

**Running**

If you think running has to be easy because you have the wind at your back, think again. Running can be tricky, even dangerous. Running before a strong wind can capsize a boat. (Or your craft may *broach*, which means it will swing broadside to the wind, lose headway, and leave you at the wind's mercy. Your best bet is to let the main boom swing as far forward as it will go without causing the mainsail to luff (flap loosely). Also, keep a firm, steady hand on the tiller.

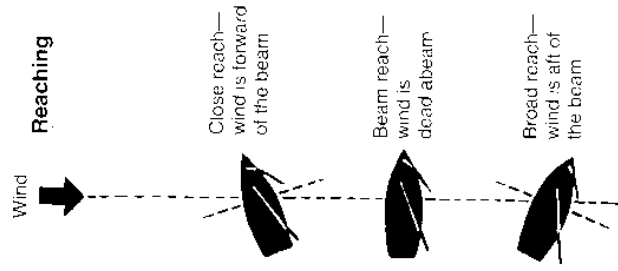
**Reaching**

Reaching, or sailing across the wind, is probably the easiest of the three. You have the power of the wind at your *side*—neither dangerously pushing you from behind nor stubbornly resisting you from the front. Set your course, then set your sails at the angle that will keep you on this course. Usually more sail is exposed to the wind in reaching, which makes it the fastest point of sailing.

**Beating**

If your course is north, say, and the wind is coming at you from the north, you are in the “no-go area” and you have a problem, which is that it is impossible to sail directly into the wind. You can solve the problem by beating—doing a series of tacks right and left of an imaginary line between start and finish known as your course line, or baseline.

You sail on the starboard tack for a distance, as close to the wind as you can, then switch to the port tack and sail for a

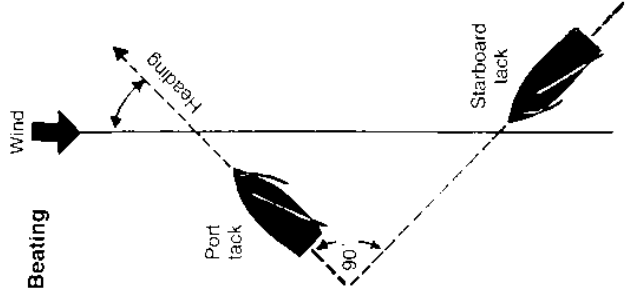


**Reaching**

Close reach—wind is forward of the beam

Beam reach—wind is dead abeam

Broad reach—wind is aft of the beam



**Beating**

similar distance, equally close to the wind. Keep alternating this way, and each tack will bring you closer to your finish point.

Beating is a little like going up a steep mountain via a series of switchbacks. It's too steep to go straight up; you gain altitude gradually by taking gentler slopes to the right and left.

Does tacking take you out of your way—force you to cover more distance than a direct route would? Yes, but it gets you there.

Tacking works best when the mainsail and the jib are set to work together properly. Neither must be trimmed too flat or cased too much. If the mainsail luffs, the helmsman might be sailing too close to the wind. This is called *pinching* the boat. Or, the mainsail might not be trimmed enough or the jib might be trimmed too flat.

If the jib luffs, it might not be trimmed flat enough, or the boat might be sailing too close to the wind. Ease off.

A word to the helmsman: Whether you're running, reaching, or beating, you're in charge of the tiller. Give it plenty of room to move, but don't let it take over. If you lose control of the tiller, you lose control of the boat.

**Jibing**

To *jibe* (sometimes spelled *gybe*) means to swing the boat's stern so that the boom swings across the boat and the wind is brought from one quarter to the other. (In jibing, the stern passes through the wind, as opposed to in tacking, when the bow passes through the wind.)

To make a *flying jibe*, bear off before the wind with the main boom out all the way. When the wind catches the backside of the sail near the end of the boom, it will send the boom flying across the boat, which, if you are not careful, can put a strain on the boat and you.