



Melges 24 Preparation Guide

Your preparation goals should be to ensure that your boat and gear:

- Are safe and strong enough not to fail in any condition
- Present a clean profile to the wind and water
- Allow smooth, easy and hazard-free control of all adjustments

Hull

The factory finish on a Melges 24 requires little attention. The class rules do not allow fairing so just make sure the bottom is clean. A Teflon or 'PTFE' based polish is always good and retards growth when you boat is in the water.

Keel & Rudder

Just like the hull, class rules do not allow fairing of the keel and rudder. The rudder preparation is as simple as keeping it in a cover during travel and making sure it is clean. Since the keel is raised and lowered every time the boat is launched, it can become scratched. It is important to make sure the keel trunk is clean and the plastic shim blocks are sanded smooth so as not to scratch the keel. By using a lubricant such as soap, the keel will raise and lower easier.

When trailering the Melges, the keel can move around inside the trunk, which leads to keel damage. To prevent this, insert rags or shims into the trunk from the top to wedge the keel into place so it will not move. Tie a line from the top of the keel to the mast step to hold it forward. Use foam tubing with a slit down it to protect the leading and trailing edges.

Deck Layout

The class rules allow for little modification to the deck layout. There are a few small items that will improve your boathandling:

- Install a 6" piece of poly tubing to prevent the spinnaker sheets and tack line from wrapping around the end of the sprit on take downs.
- Lubricate the spinnaker pole with a dry Teflon or Vaseline.
- Mark the pole extender line for maximum pole extension.
- Install backing plates under the deck for the lifeline stanchions.
- Adjust lifeline tension so they will extend to the maximum class rule. Lifelines may not touch the deck when pushing down on the lifeline between the stanchions.
- Use tapered Y spinnaker sheets so sheets do not snag on the furled jib during jibes.
- Install a carabiner on the boom forward of the outhaul block to lead the tail of the spinnaker halyard through to prevent the halyard from cleating on the douse.
- Cover the furler basin with sail tape to prevent water from filling it and running down below.
- Mount a second tack line cleat on the back of the cabin to prevent shrimping in breezier conditions
- Mount a second spinnaker halyard cleat. This is usually done on a semi-custom mast plate that holds both the primary cleat and the secondary cleat.

Rig and Boom

The rig requires only a minimum amount of work:

- Install a Dinghy Model Windex on the mast crane
- Install a stiff backstay batten on the mast crane
- Tape the ends of the spreaders to protect the spinnaker
- Place black tape marks around the spreaders at 2, 4 & 6 inches from the outboard end of the spreader to use as trimming reference marks
- Install a short piece of shock cord around the front of the mast, attached to both lower shrouds 8 below the spreaders and hounds to prevent the spinnaker halyard from getting caught during the spinnaker set
- Polish the mast with a coat of silicone-based marine wax
- Add a safety line and cleat to the outhaul externally
- Add a small cam cleat to the port side of the boom at the gooseneck to keep the spinnaker halyard taught while going upwind
- Mark your vang in multiple spots to duplicate settings

See our new “Melges 24 Tickle” page for more great ideas for new & old boats!!!