Cruising

- Most canals are saucer shaped, being deepest in the middle.
- Few canals have more than 3-4 ft of water and many have much less.
- Keep to the centre of the channel except on bends, where the deepest is on the outside of the bend.
- When you meet another boat, keep to the right, slow down, and aim to miss the oncoming boat by about 2 meters (2 yards - 6 feet).
- When overtaking, keep the other boat on your right side (overtake on left).
- If you meet a loaded commercial boat, keep out of its way and be prepared to follow instructions.

Speed

- There is no need for speed on a canal. General speed limit is 4 mph.
- If your wash is breaking against the bank - slow down.
- When passing moored craft - slow down.
- When passing anglers on the bank - slow down. Be courteous.
- When there is a lot of rubbish on the surface, drift over it in neutral.

Mooring

- Generally speaking you may moor where you wish on British Waterways property - so long as you do not cause an obstruction.
- Do not stretch mooring ropes across footpaths. Use the steel pins provided on your boat to anchor.

Bridges

- On narrow canals aim to miss one side (normally the tow-path side) by about 9 inches. Keep everyone inboard when passing under bridges.

Safety

- Do not leap about the boat, especially the decks. No running.
- Do not run about the roof of the narrowboat, especially in locks.
- When walking the side of the boat, hang on securely to the handrails.
- Non swimmers and young children should wear life jackets.
General Tips

- Never open the paddles at one end without ensuring that those at the other end are closed.
- Never DROP the paddles - ALWAYS WIND RACK & PINION DOWN GENTLY.
- Keep to the landward side of the balance beam when opening and closing gates.
- Never leave your windlass slotted onto the paddle - it will be dangerous if anything slips.
- Keep your boat away from the top and bottom gates to prevent it getting caught on the gates or CILL. The cill is a concrete step just inside of the gates and is normally marked on the wall for safety.
- Be wary of fierce top gate paddles, especially in wide locks. Operate them slowly.
- Always follow the narrowboat leader’s instructions.
- In wide locks allow other boats to join you before closing gates.