

A Guide to Summer Cruises: Hints and Tips

Stuff to review ahead of time

- How to properly board/leave a ship
- Enlisted ratings (People will be happy to tell you about them, but it's much easier to understand what's going on if you know at least the big ones.)
- Midshipman Summer Training Handbook (It's not as long as it looks—most of it probably doesn't apply to you. Still, it has important information about what to do in various circumstances.)
- Basic shipboard organization: department, division, etc.

Good Questions

- Find out where people are from, why they joined the Navy, etc.
- JOs: What do you like/not like about your job? What is the work day like? Why did you choose SWO, etc.?
- Junior Enlisted: Ask about equipment (if they aren't too busy—they love to show off their knowledge of their gear). Ask about their DivO.
- Chiefs: What do they like/not like in officers?

Fun with Midshipmen

- Mail buoy watch – Mail in the Navy arrives by air or boat
- DRT snake – Only found on old ships with Dead Reckoning Tables; you *don't* want to see it
- Request permission to blow DCA – DCA stands for Damage Control Assistant
- Relative bearing grease – Fun with homonyms! Relative bearing = (true bearing – ship's heading).
- ID-10-T forms – What does that spell?
- An HT punch – HT = hull technician. HTs are often known for their boxing skills.

Wardroom Etiquette

(Varies from wardroom to wardroom, but they often follow the following schema:)

- Stand and wait for Captain to sit
- Wait to eat until everyone is served
- Eat quickly; often they can't serve the next course until you're done
- If coming in late, ask "permission to join the mess"
- If leaving before the CO, ask to be excused

Odd Terms and Abbreviations

Not unlike Stanford with their "CoHo" and "MemAud," the Navy has a natural predilection towards abbreviation and jargon. To wit:

reveille = the dulcet sounds of your 0600 wakeup call over the 1MC

1MC = a PA system that goes throughout the ship

field day = sounds like fun but it's not: it means a thorough cleaning of the ship

BZ or "Bravo Zulu" = "well done"

goat locker = the chief's mess (don't go in without asking permission)

CIC or "Combat" = Combat Information Center (the dark room with all the radars). Funny fact: the CIC Officer is the CICO, pronounced "sicko"

Control = A control room that handles all the engineering (switchboards and the like). On subs, control is where you steer the boat, and conduct combat (so it's a bit like a CIC plus a bridge plus Control).

CMC = Command Master Chief. One of the most senior enlisted people on board; often a good brain to pick. Called a COB (Chief of the Boat) on subs.

Cheng = Chief Engineer (or just "Eng" on some ships). Also a Chinese surname.

Mast = Captain's Mast, where one goes if one has done something very wrong. As in "yeah, I @#\$#d up a lot when I first got in, and went to mast three times." Avoiding mast ("not getting caught") for 12 years earns one gold, rather than red, collar devices.

Duty/Watch/Quals = What a JO spends most of his/her time doing. You get qualified (*qualed*) in a particular job (*watch*) which you do based on some rotation (the *watchbill*...the more watch teams or *sections* there are, the less often you are on watch). When in port, a certain number of people must be on the boat at all times, so you'll stand *duty*.