

4. Crew Overboard Rescue Maneuvers

September 21, 2016 [Marc Hughston](#)

Heave-To and Downwind Methods

Below are diagrams that I have been using for years to help sailors get a visual image of the Heave-To method, as well as the most effective ways to return to your person in the water (PIW) from a downwind point of sail.

The Heave-To method is by far the most effective method when sailing on a beat to a beam reach. We have practiced this in up to 30 kts of wind on OCC's Catalina 42, *Betty*, and the beauty of the maneuver is that it's fast, and minimizes separation from the PIW when out in the open ocean. Plus, you avoid the wildly slapping jib sheets when using methods that have you luff up to slow and stop the boat at the PIW.

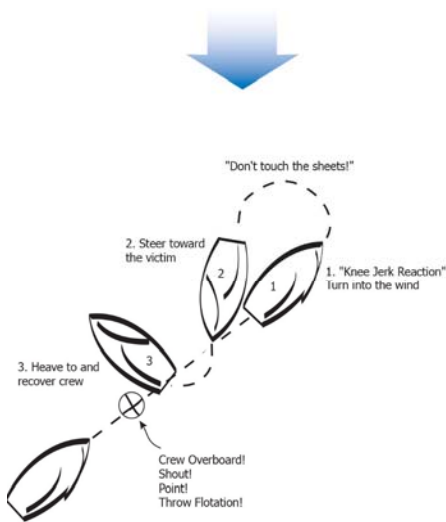
Downwind, the Heave-To method does not work reliably. The best downwind rescue maneuver is the Deep Beam Reach, aka the Broad Reach-Close Reach, and this and its variants are shown on the *Crew-Overboard Recovery Methods from Downwind* page below.

Note: this is not a comprehensive treatment of the subject, and different maneuvers may work better on other types of boats. The maneuvers detailed here do work exceptionally well on a modern sailboat with a masthead rig, fin-keel, and spade-rudder, such as the Catalina 42.

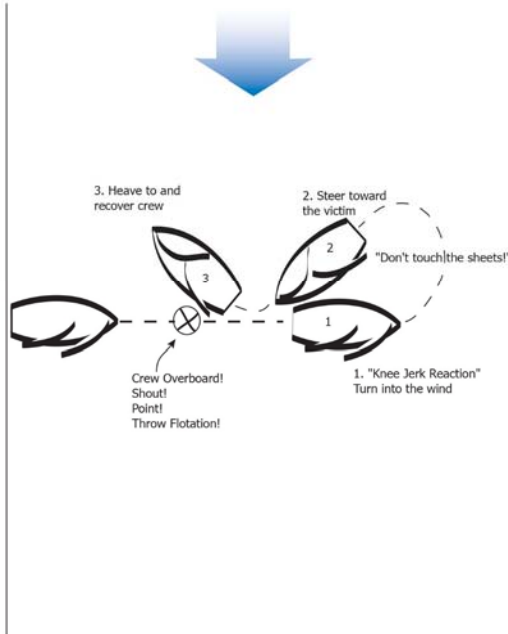
Scroll down to view the diagrams

Crew-Overboard Recovery Heave-To Methods

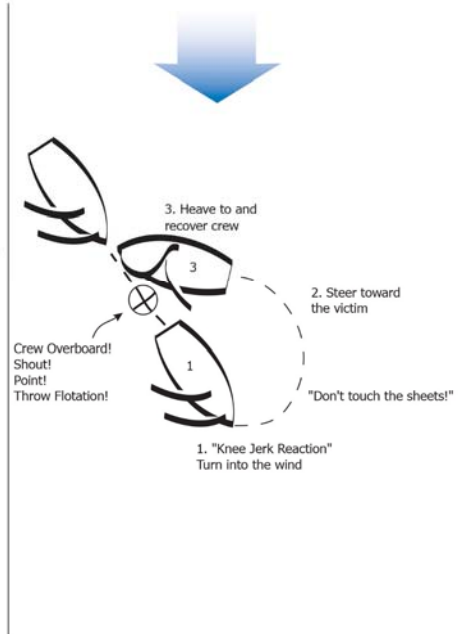
From Upwind



From Beam Reach



From Broad Reach



Crew-Overboard Recovery Methods From Downwind

From Broad Reach



From Run



From Beam Reach

