

Retrofit a Dodger Grab Rail

A grab rail added to a bimini or dodger improves onboard safety.



In less than an hour a grab rail can be added to any 1" (25mm) diameter frame that can be disassembled.

A new kit from Sailrite makes it easy to retrofit a bimini or dodger with stainless-steel grab rails. These rails mount on the side or along the aft frame to provide a convenient handhold. The kit (part number 102193) costs US\$59.50 and includes everything necessary to install one rail with a maximum length of 30.5" (77.4cm) on any frame made of 1" (25mm) diameter tubing. The key part making this kit possible is the sliding post (**Figure 1**). When two posts are placed on a span of the dodger frame and made to protrude through the canvas, a rail with two eye ends can be securely attached as shown.

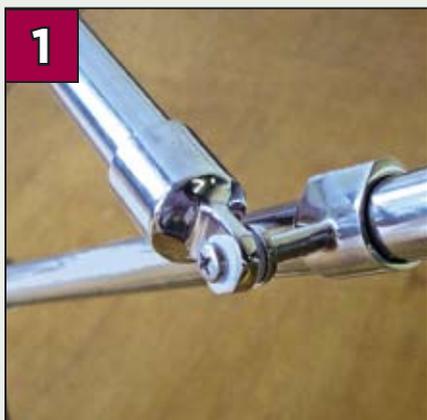
Installation is straightforward. First, determine where to attach the rail. Using a marker, put a dot on the metal frame. If there is fabric in place over this location (as will certainly be the case with a rail mounted on the side of a dodger), cut a small slit (about 1/4"/6mm) and mark the position on the frame through this slit. Make sure that the slit and the mark are centered on the round tubing. If both sides are to have a grab rail, remove the fabric cover and mark the second side on

the frame and place the slit in the cover by measuring up from a reference point, such as the end of a frame leg (**Figure 2**).

To install the sliding posts requires disassembly of the frame. Most dodger frames are assembled from parts that are secured with set screws. If the frame in question is welded together, this kit will not work. Before disassembling the frame mark the positions of the hardware to facilitate reassembly (**Figure 3**). Having removed the eye ends and jaw slides, the sliding posts easily slip over the end of the frame and move into position over the placement marks.

For frames where the sliding posts aren't going through fabric, i.e. a typical bimini, just slide the sliding posts into position and put the frame back together (**Figure 4**).

If, however, the mounts need installing through the top material, the opening in the material needs preparation. Accomplish this by sewing small squares of leather over the slits in the canvas. It's normal to place these "patches" on the outside of the canvas since they then protect the cover from



Sliding post with eye end attached.



Marking for the second rail.



Mark the position of hardware before disassembly.