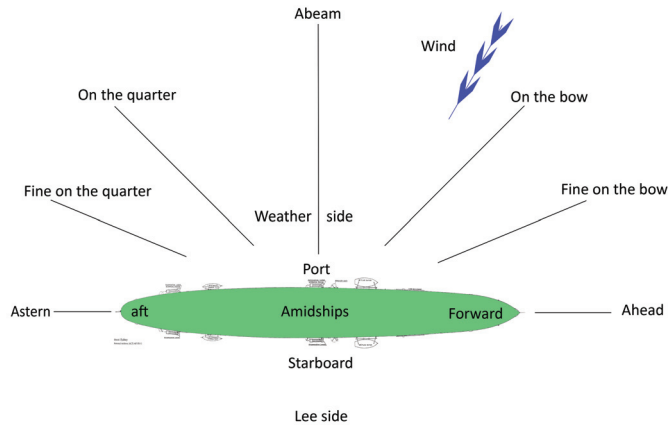
Draught	The depth of the lowest point of a ship below her water line.
Drift	The direction and distance an object is carried by current at sea.
Engine-room log	A book in which a watch-keeping engineer records particulars relating to the ship's engines during his watch.
Fathom	<i>see</i> Units of measure
Fend	To fend a boat is to prevent it striking against anything that might endanger it.
Fender	An object used to provide protection to the ship's side when berthing at a wharf or to another ship.
Flare	A long-lasting light used to attract attention.
Fleet	In Australia 'the Fleet' means the main seagoing force of ships and aircraft under the command of the senior Naval officer afloat.
Flotsam	The cargo of a wreck that is floating about or freed from the wreck.
Flush deck	When the deck has no raised or sunken part.
Fore and aft line	The line between stem and stern (that is, in line with the keel); in the direction of the length of the ship.
Forecastle	Also called fo'c'sle, the fore part of the upper deck; the deck right forward, just abaft the bow. (Pronounced foe'ksle)
Founder	A vessel founders if a leak or leaks cannot be controlled by pumps.
Galley	A ship's kitchen.
Gunwales or gunwhales	The top or upper edge of a boat's side planking. (Pronounced gunnels)
Halyards	Ropes used for hoisting flags, sails, pennants, and so on. Also spelt halliards.
<i>Handelsschutzkreuzer</i>	Merchant navy protection cruiser
<i>Handelsstörkreuzer</i>	Merchant shipping disruption cruiser

HAPAG	<p>The Hamburg–Amerikanische Packetfahrt Actien-Gesellschaft for shipping across the Atlantic Ocean was founded in Hamburg. In 1912 HAPAG built the first of the ‘big three’ ocean liners – the IMPERATOR. She was followed by her sisters VATERLAND and BISMARCK. BISMARCK was under construction at the outbreak of World War 1 and was completed after the war for the White Star Line as the MAJESTIC. These were the first liners to exceed 50,000 gross tons and 900 feet in length.</p> <p>During World War 1 the majority of HAPAG’s fleet of 175 ships were destroyed, and most of the surviving ships (including the big three) had to be turned over to the winning side as war reparations. HAPAG rebuilt its fleet with much smaller ships, but the fleet was again mostly destroyed during World War 2, and the surviving ships were turned over to the Allied powers.</p>
Hatches	Covers of hatchways that rest on the hatch beams.
Hectometre	The unit of distance used by the Kriegsmarine in World War 2 for the ranging of artillery weapons. Equal to 100 metres.
Helm	Steering gear, including the wheel of a ship; the place a ship is steered from.
Helmsman	The seaman steering the ship.
Hoist	To haul anything up by means of a rope. A string of flags making a signal is also known as a hoist.
HSK 8	The German Navy’s official designation for KORMORAN, used for administrative purposes.
Hull	The complete outside plating of a ship up to the level of the upper deck.
International Signal Code	A flag code used by vessels of all maritime nations for signalling.
Jury rig	A makeshift rig fitted temporarily to a ship to replace a damaged or broken rig – for example, jury mast, jury rudder.
Keel	A continuous line of steeling plating lying fore and aft along the bottom middle line of a ship. The ship is built up from the keel.
Knots	A measure of speed representing nautical distance over time.
Kriegsmarine	The German Navy.

Lee	In the lee means sheltered from the wind. The lee side of a ship is the side other than that onto which the wind is blowing directly.
Listing	The leaning of a vessel to port or to starboard.
Maierform	A form of ship body construction featuring a raked stem, a cruiser stern and large cargo capacity; named after Austrian Naval engineer Fritz Maier (1844–1926).
Master	The captain of a merchant vessel; the navigator in the old sailing men-of-war.
Midships	<i>see</i> Amidships
Naval Board	<i>see</i> Australian Commonwealth Naval Board
Naval Staff	At Navy Office, responsible for the collection, evaluation and dissemination of intelligence, the preparation and negotiation of plans, the conduct of operations, the study of the principles of Naval warfare, and the promulgation of tactical doctrine.
Navigator	The officer responsible for the safe passage of a vessel, pilotage in and out of port and through difficult navigational waters (with or without electronic navigation aids), and provision of specialist advice to the commanding officer in relation to technical ship-handling and tactical ship-routing scenarios. Also responsible for the maintenance of navigation equipment and charts.
Navy Office	The head office of Australia's Naval administration from 1905. It was the central administration of the Department of the Navy from 1915 to 1921 and from 1939 to 1973 and the head office of the Naval Branch of the Department of Defence from 1905 to 1915, from 1921 to 1939, and since 1973.
On the bow	A bearing midway between ahead and abeam.
On the quarter	A bearing midway between astern and abeam.
Parliamentary Inquiry	The Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade inquiry into the sinking of HMAS SYDNEY.
Pinnacle	A large rowing boat, more often a steam or motor launch 35 to 40 feet long.

<i>Peildeck</i>	Signal deck (German).
Pendant	A long flag, wider at the head (next to the mast) and tapering to a point. Also called a pennant.
Poop	The aftermast and the highest point of a large ship's hull. A poop deck is an exposed portal weather deck on the stern superstructure.
Port side	The left-hand side of the ship, looking forward.
Prize	A ship is seized as a prize when the officer in command is satisfied that the ship is an enemy ship and is liable to capture.
Prize officer	The prize officer is appointed to take charge of a ship seized as a prize, to navigate her to the port selected by the officer in command and to take charge of all papers and cargo on the seized ship.
Q message	A distress message, made by W/T, used by merchant ships to alert the Admiralty to the sighting of or upon being attacked by an armed merchant ship.
Quarter	A sector of the ship or the horizon from almost after to 45 degrees round on each side.
Quarterdeck	The after part of the upper deck.
R message	A wireless telegraphy message sent by a merchant ship and warning of attack by a raider or enemy surface vessel.
Rating	A sailor or seaman, as distinct from an officer.
Samson post	A strong vertical post or stump mast to which lines are attached for bearing loads.
Scuttle	To cause a vessel to sink.
Sea state	A summary description of the height, period, direction and swell of the ocean's surface waves at a given time and place.

## Shipboard directions



Degrees from the bow	Bearing
0°	Dead ahead
11°15'	1 point on starboard bow
22°30'	2 points on starboard bow
33°45'	3 points on starboard bow
45°	Broad on starboard bow
56°15'	3 points forward of starboard beam
67°30'	2 points forward of starboard beam
78°45'	1 point forward of starboard beam
90°	On starboard beam
101°15'	1 point abaft starboard beam
112°30'	2 points abaft starboard beam
123°45'	3 points abaft starboard beam
135°	Broad on starboard quarter
146°15'	3 points on starboard quarter
157°30'	2 points on starboard quarter
168°45'	1 point on starboard quarter
180°	Astern
191°15'	1 point on port quarter
202°30'	2 points on port quarter
213°45'	3 points on port quarter
225°	Broad on port quarter
236°15'	3 points abaft port beam
247°30'	2 points abaft port beam
258°45'	1 point abaft port beam
270°	On port beam
281°15'	1 point forward of port beam
292°30'	2 points forward of port beam
303°45'	3 points forward of port beam
315°	Broad on port bow
326°15'	3 points on port bow
337°30'	2 points on port bow
348°45'	1 point on port bow
360°	Dead ahead

Spallation	A process in which fragments (spall) are ejected from a body as a result of impact or stress. Spallation as a result of impact can occur with or without penetration of the object creating the impact.
Stability	A ship's ability to return to the upright position when the force that heeled her over has been removed.
Starboard side	The right-hand side of a ship, looking forward.
Stem	The extreme forward part of a vessel.
Stern	The extreme rear part of a vessel.
Stove in	Broken by an external force.
Superstructure	Cabins, navigating rooms, masts, and so on, built above the top continuous deck of a ship.
Swell	Long, undulating movements on the sea's surface.
Tackle	A rope or line run through a number of blocks and forming a purchase, or tackle. This gives additional power when pulling by hand or mechanically.
Trim	The position in which a ship floats, either perfectly horizontal (on an even keel) or down by the stern (deeper after) or bow (deeper forward).
Units of measure	1 nautical mile = 1.852 kilometres = 18.52 hectometres 1 kilometre = 10 hectometres = 0.53 nautical mile 1 fathom = 1/1000 nautical mile = 2 yards = 6 feet = 1.82 metres 1 yard = 3 feet = 36 inches = 0.91 metres = 91.4 centimetres 1 inch = 2.54 centimetres = 25.4 millimetres
Waist	The midship part of the upper deck aft in the stern.
Watches	Periods of duty at sea, each traditionally four hours long.
Watertight	Having the strength and ability to keep out water.
Wave length	The distance between the summits of two adjacent waves.
Welin gear	AB Welin, a Swedish company founded in 1901, supplies safety equipment to ships, including davits, embarkation ladders, winches and lifeboat hooks.
Well decks	The lengths of deck between and below raised decks.
Whaler	A long, double-ended rowing boat.