

MC SCOW TUNING GUIDE





MC SCOW

The MC Scow is a fun, fast, and exciting boat to sail, and one that is welcoming to all types and ages of sailors. It's a simple boat to set up, which gives sailors more time enjoying themselves on the water and less time worrying if their boat is set up correctly. The Scow's simple set-up also allows the sailor to focus on the next puff is and if it's a header or a lift.

Here is our guide on setting up your MC Scow.





SET-UP

SPREADERS

The first step is to look at the spreaders and get them in the right position. We recommend positioning the spreaders with the mast down which makes it easier to correctly position the spreader sweep. Spreader set-up isn't an exact science on a Scow, as it is with some high-performance boats. The spreader sweep should be somewhere between 2-3½", depending on how much vang you tend to use. Sailors who use a lot of vang should have the spreaders closer to 2" apart, and sailors who use less vang find success with spreader sweep closer to 3½".

MAST RAKE

Once you've set up the spreader sweep, we can move to setting up the mast rake. The mast rake should be set up once and then left alone. Stepping the mast involves connecting the shrouds, placing the mast step correctly and connecting the forestay. Once the mast is up, take the main halyard, and tie it to the end of a tape measure. Raise the halyard up to the locked position. The rake measurement should be taken at the stern/deck intersection right above the rudder pins. The measurement should read somewhere between 27'-29'. Our ideal number is 28.4', but feel free to find what number in this range works best for you.

SHROUD TENSION

Next up is setting the shroud tension, which should be equal on both sides. In light breeze, (under 8 knots), the shrouds should be loosened to the point where the leeward shroud is dangling a little when the mainsail is trimmed in all the way while going upwind. In medium conditions (8-16 knots), the shrouds should be hand-tightened so that the leeward shroud dangles slightly while sailing upwind. In heavy breeze (16 knots and up), the shrouds should be tightened to the point where there is little-to-no play in the leeward shroud when sailing upwind.



MAINSAIL AND MAINSHEET

Now that you have set up the mast, it's time to move to the most important control. The mainsheet not only controls your power moving forward through the water, but it also works as a stabilizer when conditions get rough. In light breeze, (under 8 knots), the mainsail should have a nice curve to leeward from the boom to the top of the sail. There are three ways to get a view of this.

One method is to put your eye to the aft of the mast where the boom and mast connect, and look up the mainsail track. In light breeze, you can slide back to the stern of the boat and look up the leech of the sail (Be cautious of capsizing when you do this.). If you have access to a coach or spectator boat, ask them to follow you as you sail upwind, line up the boom with the mast, and tell you roughly how the sail looks from behind. The sail should be at a point where the boom is over the back corner of the cockpit and the top batten falling off to leeward about 5-plus degrees. The top leech telltale should be flowing about 75 percent of the time while sailing close hauled. In medium air (8-16 knots), pull on the vang until the top telltale is flowing about 50 percent of the time.

In heavy breeze, the vang should be tight and the top telltale pointed 5 degrees to leeward of the boom. The mainsheet should be eased when the larger puffs hit and then trimmed back once the boat settles down.

Downwind, the mainsheet does not change the leech curve; that's the job of the vang. The mainsheet does help stabilize the boat downwind, so if you are overpowered and the boat feels like it's going to capsize on the downwind, pull the mainsheet in until the boat feels a little more stable and then let it out as you get more comfortable. The vang can also help with stabilization when sailing downwind.



VANG

The vang is an important control line, as it depowers the boat on the upwind and controls the sail rotation while sailing downwind. The Scow has no backstay, so the vang acts as a backstay for this boat. The tighter the vang, the less power the sails have upwind and downwind. As the vang comes on, the leech of the sail flattens and the top of the main opens up to ease power off the top. In lighter breeze, don't use any vang when sailing upwind. In medium breeze, the vang is used to flatten the sail and make it more controllable going upwind. If you find yourself heeling too far over on the upwind (the leeward shroud is in the water), pull on some more vang to help flatten the sail and ultimately the boat. Sailing in anything over 16 knots, the vang should be on tight so that the boat is as controllable as possible and you don't end up sliding sideways and pushed over by the breeze. When the boat is really overpowered, the vang should come off a little so that the top of the sail falls to leeward.

Sailing upwind in big breeze, the vang should be on enough that when the mainsheet is eased, the boom does not twist up when eased out. Turning downwind in all conditions, the vang should come off before or as you turn down. In lighter breeze, the vang should be pretty loose so that you can get the proper rotation throughout the sail. If the leech of the mainsail is flexing outward in every other wave, you have the right amount of vang on. If it's stiff and barely moves, take off some vang to help you move faster downwind.

In medium breeze, the leech should be pretty stiff with little popping to leeward. When it's windy, the vang should be loosened slightly around the mark so that you can turn down easier, but it should have little-to-no play downwind. The more the vang moves, the greater your risk of capsizing to windward.

TRAVELER

In light breeze, the traveler should be in the center of the boat. As the breeze comes up, the traveler should be dropped towards the leeward side. This makes the boat depower a little better and keeps the boat moving forward instead of sideways when the bigger breeze hits. As the boat becomes overpowered, slide the traveler down until the boat becomes manageable when sailing upwind. When going downwind, the traveler should always be in the center.

OUTHHAUL

When sailing upwind in 4 knots or less, make sure the outhaul is tight enough to close the shelf foot. This eliminates an exit angle that is too large and allows the very light breeze to flow over the foil more easily. In 4-14 knots, ease the outhaul to the point where the shelf just fully opens and then tighten it as the breeze gets closer to the boat being overpowered. When you're sailing at 14-plus knots and overpowered, tighten the outhaul so the shelf closes. On the downwind, ease the outhaul until the shelf just opens in light and moderate air. This lets the boat accelerate and maintain a better speed. Keep the outhaul tight in big breeze so that the boat is stable.

CUNNINGHAM

The cunningham pulls the draft forward, which makes it easier for the boat to turn down. It also flattens out the top of the sail, and is a crucial element in depowering the sail. The cunningham is another control that you should use only when the breeze gets heavy. In 0-8 knots while sailing upwind or downwind, do not use the cunningham at all. When sailing 8-14 knots, use the cunningham only to take the wrinkles out of the sail. When the breeze is over 14 knots, the cunningham should be used based on how overpowered the boat is. The more overpowered the boat, the more it should be pulled on. You can never have too much cunningham when it's blowing over 20 knots.





TIPS AND TRICKS

- Put on some shroud telltales to help you see the shifts in lake conditions.
- Shroud telltales are normally made of yarn or old cassette tapes. Cassette tapes fly better than most yarns.
- An important speed factor largely unique to MC Scows: Flat is slow.
- The hull shape creates too much drag when flat, so never sail an MC Scow flat. Sail the boat heeled at all times upwind and downwind. The MC Scow sails best at about 15 degrees of heel angle. At this speed, the reduced drag generated by the hull reduces the amount of surface area that is in contact with the water.
- The leeward shroud should never touch the water. If it does, the boat is too far heeled to windward and needs to either be flattened by body weight or by using the control lines described above.
- Downwind in light air the boat should be heeled to leeward to generate flow across both the sail and board foils. Use gravity to help you.
- In heavy air when sailing downwind, heel the boat slightly to windward.





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