

PORT AND STARBOARD

By Richard Sorokin

Where did these terms come from?

A possible source of the two terms comes from early rowing ships. The early rudder was more like a large oar. Most people are right handed so the steering oar was on the right side. This side became known as the "steering boardside" which was eventually abbreviated to starboard side. When these vessels came into harbor, to protect the steering oar they tied up on the other side. The other side became known as the port side.

Thus the right side of all vessels is the starboard side and the left side is the port side facing the bows.