

Grab post

Reaching the age of eligibility for Social Security, I decided that I needed additional support while moving about the cabin of my P323. I looked at a number of boats of various makes with grab posts and found that I could fit one into the cabin at the bulkhead that separates the navigation station from the main salon.

A 1-inch diameter polished type 304 stainless steel tube was used for the post. In order to get a strong attachment it was necessary to offset the post ~4 inches from the bulkhead. The upper attachment is a 90 degree rectangular stainless rail base (West Marine #487710) which takes 4 ¼-inch flathead machine screws. There is too little access between the cabin top liner and deck to easily use washers and nuts to hold it in place. So, in order to firmly attach the rail base to the cabin liner, I cut a piece of ¼ inch thick aluminum plate the size of the rail base and drilled four holes that were tapped to ¼-20 threads. In this way it was easy to line up and attach the rail base to the cabin top liner (Figure 1).



Before final installation the aluminum plate was finished with a good coating of zinc chromate to reduce corrosion.

For the base attachment I looked at a number of alternatives. One was to have the stainless steel tube bent at a 90° angle, but my attempts to do this ended in failure when the tube collapsed. In the end I took a piece of teak and drilled a 1 inch hole for the stainless tube (Figure 2).



To align it I used a plumb bob from the upper connection to find where the hole should be drilled in the teak block. To hold the tube in place within the teak block I used two #10 stainless screws with barrel nuts to give it a professional finish. The block was secured to the bulk head with two ¼ inch bronze lag bolts. These are hidden by the removable seat back cushion. The bottom of the teak block was cut to match the other curved edges in the cabin.