

Uncle Al and Marc Bennett present a fully illustrated step-by-step

Geezers' Guide to Roll Tack Procedure

<p>This guide is dedicated to my daughter, Joanna, whose second words in this life - uttered clear as a bell during a silent moment at dinner - were "roll tack".</p>	
helm	crew
<p>1. warns crew of impending tack</p>	<p>1. if using a continuous jib sheet, ensures that feet are inside triangle formed by the sheet as it runs from the jib clew, through both jib fairleads, and back to the clew - takes up slack on the "windward" jib sheet - uncleats leeward jib sheet - informs helm that all is set</p>
<p>2. uncleats main, moves to windward deck if not already sitting there and puts helm alee</p>	<p>2. moves to windward deck if not already there - can release "old" jib sheet now or, for a really crisp tack, hold "old" jib sheet until jib "backs"</p>
<p>3. steers through a 90° turn - lets main fill enough to promote heel to the new leeward side, then eases mainsheet as required to (a) avoid excess heel, and (b) let the boom out far enough that standing up without hitting one's head or catching the PFD is reasonably easy</p>	<p>3. as the main fills on the new leeward side, crew tips forward across the centreboard, landing with his forward hand on the windward forward bench while straightening his aft arm (the one holding the "new" jib sheet) out towards/over the windward deck until he feels reasonable tension for the conditions on the new sheet - if in doubt, he undersheets!</p>
<p>4. straightens tiller to stop the turn - stands up, facing the new windward side - takes one step across the boat, still facing the windward side - lets mainsheet slide through forward hand only as necessary to maintain reasonable angle of heel</p>	<p>4. ready to move to the new windward side faster if the helm should fall or have other difficulties</p>
<p>5. still standing and holding a straight course, helm calmly turns to face forward in the boat, putting his tiller hand behind his back, and maintaining control of his mainsheet with the other hand - as the full 180° turn is completed, the tiller arm will become bent at 90° - hand that is holding mainsheet is now the aft hand and will reach back to take hold of tiller extension - once a grip is secured, the other hand (the one that is now the forward hand) can let go of tiller, reach around in front and grab the mainsheet</p>	<p>5. maintaining reasonable tension on the jib sheet, crew straightens up, steps across the centreboard box, turns to face aft and then completes his 180° turn. Speed of this manoeuvre is proportional to the need for hiking once the tack is completed.</p>
<p>6. once mainsheet and tiller are under control, the helm sits down on the deck (or further amidships if lack of wind requires it), and as he does so, the helm cranks the mainsheet back into its closehauled setting.</p>	<p>6. Once his turn is completed and he has sat down, the crew will fine-tune the jib sheet by bringing it in slightly (since he has been making sure the jib is slightly undersheeted until this point) In lighter conditions, the crew will move to windward slowly or not at all if lack of wind demands this.</p>

illustrations



Marc warns Al of upcoming tack - Al uses aft hand to remove slack from the "new" sheet



Al has now uncleated jib sheet with forward hand, while aft hand holds "new" jib sheet



As Marc puts the helm down, Al will move up onto the deck



the mainsheet remains under tension but has been uncleated by the helm



When he is the crew, Marc likes to keep tension on the "old" jib sheet until we are past head to wind, after which he snaps it over onto the new leeward side



As the boat completes its turn, the helm eases the main sheet as required



The main is now full on the new tack, but the helm has eased it just enough to prevent excessive heel. Here, the helm stands up and prepares to take one step across the boat. The crew meanwhile, is tipping himself forward, grabbing the windward bench with his forward hand. That grip secured, he will shove his aft hand out the windward side, until he feels jib sheet tension. At this point, he will let the sheet slide through his hand to avoid overtensioning this sheet.



Marc (the helm here) turns to face forward. As he completes his 180° turn, his tiller arm will briefly end up behind his back. Al (crew here) meanwhile, faces aft to initiate **his** turn. Note how both main and jib are slightly eased. At this point, neither helm nor crew are watching the sails which are being trimmed by "feel", i.e. tension relative to wind strength, angle of heel, etc.



Al has just used his "mainsheet hand" to multitask by grabbing the tiller from his right hand that had been holding it behind his back. His right hand will now reach around in front and grab the mainsheet, and the tack will be complete!!