



Melges 24 Preparation Guide

Your preparation goals should be to ensure that your boat and gear:

- Are safe and strong enough not to fail in any condition
- Present a clean profile to the wind and water
- Allow smooth, easy and hazard-free control of all adjustments

Hull

The factory finish on a new Melges 24 requires little attention. The class rules do not allow fairing so just make sure the bottom is clean.

Keel & Rudder

Just like the hull, class rules do not allow fairing of the keel and rudder. The rudder preparation is as simple as keeping it in a cover during travel and making sure it is clean. Since the keel is raised and lowered every time the boat is launched, it can become scratched. It is important to make sure the keel trunk is clean and the plastic shim blocks are sanded smooth so as not to scratch the keel. By using a lubricant such as soap, the keel will raise and lower easier.

When trailering the Melges, the keel can move around inside the trunk, which leads to keel damage. To prevent this, insert rags or shims into the trunk from the top to wedge the keel into place so it will not move. Tie a line from the top of the keel to the mast step to hold it forward.

Deck Layout

The class rules do not allow modification to the deck layout, but there are a few small items that will improve your boathandling:

- Install a 6" soft batten or piece of poly tubing to prevent the spinnaker sheets from going under the spinnaker pole during outside jibes
- Lubricate the spinnaker pole with a dry Teflon
- Mark the pole extender line for maximum pole extension and put a stopper knot in the line so when the pole is retracted, the thick part of the pole (not the tapered part) is in the pole gasket to prevent water leakage
- Remove the bow running lights so the jib does not snag
- Install a shackle in the sailmaker's eye in the luff wire at the tack in place of the standard single block on the roller drum. The Ullman jib has a block and a cleat on the jib so the jib luff tensioning system is a 4:1 purchase instead of the standard 2:1. Lead the tack line from the sail through the shackle, through the block on the jib, back through the shackle and to the cleat on the jib. This is needed to pull the draft far enough forward in heavy air.
- Wind the roller furling drum clockwise so the jib will furl counter-clockwise. This will prevent the spinnaker sheets from being furled into the jib.
- Install backing plates under the deck for the lifeline stanchions.
- Drill out two holes in the jib tracks between each factory hole.
- Adjust lifeline tension so they will extend to the maximum class rule of 12.7mm from the deck when pushed down.
- Use tapered Y spinnaker sheets so sheets do not snag on the furled jib during jibes.
- Install a carabiner on the boom at the outhaul block to lead the tail of the spinnaker halyard through to prevent the halyard from cleating on the douse.

Rig

The rig requires only a minimum amount of work:

- Install a Dinghy Model Windex on the mast crane
- Install a stiff backstay batten on the mast crane
- Tape the ends of the spreaders to protect the spinnaker
- Place black tape marks around the spreaders at 2, 4 & 6 inches from the outboard end of the spreader to use as trimming reference marks
- Install a short piece of shock cord around the front of the mast, attached to both lower shrouds 8 below the spreaders to prevent the spinnaker halyard from getting caught during the spinnaker set

Polish the mast with a coat of silicone-based marine wax