

## INSTALLING A WINDOW IN A SAIL

There are no hard and fast rules regarding either the proper size or the proper placement of windows in sails. Certainly, one should avoid making the window larger than necessary since the vinyl window material (Plastipane) is relatively heavy. Also, since it will stretch somewhat more than Dacron sail fabric, try to keep the window at least 6-inches from the sail's edges.

The best procedure is to sail the boat and have someone mark just the "right" place for a window. Remember that increased heeling will change the line of sight upward. So the window will have to be higher than would otherwise be necessary. No attention need be given seam location when placing windows. Windows can be placed squarely over seams.

Start your work by cutting the vinyl window material to whatever shape you desire. Now place strips of seamstick double sided basting tape around the edges of the vinyl. Smooth the vinyl in place over the sail. It is a good idea to use staples at the four corners of the window to make sure that it will not break free when you start your sewing.

Sew all around the vinyl with a zigzag stitch between 1/8-inch to 3/16-inch long and wide. A zigzag stitch is desirable since it distributes stress over a broader area, but a straight stitch can be used. As you approach the staples at the corners, remove them.

When sewing around a window it is a good idea to break the task up. That is, don't sew all the way around in one pass. Rather sew down one side at a time and try to sew parallel sides consecutively. For example, roll the sail from one edge and sew all along the closest window side. Finish the stitching with a short reverse stitch at the beginning and at the end. Then continue rolling the sail to the other parallel window side and sew it. Now pull the sail out from under the machine and roll it the other way sewing the last two parallel window sides. This technique makes it easier to keep the window from breaking loose from its basted position.

Now cut free the Dacron sailcloth underneath the sewn window. There are two methods of finishing the cloth edges around the window and the method used depends upon the weight of the sailcloth.

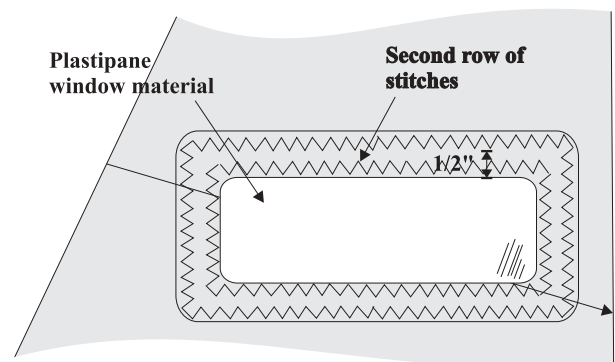
For small sails made of firm cloth, the edge can be finished by simply running another row of zigzag stitches all around the raw edge of the Dacron sailcloth. If you choose to do this, use a pencil to

mark a line 1/2-inch inside the initial row of stitching. Then, cut along the line making sure to cut only the sailcloth. Remove the sailcloth and sew a row of zigzag stitches 1/16-inch in from the raw edge. It is important to penetrate both the sailcloth and the window material. Do this carefully.

For larger sails which are subject to more stress and sometimes made of softer cloth that can ravel, it is a good idea to use a second finishing method. This entails folding under a 1/4-inch sailcloth hem around the window before running in that last row of stitches. If you choose this method, it will be necessary to cut the sailcloth about 5/8-inch inside the initial stitching so that there will be enough cloth to fold under. You will also have to cut slits to ensure a smooth fold at the corners. If the window is rounded, it may be necessary to cut radius slits along the rounded edges so that they will fold under properly. Use seamstick basting tape to hold the folded cloth in place until it is sewn.

If there is any excess adhesive on the window or sail, it can be easily rubbed away.

### *Window installation with no hem*



### *Window installation with a hem*

