

Glossary of Naval Terms

- FLIGHT DECK:** deck of an aircraft carrier on which planes take off and land.
- FORECASTLE:** upper deck in the forward part of ship. Pronounced "foke'sul"; abbreviated fo'c'sle.
- FORWARD:** toward the bow; opposite of aft.
- GAFF:** small spar abaft the mainmast from which the national ensign is flown when the ship is underway.
- GIG:** one of the ship's boats designated for commanding officer's use.
- HEAD:** compartment of a ship having toilet facilities.
- HOLIDAY ROUTINE:** routine followed aboard ship on authorized holidays and Sundays.
- ISLAND:** superstructure on an aircraft carrier; contains conning tower, navigation bridge, etc.
- KEEL:** backbone of a ship running from sternpost to stem-at the bottom.
- KNOT:** one nautical mile per hour. (Never say "KNOTS PER HOUR". This would be the same as saying "Miles Per Hour".) Also a knot tie, or fastening formed with rope.
- LAY:** a preliminary order, such as "Lay Below".
- LORAN:** (long range navigation) a navigational system that fixes the position of a ship by measuring the difference in the time of reception of two synchronized radio signals.
- MAIN DECK:** highest complete deck extending from stem to stern and from side to side.
- OFFICER OF THE DECK:** the officer on watch in charge of the ship.
- OVERHEAD:** on a ship, equivalent to the ceiling of a building ashore.
- PLAN OF THE DAY:** schedule of day's routine and events ordered by executive officer; published daily at a shore activity and aboard ship.
- PORT:** left side of a ship facing forward; a harbor; an opening in the ship's side for light and air is also a PORT.
- QUARTERDECK:** that part of the main (or other) deck reserved for honors and ceremonies and as the station of the OOD in port.
- QUARTERS:** living space; assembly of the crew; all hands assembled at established stations for muster, drills, or inspection.
- READY ROOM:** compartment on aircraft carriers in which pilots assemble for flight orders.
- SCUTTLEBUTT:** container of drinking water, or a drinking fountain. Also a rumor, usually of local importance.
- SECOND DECK:** complete deck below the main deck.
- SECURE:** to make fast; to tie; an order given on completion of a drill or exercise, meaning to withdraw from drill stations and duties.
- SIDE LIGHTS:** red and green running lights carried on port and starboard sides, respectively.
- SQUARE AWAY:** to get things settled down or in order.
- STARBOARD:** right side of ship looking forward.
- UNDERWAY:** a ship is underway when not at anchor, made fast to the shore, or aground. She need not be actually moving; she is underway as long as she lies free in the water.
- WARDROOM:** officer's mess and lounge aboard ship.
- WATERTIGHT INTEGRITY:** system of keeping ship afloat by maintaining watertightness.