

21. The boat is leveled both fore-and-aft and athwartships, then marked for the painted waterline.

The Waterline

Making a painted waterline on a lap-strake boat is a nuisance, although it improves its looks. I'd avoid it if I were planning to dry-sail the boat. But if you want to leave the boat in the water, especially salt water, you'll need to use antifouling paint on the bottom, and marking a level waterline is in your future.

I think the easiest way to mark a waterline on a small boat is to set it on a flat floor and block it up so that it is level athwartships and fore-and-aft. Then set your dividers to the proper width, as shown on the plans, and, being very careful to keep them vertical, mark around the boat. You might find it easier to use a block of wood of the proper height with a pencil riding on top (Photo 21). These lines will probably be a bit wiggly—try to even them out with masking tape when you paint the bottom.

Looked at from below, the waterline of a lapstrake boat takes a funny little reverse jog where it crosses each lap. Don't worry too much about this—just keep in mind that when you are looking at the boat from the side, the waterline should appear as a single straight line.

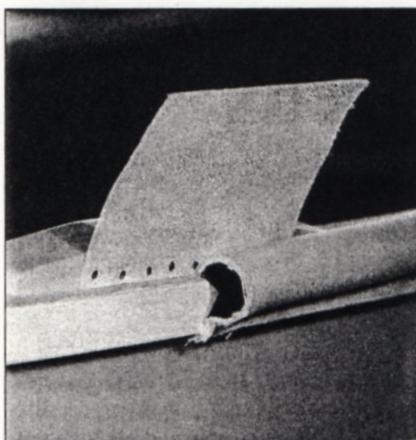
Gunwale Guard

If your peapod is to be left at a float with other boats, or is going to be a tender to a yacht, she had better have some gunwale guard. By far the best is that horribly expensive three-quarter-round-rubber-covered-with-canvas stuff. A leather patch tacked over the guard at each oarlock (Photo 22) will protect the gunwale guard from oar chafe (and is a good place to hide the ends of the guard).

Oars

Your oars should be between 7' (if you'll be maneuvering in tight spaces a lot) and 8' (if you're planning on sticking to the wide open spaces). I think 7½' is good for most purposes. You can buy good oars; they are expensive and a bit hard to find, but they are worth the money and effort. As alternatives, you can make your own from scratch (see WB No 127) or whittle down the cheap but clunky oars you are likely to find at your local chandlery.

Lately, I've been favoring this last approach. These oars usually have at least half again as much wood in them as they should, so don't be shy about really mowing them down. If they are hardwood, the scantlings can be pretty fine. A couple of hours with a plane, spokeshave, and sandpaper can get you a nice pair of oars. I like to fold a bit of fiberglass tape set in epoxy over the ends of the blades to help in the war against rocks.

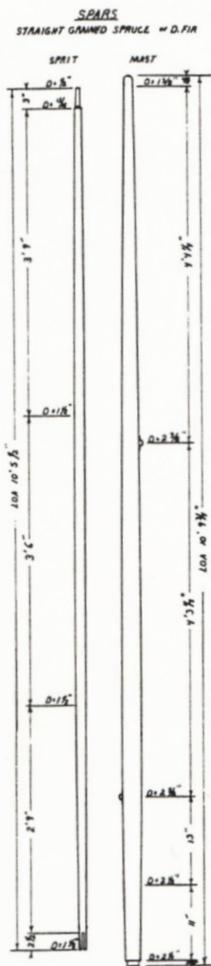


22. Gunwale guard is installed with the butts hidden under leather chafe patches at the oarlocks.

SAILING BEACH PEA

A sailing rig for your peapod can add a new dimension to her use. You can cover a lot more distance than you may care to row. And if the boat is being used as a tender, sailing her can be a great way to explore an anchorage after a day's cruise. Beach Pea is designed to sail "backwards"—that is, with the painter at the stern.

The plans show two sailing rigs for this peapod: a lug rig and a sprit rig. Both of these rigs allow for short spars that can be stowed inside the boat.



Spars for the Sprit Rig

Other, loftier sail plans could be used if stowage is not a consideration and your boat-handling skills are up to it.

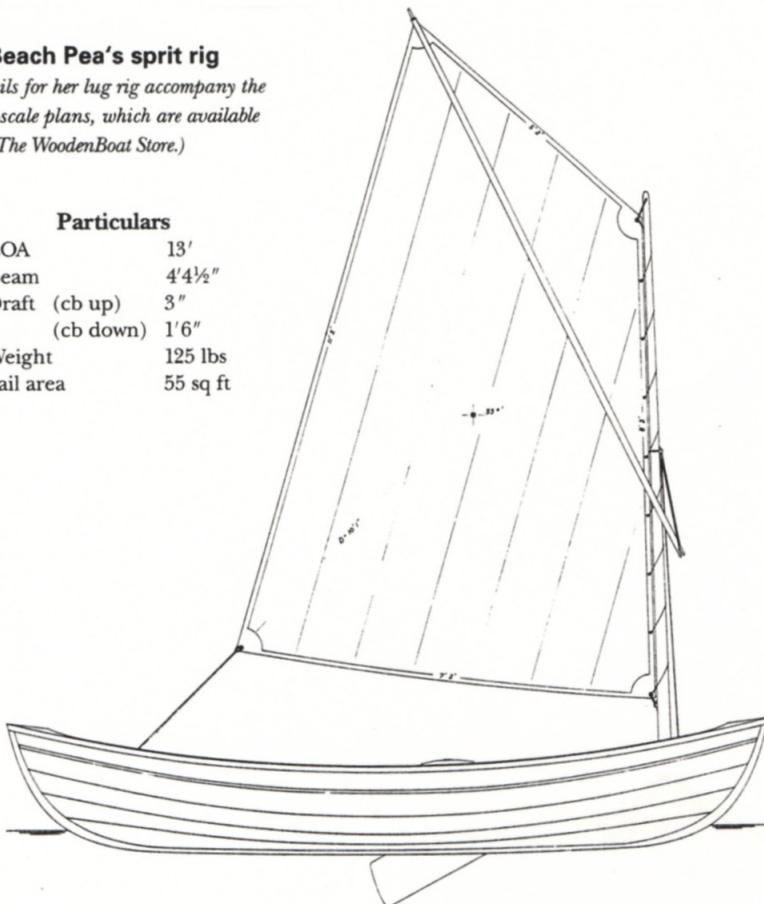
The lug rig offers the ability to douse the sail quickly, from the middle of the boat, in the event of a sudden onslaught of weather. Just cast off the halyard (cleated on the side of the centerboard trunk), and down she comes. This can be no small boon, given the difficulties of trying to strike a sail in a hurry while standing in the eyes of a small boat with wind and waves rising.

Beach Pea's sprit rig

(Details for her lug rig accompany the large-scale plans, which are available from The WoodenBoat Store.)

Particulars

LOA	13'
Beam	4'4½"
Draft (cb up)	3"
(cb down)	1'6"
Weight	125 lbs
Sail area	55 sq ft



Still, my first choice would be for the sprit rig. I prefer its looks with this boat, and I like how easy it is to stow. When you're done sailing, simply slack the snotter and roll up the sprit in the sail for a compact and secure bundle. If you don't use a rudder, then this bundle represents your entire sailing rig. To combat the occasional thunder-squall, the snotter tackle can be led down to a small belaying pin, allowing you to quickly "scandalize" the rig.

"Wait a minute," some of you are saying. "Did he say, 'If you don't use a rudder'?" Rudders on peapods are a nuisance unless the boat stays on a mooring or slip with the rudder shipped all the time. There are three problems: First, it is hard to fit pintles and gudgeons to a curved sternpost. Second, it is difficult to ship a rudder on the stern of a small, fine-ended boat. Lastly, a rudder and tiller are just two more pieces of equipment that must be built, stowed, and lugged around.

Peapods that are heavier and have no rocker to their keel can be steered by merely shifting body weight forward or aft. This is enough to move

the lateral plane sufficiently to steer and tack. However, Beach Pea does not seem to be able to perform this trick with grace, so I have rigged up a method that uses one of her oars for steering. A short piece of line is tied or spliced around the oar. The other end of this lanyard is led through a hole in the stern sheets and belayed on a small cleat there. The length of the lanyard and where it attaches to the oar will be discovered after a little experimentation. In use, the oar is set over the lee side, and you pull the oar against the gunwale to bring the boat off the wind, and push it against the restraint of the lanyard to come up. When you come about, just shift the oar to the other side of the boat, and you're off again.

Mast and Spars

Your mast can consist of a couple of 2 x 4s glued together, whittled to shape by eye, and splashed with linseed oil. Or, it can be a perfectly shaped Sitka spruce affair with 10 coats of varnish. A peapod, being descended from working stock, can handle either extreme with aplomb and, so long as

the necessary strength is there, it will make no difference in the way the boat sails.

There are many good articles in boat-building literature on sparmaking. They tend to be rather longwinded and, I think, a bit much, unless you intend to spend a lot of money on the Sitka-spruce-and-varnish approach. For the rig on a little boat like this, I favor a quick-and-dirty approach, so I'll give you my condensed sparmaking method.

Go to the lumberyard and ask permission to paw through their stacks of "two by" KD (kiln-dried) construction lumber. Promise to restack the wood neatly when you are done. A friend can be a big help with this job. If the lumberyard personnel seem reluctant, explain that you are building a boat and need just a few pieces of good stock. This will usually soften them up a bit.

Look for wood that is as clear and straight as possible. You may find the perfect stick in a pile of 2 x 4s, but often you will have to look for a wider piece with one good edge. It will still be much cheaper than Sitka spruce. You will need two pieces to glue together for the mast and another piece for the sprit or lugsail yard.

Often a plank will have some tension in it and will change shape when it is sawn in two, so it is a good idea to rip the pieces a little oversize to allow for some spring. Glue the two mast halves together in such a way that any sweep in one piece will try to offset sweep in the other. When the glue has set, work the pieces down with a saw or plane until they are square in section, with each side the same dimension as the greatest diameter of the spar. Cut the spars to their finished length, and on each end mark a circle having the diameter of the end of the spar. For now, ignore any places where the end is abruptly turned down, such as the heel of the mast or the top of the sprit—mark the diameter just before the turned-down place. If the spar blanks are not straight, you can make the finished spar a little straighter by moving these