

## Words That Have Made Their Way from Nautical Language into Everyday English



Many phrases that have been adopted into everyday use originate from seafaring. We often use them but seldom endeavour to delve into their origins. Here is a list of words that have been borrowed from the nautical language.



### All aboard!

This first one was a call warning passengers to get on a ship that was about to depart.

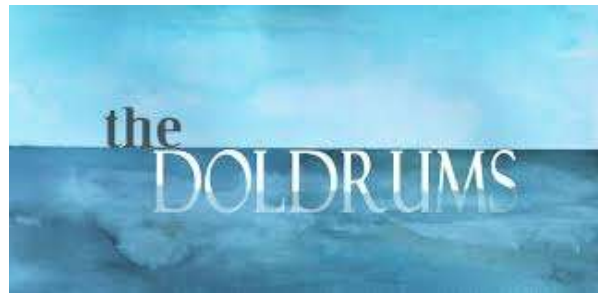


### Give a Wide Berth

Meaning: Leave space for, veer around

At sea, a berth is a place where a ship drops its anchor. In harbours, a berth is allocated to boats within it. However, any boat or ship will still move with the tide when anchored to the degree that the length of its anchor rope limits its movement.

Hence, it always sensible to give other ships a wide berth, or plenty of room, to prevent accidents.



### Down in the Doldrums

**Meaning:** not making progress

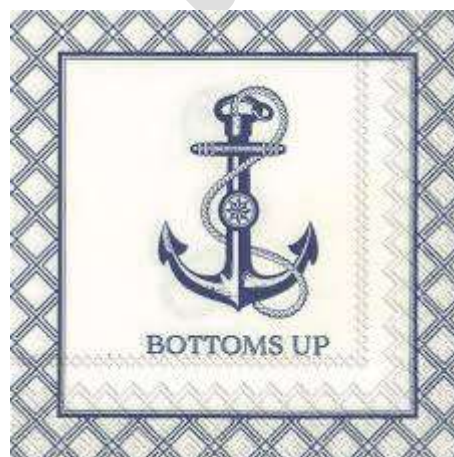
**Origin:** This idiom was used by sailors to describe a situation in which no wind was present especially near the Equator. At a time when sailors relied solely on wind power, this meant they would be stuck at sea.



### Turn the Corner

**Meaning:** Pass a critical point on the way to somewhere better or safer

**Origin:** This idiom is believed to have been first used by sailors who had passed the Cape of Good Hope at the southern tip of Africa and/or Cape Horn at the southern tip of South America.



### Bottoms Up

**Meaning:** An encouragement to drink or to finish one's drink

**Origin:** This imperative is believed to come from a time when English sailors were sometimes tricked into joining the navy. The trick involved giving the unsuspecting man a beer with a coin at the bottom. Once the poor man had hold of the coin, he was deemed to have accepted payment and was swiftly enrolled into the Royal Navy.

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### **Sources (PICS)**

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