

Some answers to common Boomkicker questions:

Q: Is buying a larger Boomkicker model always better?

A: Not necessarily. Using a larger model than needed can result in too much force making it difficult to pull on the vang and mainsheet. If however the length of a larger model will fit the area above the vang better, we can substitute or exchange the standard spring rods for optional lighter ones.

Q: Do I need a vang with the new track fitting.

A: Although a vang is recommended for sail shape, there is usually enough travel in the track compared to the original boom fitting, that a vang is not required.

Q: How do you get the mast slide in the luff groove when the mast is stepped and the gooseneck is in the way?

A: The slide is removable from the fitting and can often be inserted where the sail goes in above the gooseneck, then slid down into position. Using string to lower the slide is one option. Dropping it is another, making sure the slide can not go all the way to the keel.

Q: A round slide came standard, the luff groove requires a flat slide, are these available?

A: We stock flat slides from 1/2" to 1" wide depending on the model. Slides are 1/8" thick stainless. Measure the inside of the existing groove or the sail slides to determine the required width. Flat slides can be bought direct or the standard round slide can be exchanged, the parts list included with the Boomkicker has specifics.

Q: The luff groove is not usable or does not exist below the gooseneck. How is the fitting attached?

A: The mast fitting bracket can be attached directly to the mast using the same drill and tap provided for installing the boom fitting. Extra long screws are included if needed. The slide goes unused. For unusual cases, for example where wiring runs in the luff groove, we can supply custom brackets to span the luff groove.

Q: There is a groove on the underside of the boom, are there slides available for the boom fitting?

A: Yes. Contact us with the required inside width. Slides are 1/8" thick stainless, drilled and tapped for the fitting. Shorter screws are also included. Before ordering, check for access.

Q: The existing gooseneck is adjustable up and down the mast. Is this a problem?

A: The Boomkicker works best with the boom gooseneck fixed at one location on the mast. After installation, the Boomkicker boom attachment becomes a lever point. Raise the gooseneck and the aft end of the boom drops. It is preferred to select the best gooseneck position, when using the halyard or a cunningham to tighten the luff. Use the downhaul/sailstops to fix the gooseneck in that position. We also sell slides separately as stops.

Q: The boom rolls on a gooseneck pin. Is this a problem?

A: Not with the smaller Boomkicker models, but as boats approach 30', to avoid undue stress on the boom fitting, it is best if booms are fixed in the upright position. If necessary we have a fitting which mounts on the mast, under the gooseneck to hold the boom in the upright position.

Q: Does the Boomkicker need to be installed parallel to the vang?

A: Usually it looks best, but it is not essential. So long as there is room to flex and it provides enough support, the installation is fine. For more see next question.

Q: For installation, is the best angle to the boom 45 degrees?

A: Actually, the farther out the boom the better the leverage for support. The best angles to the boom for all models except the two smallest are between 35° and 40° but customers often install them successfully at angles close to 30°. If shortening the Boomkicker is necessary to fit above the vang, shorten only the minimum amount required. The exceptions are models K0312 and K0400. Both work best if installed between 40° and 45°, see their installation instructions for more.

Q: How high should I set the boom for installation?

A: With the new boom track fittings' extended travel, setting the boom height is not as critical as the original fitting. Generally it should be slightly above the normal sailing height with consideration given to reefing, head clearance when in port, lifting the boom in light air to improve sail shape and different mainsails.

Q: Can I install the Boomkicker upside down so it flexes downward?

A: Yes, the Boomkicker works the same whether it flexes up or down. Customers have installed it "outside" the vang, flexing it down away from the vang but vang leads and interference with crew should be considered. We have also heard of customers running the vang between the rods, one fitting outside, the other inside the vang. The two smaller models which use a webbing sling at the boom actually benefit by flexing down. As the rods flex, the sling becomes more vertical, better capturing the boom.

Q: When leaving the boat for an extended time, does the Boomkicker need to be left in the straight position?

A: No. Leaving some flex in the spring rods is fine. If left heavily flexed in hot weather for an extended period, some set could occur.

Q: How much travel or flex is available?

A: If uncut, the spring rods provide around 6 feet of travel at the aft end of the boom depending on the setup. Most boats require only a foot or two of travel. Shortening the spring rods reduces travel. At their minimum lengths, travel is still around 3.5' at the aft end of the boom, again, depending on the setup.

Q: Can the spring rods wear out?

A: The indication since 1990 is no.

Q: Once installed, the force is more than I like. Are smaller diameter rods available?

A: Yes. If uncut, the spring rods can be exchanged for an optional set, see the parts sheet included with the Boomkicker for specifics. Rods can also be purchased on line at the price list or by email and phone.

Q: After using the Boomkicker for a time, I would prefer the boom higher. Do I need to order longer spring rods or drill more holes.

A: No, not with the new track boom track fitting, just adjust the clevis pin stop. Additional stop holes can be drilled for the 3/16" diameter pin using the inscribed line along the track as a guide.

Q: Do I need to increase the purchase of an existing block and tacke vang?

A: If there was enough purchase before installation, adding the Boomkicker should not require more, but it depends on the spring rods choosen and vang demands.