

CUSTOMER GUIDE

A Guide to Transportation

What to expect when your yacht moves from booking to delivery
— and how to prepare her for the journey.

Transporting a yacht to a new cruising destination can be a complicated and daunting operation. This guide is intended to help owners moving their yacht to a new destination, and to make sure you are informed on the basics of yacht shipping and the processes involved.

The more complex elements — customs clearance, port clearance and handling, health and safety requirements, and anything specific to your route — will be advised by the Peters & May sales representative handling your booking.

Pre-loading

The basic principle is to prepare your yacht as if you were going to sea — because in a sense, she is, even though you're not going with her. Make her as light and as secure as possible. Follow our A–Z checklist for full detail.

Remove, secure and lock. Secure any loose items, on board or on deck, that could shift and cause damage in transit. Close and lock hatches, lockers, portholes and doors.

What happens on the day of loading?

Lifting, cradling and lashing

According to your booking, either you or your representative will need to deliver the yacht to a pre-agreed location for lifting.

- If arriving by water, contact the Peters & May loadmaster (or assigned liaison officer) to confirm the berth or ship location and where to come alongside.
- Backstays, topping lifts and triatic stays will need to be loosened. This is your responsibility, or your delivery skipper's — know how to disconnect and re-tighten them, and have the right tools to hand. Do this before the lift: stays not prepared in advance will incur a delay charge.
- Once alongside, lifting gear is positioned over the yacht, the loadmaster boards and a diver enters the water. Together they coordinate correct positioning and slinging of the boat.
- When everyone is satisfied the yacht is safe to lift, she is lifted from the water and offered up to the cradle, with final adjustments made before she is settled and released from the crane.
- The yacht is then lashed to the cradle and/or deck using points such as cleats and bollards. These strains are slightly greater than normal mooring or anchoring loads — check your fittings are sound before shipment.

Handing over the yacht

Once settled and secured to the cradle, take fenders and warps aboard and secure them. Go through the A–Z checklist a final time.

- Report and photograph any incidents during the loading operation.
- Leave keys on board, secured somewhere suitable, and pass their location to the attending surveyor.

Once the ship has departed, you will be given an estimated time of arrival. Weather and other factors outside our control can delay a shipment — we will keep you updated as often as possible to minimise disruption.

On arrival

Collecting your yacht

If you or your representative are receiving the yacht, you will be told where to go and the process to follow to safely access the vessel and take delivery. Peters & May can also help source a local skipper — ask your sales representative for details.

Before discharge, make sure everything required is in place and that you have the boat keys, so you can leave promptly once she is offloaded and the loadmaster confirms you're clear to go.

If discharge takes place at anchor, the risk is higher — do not stay alongside longer than required, and leave swiftly once the loadmaster confirms.

Loadmasters

Our loadmasters are instrumental in loading and discharging your yacht across the globe. They work at the forefront of operations with port staff and stevedores worldwide, with the experience to know when a safe operation is possible.

Before and during loading or discharge, they stay in close contact with our technical department to make sure the operation runs to the agreed detailed plans. Their experience gives them the authority to oversee the process and instil confidence throughout.

Loadmaster role includes:

- Preparation of all required loading / discharge equipment
- Overseeing and managing all loading / discharge operations
- Coordination of third parties, including divers and ship's crew
- Acting as client point of contact on the day of loading / discharge
- Designing bespoke lifting gear and cradling solutions

Frequently asked questions

Do I need to cover my yacht?

You do not need to cover your yacht, but it can be arranged if required. Factors like time of shipment, weather, loading and discharge ports, and hull material all play into whether it's worthwhile — your sales representative can talk you through the decision.

What about cradles?

We have a wide range of bespoke, tried and tested shipping cradles to suit all shapes and sizes of yacht. A cradle designed for rest in a boatyard cannot withstand the pitch and roll of a ship's deck — your own cradle will need approval from our technical team. Custom or unusual yachts are likely to need specialist cradling; we're happy to advise.

How easy is it to measure my yacht?

Shipping is based entirely on key dimensions — length, beam, height and weight — so accuracy matters. Include anything that protrudes: davits, aerials, radar arches, pulpits. Incorrect dimensions can mean additional charges or non-shipment, so flag any anomalies in lifting positions, packing, blocking or slings early.

What about customs?

Customs clearance and documentation varies by yacht and by country, and getting it wrong can be costly. With the right preparation, documentation and handling it's straightforward — our customs experts will guide you through every step.

Will my normal yacht insurance cover the transportation?

Generally, annual hull insurance covers normal boating activity only, not sea or road transportation. Marine cargo insurance covers shipment — we can quote you separately. When requesting rates, consider replacement value, shipping costs and onboard accessories; as a guide, use total value plus freight costs. Tell your current insurer about the move to keep cover active in your new cruising grounds.

Start your journey with Peters & May

Reach out to our team with any questions, or to book your next shipment.

info@petersandmay.com · +44 (0)2380 480 480