

A

AB; able-bodied seaman
abandon; to leave
abdominal; having to do with stomach area
abeam; position on either side of a ship, at right angles to the length of a vessel
abnormal; not normal
abroad; in a foreign country
absolute humidity; the mass of water vapour present in a unit volume of moist air
abyssal depth; at the bottom or deepest part of the ocean
access; the act of entering or approaching e.g. a port
accident; an unintended event involving fatality, injury, ship loss or damage, other property loss or environmental damage
accident at sea; unexpected event that causes damage, injury or death
accommodation; place for crew and passengers in cabins
accommodation ladder; a ladder attached to platform at vessel's side with flat steps and handrails for persons to embark and disembark, also: gangway
accomplish; to complete, to succeed in doing something
account; a statement of monetary transactions
acid rain; rain full of harmful chemicals
actuate; to put into action or motion, to make something operate
actuator; a motor providing some motion
adjacent; next to
adjustable; being able to suit, adaptable
adrift; floating without a clearly determinable direction, esp. of a vessel at sea without power
adverse weather; unfavourable weather conditions
afloat; floating on the surface of the water
A-frame; a structural element of an engine in the form of the letter A, also: engine bed
aft; at, near or towards the stern
ahead; in front of something or somebody, esp. with reference to own ship
air compressor; a machine for increasing pressure of air in order to condense it
air conditioning compressor; a mechanical device which controls the coolant of air condition unit
air pollution; a substance in the air, that is harmful to humans and the environment
air starting valve; a valve that admits compressed air to the air starter
air-fuel ratio; the ratio (by weight and volume) between air and fuel
algae; small and simple plants in or near the water
alignment; an arrangement in a straight line
alleged; so-called, declared but without proof, presumed
allowance; 1. an amount of something that you are allowed to do 2. an amount of money that you or your family members get 3. DSA – daily subsistence allowance, money allowed daily to a person for food and other expenses
alloy; a substance that is a mixture of two or more metals
alongside; along the quay, along the ship's side
amenity; a structure, such as a swimming pool or shopping centre, that is intended to make life more pleasant or comfortable for the people in a town, hotel or other place (plural: amenities)

amidships; in the middle part of the ship
anchor; a heavy piece of ship's equipment, usually of cast iron, attached to a vessel's bow by a chain and dropped overboard so as to keep a boat or ship in place
anchor dragging; moving of an anchor over the sea bottom involuntarily because it is no longer preventing the movement of the vessel
anchorage; a place allocated by the authorities for ships to anchor
angle; the difference in direction between two straight lines or surfaces meeting in one point, commonly measured in degrees or radians
anti-clockwise; in the opposite direction to the movement of the hand of the clock or watch
anti-fouling; protection of the ship's hull by using chemicals or other cleaning methods
approximately; about, roughly, close to
arresting gear; a device used to hold a hook-equipped aircraft in a routine or emergency landing
asphalt; a black sticky substance mixed with sand or small stones to form a strong surface when it hardens
assembly; parts fitted together to make a whole
assembly station; a place on deck or in messrooms assigned to crew and passengers where they have to meet according to the muster list when the corresponding alarm is released
astern; towards the stern, at the stern of the ship
astern of; behind the ship
asthma; a respiratory disorder, often of allergic origin
atmospheric; relating to the atmosphere or the air
automotive; having to do with cars or motor vehicles
auxiliary; helping, supporting, ancillary
auxiliary boiler; a boiler which maintains steam pressure when the engine is in standby mode
auxiliary engine; the engine used for manoeuvring purposes and when the main engine breaks down
average; normal, ordinary, medium in value, arithmetic mean
awareness; the ability to perceive, feel or be conscious of events
axial; axis of the Earth, the line round which the Earth rotates
axial force; (of propellers) force acting along the ship's fore and aft line and pushing the ship ahead, also: axial thrust
axial thrust; see: axial force

B

backing wind; the wind which blows round by changing direction in an anticlockwise manner
bag; sack made of paper, cloth or plastic capable of being closed at the mouth
bale capacity; space available for the stowage of baled cargo in ship's holds, measured in cubic feet
ballast; heavy matter such as sand, stone or water that is used at the bottom of a ship to make it heavier and improve the stability
ban; to forbid, especially officially
bareboat charter; a contract for the hire of a vessel only, without crew, stores, fuel and the like, also: charter by demise
barge; a flat-bottomed vessel, usually intended to be towed or pushed, for transporting cargo or passengers, also: lighter
barge carrier; a vessel which usually carries lighters or flat-bottomed barges on board

barnacle; a small sea creature with a shell that sticks very tightly and in large numbers to rocks and the bottom of boats

barometer; an instrument used to measure atmospheric pressure

barrel; 1. a large, cylindrical, wooden container with flat, circular ends 2. a unit of capacity used in the oil and other industries, normally equal to 42 U.S. gallons or 35 Imperial gallons 3. drum (of a windlass or winch)

beacon; a guiding or warning signal such as a light or fire in elevated position, a lighthouse on a shore or a signal buoy at a dangerous area at sea to warn or guide vessels

beacon buoy; a seamark with a spar and a light

beam; 1. the maximum breadth of a ship 2. a steel girder across the ship carrying the deck 3. ship's side (on the port/starboard beam)

bearing; 1. direction relative to one's own position or to the compass 2. (in marine engineering) a support, guide, or locating piece for a rotating shaft or axle

bend; 1. to force an object into a curved line 2. (of a line) to attach or fasten a line to a cleat, bitt or another line

berth; 1. a place for securing a vessel (for conducting commercial operations) 2. a bed in a passenger cabin 3. distance (give this object a wide berth means keep well clear of)

bilge; 1. almost flat part of the ship's bottom into which dirty water drains from the cargo holds 2. the widest part of a barrel

bilge pump; a device for pumping dirty water from the bilges

bill of lading; a document stating that goods have been shipped on board and are to be delivered to a consignee at a port of destination, also: B/L

biochemistry; the scientific study of the chemistry of living things

bitt; 1. a bollard, a pair of strong posts of iron projecting above the deck of a ship, used for securing cables, lines for towing etc. 2. (on shore) a strong metal post mounted on a wharf, quay, etc., used for securing mooring lines

B/L; see: bill of lading

blade; the arm of a propeller or other similar turning mechanism such as an electric fan or turbine

blank; to cover over

blank bill of lading; bill of lading to the bearer of the document

blank flange; a flange which covers the open end of the pipe

blast; a sound of the ship's siren or whistle

blast of wind; a strong gust of wind

blind sector; an area which cannot be scanned by the ship's radar because it is hidden by parts of its superstructure or shore obstructions, a sector which cannot be seen

blizzard; snow storm

blower; a device for increasing the weight of air supplied to a cylinder, driven mechanically, electrically or by exhaust gas turbine

boarding arrangements; all equipment, such as pilot ladder, accommodation ladder, hoist, etc. necessary for safe transfer of the pilot

boarding speed; mutually agreed speed of a vessel for pilot to embark

boiler; a tank, in which water is turned to steam for heating

bollard; a strong post on the quay for mooring, also on ship's deck

bolt; a piece of metal used with a nut to hold two things together

booster pump; a pump used to increase pressure in a liquid line, or to pull liquid from a tank and pressurize a system

bore; 1. to make a hole in or through, with a drill or an engine cylinder diameter 2. the width of a cylinder

bottom dead centre; the exact bottom of the piston stroke in a reciprocating engine or pump

bottom-dwelling; to dwell attached to or close to the bottom

bow; the fore part of the ship, forward end of the ship

bow thruster; a device which assists ship handling by moving the bow or stern laterally

box; a container, case or receptacle

brackish water; slightly briny or salty water

branch line; a pipe of smaller size connected to the main line

brash ice; floating bits of sea ice or river ice

break bulk carrier; see: break bulk vessel

break bulk vessel; a ship which carries packaged goods, usually manufactured, for individual consignees and has to be loaded and unloaded piece by piece at each port of transfer, formerly referred to as general cargo or piece goods, also: break bulk carrier

breakdown; 1. (of an engine) failure to function 2. (in statistics) division into sections or parts

bridge; the place from which a ship is steered

broken stowage; the empty space which is not taken up by the cargo (usually not chargeable and therefore useless)

broker; an agent or intermediary, acting on behalf of a principal, who buys or sells goods, securities, etc., in return for a commission

brokerage; fee or commission payable by a shipowner to a shipbroker for the successful negotiation of a charter

brown water; the littoral areas, from the coast and estuarial areas to perhaps a hundred miles from shore. It is the most important maritime arena, including all coastal traffic and territorial waters, in which are found the great majority of a nation's maritime police, customs, environmental, and economic concerns.

bucket; 1. a deep, round container with a flat bottom and a curved handle, used to carry water, coal, ores and other bulk cargoes (e.g. a bucket wheel loader/unloader) 2. pail, a deep cylindrical vessel with a flat bottom for holding or carrying water, a bailer

bulb; the very front bulb-like part of a bow below waterline intended to reduce a vessels resistance to motion

bulk cargo; unpacked, loose cargo carried in large quantities, e.g. iron ore, coal, grain, etc.

bulk carrier; a single-deck ship designed to carry dry cargoes such as grain or coal in bulk, also: bulker

bulk chemicals; chemicals transported in bulk (i.e. loose) and not in packages or containers

bulker; see: bulk carrier

bulkhead; a wall-like transverse structure inside the vessel forming watertight compartments

bundle; several objects or pieces bound together, e.g. goat skins in bundles

bunkering; supplying a ship with fuel

buoy; a floating device used as an aid to navigation

buoyage; a system of marking the fairways and roads with buoys

burner; the principal device for the firing of oil and/or gas

burns and scalds; damage to a skin after burning oneself

bushing; a renewable lining for a hole in which a shaft, rod, or similar part moves

byelaw; see: by-law

by-law; local rules and regulations, usually national, regional or municipal, or referring to a port authority, company rules and regulations

