

MOORING UP

Mooring spaces on the river are at a premium and you are usually expected to move on every 24 hours.



- As the water level in the river may fluctuate, tie up with the stern out into deep water (without causing any obstruction) so that if the river drops you have some chance of manoeuvring if the bow is aground. Allow some slack in your ropes at night for the same reason.
- Upstream of Oxford most moorings are rural and free of charge. The Environment Agency also provides free 24hour sites (see User's Guide). In towns and other popular spots a mooring fee may be payable and as the bank could be privately owned, please be prepared to seek permission to moor if necessary.
- At night, for additional security, lower your anchor.
- At busy times please raft out with friends to save space and moor considerably to one end of the available space. Facilities such as Pump Outs, Water Points and Pubs(!) also become very busy. Courtesy is not to raft out to someone you do not know without their permission first.

FLOW CONDITIONS

- When the flow of the river increases to a specific level large YELLOW boards are displayed at the locks with the narrative **CAUTION-STREAM INCREASING.** In these conditions proceed with caution or find a safe mooring.
- If flow continues to increase, large RED boards are displayed at locks and at some entry points with narrative **CAUTION-STRONG STREAM.**

**CAUTION
STREAM
INCREASING**

**CAUTION
STRONG
STREAM**

Boaters are strongly advised not to enter the river or navigate in these conditions.

Remember all visitors to the Thames must register their craft either at the first lock or in advance via our reading office (Address and Number Below).

You will be given a free copy of 'A User's Guide to the River Thames' when you register your boat or they are available from any lock or Patrol Launch. It is full of important information for your visit.



We do hope you have found these tips useful and that you enjoy all the Thames has to offer.

Visiting the Tideway?
Telephone 0181 940 8723
For up to date tide times and transit information



ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

Kings Meadow House, Kings Meadow Road, Reading Berkshire RG1 8DQ
Telephone: 01189 535000

NARROWBOATS ON THE THAMES

Useful Hints and Tips



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WELCOME TO THE RIVER THAMES

These are just a few thoughts to help you enjoy cruising on the Thames especially if this is your first visit. The Thames is home to a wide variety of water based activities and events and you will meet boats of all shapes and sizes - from tugs towing barges to rowing eights - from passenger steamers to punts. Look out for divers, swimmers, sailing and rowing regattas, even Poohsticks competitions!

GENERAL HINTS AND TIPS

First of all, feel free to ask any of the Navigation Staff if you need assistance or local information. They will be pleased to help.

Please, read your User's Guide to the River Thames. It is full of useful information, and with the following advice should ensure a safe and enjoyable trip.



- Flow can be a friend or foe. On a quiet stretch of river, learn what effect it has on your boat and use it to your advantage. Do have an anchor ready for immediate use.
- Boats travelling **Downstream** have priority at bridges, narrows, and anywhere two boats cannot pass.
- On bends it may be very shallow on the inside so do not cut corners! You may need to slow down or stop to allow another vessel to clear the bend so that you can take a suitable line for the draught of your boat.

USING THAMES LOCKS

Most Thames locks are quite different to those you will find on other inland navigations. These simple guidelines will help you safely through the locks.



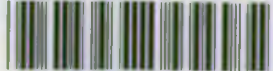
- Tie up on the lay-by as near to the lock as possible moving along in the queue. At busy times, it may be necessary to breast-up to make room for others.
- Follow the instructions of the Lock-keeper; there may be boats which you cannot see about to leave the lock chamber. For safety reasons larger vessels may be called in first - you will not be "queue jumped" - wait to be called in and position yourself where asked. Not all locks are the same so systems may vary from lock to lock.
- Have someone ready with the bow rope, and the stern rope if enough crew are to hand.

*Remember --
stern rope around
the bollard before the
bow rope and use reverse to slow the
boat to a stop. Our deepest lock is about 9 feet
drop so you will need ropes twice this length.*

- At the larger locks downstream of Oxford, you may be asked to go "down the middle" or breast up to other boats. This may make cruiser owners nervous but take your time and move slowly into the required position. Please use your side fenders in busy locks. Your concern for other boats will be appreciated.
- When the boat is stationary stop your engine, primarily to improve safety and also to reduce noise and fumes. If you have a 'Hot bulb', semi diesel (e.g. Bolinder type), or an engine which is difficult to start, tell the keeper in advance, he will arrange to "lock you through" so that you can keep it running.
- Restart your engine when it is your turn to leave the lock.
- Please do not push lock gates open with your boat as this may cause damage.
- The Lock Keeper is not always on duty (see A User's Guide to the River Thames for details). You will be able to operate the locks out of lock keeper hours, but remember to display full navigation lights after sunset.

**Travelling after sunset?
Full Navigation Lights
Required - not just a
Tunnel Light!**

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