

ADVISORY BOARD

Mr Greg Adams
Briggs Marine Supplies
Mr Alan Hurst
Yaringa Boat Sales
Mr Peter Tardrew
Quarterdeck Marine Pty Ltd
Mr Tom Whitfield
T&C Whitfield Boatbuilders



WOODEN BOAT FITTINGS

43 FINCHAM CRESCENT

WANNIASSA, ACT 2903, AUSTRALIA

TEL: +61 2 6296 1409

E-MAIL: mail@woodenboatfittings.com

WEB: www.woodenboatfittings.com

SETTING AND REMOVING PLUGS

Plugs are used to cover the heads of the bolts or screws used in attaching most fittings to a vessel. All our fittings which require plugs come with sufficient provided. They are cut from the same wood as the fitting itself, to ensure mechanical and colour homogeneity.

Once the fitting has been fastened permanently in place, proceed to insert the plugs to cover the heads of the fasteners as follows –

- Coat the bottom and side of each plug with varnish, oil, or paint that will match the final surface-colour of the fitting. *Do not use glue on the plug (particularly epoxy,)* as any later required removal of the plug will almost certainly result in damage to the fitting.
- By looking down on it, make sure that the plug is turned so that its grain aligns with the surface grain of the fitting. Then tap the plug gently home into the hole over the head of the fastening. This should not be a force-fit, and some minor sanding of the plug may possibly be necessary before insertion. The plug needs to be inserted at least 1/8" into the hole (the hole provided in our fittings will allow for this,) *but it should not be forced home against the head of the fastener.*
- Once the varnish has had a chance to set, use a sharp chisel to remove that part of the plug standing proud of the surface. The chisel should be wider than the width of the plug. Look sideways at the plug to determine which way the grain runs, then using the chisel bevel-down tap the plug smartly *about half-way up the exposed part,* in the apparent "up-grain" direction. The top of the plug will shear off in such a way as to show the true grain direction (either up from the chisel edge, or down towards the hole.) Once this has been established, use the chisel in the true up-grain direction until the plug has been taken down almost to the surface of the fitting. (Two or three more cuts will probably be sufficient.)
- Finish with a final sanding to bring the plug's surface flush with the fitting, prior to finishing the plug to match the fitting's surface finish.

[contd.]

WE HELP PEOPLE COMPLETE CLASSIC BOATS AUTHENTICALLY

Horn cleats	Jam cleats	Thumb cleats	Thimbles	Masthoops
Beeblocks	Belaying pins	Blocks	Deadeyes	Bullseyes
Saddles	Fairleads	Toggles	Pennant staffs	Jackstaffs

TO REMOVE A PLUG, first drill a pilot hole through its centre for a screw of about 10 to 12 gauge. Drive the screw straight into the pilot hole, continuing to turn it once it has bottomed out on the bolt-head underneath. If the plug was not set with glue, this action should result in the bond breaking and the whole plug being neatly removed from the hole without damage to the hole's edges.

If this method is not successful you will need to drill out the entire plug. A centre-bit or spade-bit of the same diameter as the plug, and with the leading point ground down short, will probably be found to be the best tool to use, but care must be taken to see that it is truly centred if the entire plug is to be removed while the hole's edges remain undamaged.

If damage occurs nevertheless, drill a new hole for a plug the next size up, cut such a plug to suit (using a "plug-cutting" tool designed for the purpose,) and proceed from there.

[Note: Whenever plugging, do not be tempted to use a dowel instead of a properly-cut plug. A dowel's grain direction is such that water can be wicked into the wood by capillary action once the surface coating wears, and this in turn can allow rot to occur in the plug and then also in the fitting.]


