DOCK LINE INSPECTION GUIDE

Quick Reference Checklist • americanrope.com

Use this checklist during routine boat checks. Inspect each dock line individually. Strength loss is often internal — replace any line that raises concern.

1 VISUAL INSPECTION

- [ ] Fraying or unraveling at ends or mid-line
- [ ] Cuts, nicks, or gouges on outer cover
- [ ] Flat, crushed, or distorted sections
- [ ] Significant color fading or bleaching
- [ ] Fuzzing or fuzz balls on outer braid
- [ ] Kinks or permanent bends that won't relax

2 TOUCH & FEEL TEST

- [ ] Line feels stiffer or harder than when new
- [ ] Rough, gritty, or brittle texture
- [ ] Won't coil smoothly — stiff spots along line
- [ ] Dry, chalky feel indicating UV breakdown
- [ ] Hollow or compressed feel during a squeeze test

3 HIGH-WEAR CONTACT POINTS

- [ ] Thinning or glazing where line meets cleat
- [ ] Flattening or abrasion at chock or fairlead
- [ ] Wear marks at piling wrap points
- [ ] Separation at spliced or whipped ends
- [ ] Exposed inner fibers at eye splice

4 UV & ENVIRONMENTAL DAMAGE

- [ ] Visible salt crystal buildup within braid
- [ ] Loss of elasticity — line no longer springs back
- [ ] Line stored wet or damp for extended periods
- [ ] Mold, mildew, or chemical odor detected
- [ ] Outer sheath cracking or peeling in spots

INSPECTION NOTES

5 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- [ ] Unusual snapping sound under normal tension
- [ ] Less stretch/give than the line used to have
- [ ] Noticeably narrower diameter compared to when new
- [ ] Knots harder to set or untie than before
- [ ] Boat shifting more than expected at dock

6 AGE & USAGE ASSESSMENT

- [ ] Line in service 3+ years (heavy use)
- [ ] Line in service 5+ years (any use level)
- [ ] High-cycle use: commercial or busy marina
- [ ] Regularly exposed to heavy wake traffic
- [ ] Constant saltwater exposure
- [ ] No maintenance or inspection on record

7 REPLACE IMMEDIATELY IF…

- [ ] Multiple defects found on a single line
- [ ] Any flat spot or internal hardness detected
- [ ] Wear visible at two or more contact points
- [ ] Line failed to hold under normal conditions
- [ ] You have any doubt about line integrity

MAINTENANCE TIPS TO EXTEND LINE LIFE

- Rinse with fresh water after every saltwater use
- Dry fully before coiling and storing
- Store out of direct sunlight when off the boat
- Use chafe guards at cleats and chocks
- Rotate end-for-end periodically to spread wear