

# SHADY BUSINESS

How to keep the sun off your skin on board.

The sun is great until it isn't. For health, comfort and convenience, providing shade aboard your boat proves beneficial for most boaters. There are T-tops, hardtops and Bimini tops, of course. But sometimes boaters want even more shade — or more precisely positioned shade. What follows is a quick study in the numerous ways of providing shade aboard, ranging from DIY solutions to OEM equipment, and from cheap to expensive. —Kevin Falvey

## ELECTRIC SHADE

Powered shades, like SureShade's ATF or M3 Automated Mega Shade, are available as optional equipment aboard many fine boats. This type can also be self-installed, or dealer-installed after the sale. Press the button and watch the coolness roll over your cockpit. When not in use, it remains ever at the ready.



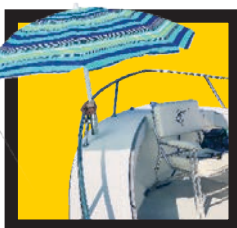
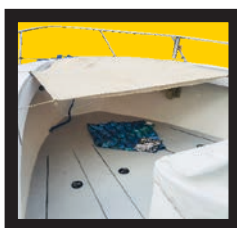
## MANUAL SHADE

Similar to the electric shades, pullout models, like the SureShade MTX (fore) and RTX (aft) shown in the opening photo, roll up and stow, yet stay ready for instant sun blocking. They are less expensive than electric models and more amenable to DIY installation,

though you will also find them offered as optional equipment aboard new boats.

**BOW DODGER** Popular with center-console owners and available from aftermarket canvas shops, a bow dodger resembles half an igloo,

and erects on hinged supports, like a Bimini top might. It provides shade for crew seated forward, spray protection and sometimes



privacy for a head. A bow dodger may impede visibility forward if made too tall in an effort to achieve headroom. Since this is custom work, pricing varies.

## BOAT UMBRELLA

Boat umbrellas work well for shading areas

of the boat beyond the coverage of a top, or for providing the primary shade aboard boats without tops. Magma Products' umbrellas

mount on most vertical or horizontal rails, and are made from fade-resistant acrylic. They are square-shaped for more coverage, and offer tie downs on the corners to better deal with gusty winds, but are not for use while underway.

## NON-RETRACTABLE SHADE

Becoming more and more popular are canopy-type shades that clip onto a top at one end and are supported at their other end by a set of springy uprights inserted into small sockets in the

gunwale. Unlike retractable shades, these need to be rolled up and stowed, and then reassembled when desired. These are offered

as optional equipment aboard many boats, though we're sure a clever canvas man could sew a custom order for you. Either way, prices vary.

**CHEAP SHADE** I cut a swatch of Sunbrella to fit my bow, sewed in a hem, added grommets and bungee cord, and voila — a place to let my once-little kids take a nap. Now the kids are grown, but we still use it for brief respites from long days in the sun.

**EASY SHADE** A golf umbrella, or a beach umbrella, can be used to place shade for a person or two, provided there's a rod holder in which to insert the pole. I find that by jamming the pole in with a rag, the umbrella is resistant to blowing away in a gust.

## MADE IN THE SHADE

SureShade's MTX and RTX can provide shade from bow to stern.



## PROTECTION FOR YOUR SUNSHADE

If your method of providing shade aboard involves fabric of some sort, keep it waterproof and looking good with an application of 303 Fabric Guard. It protects against both water-based and oil-based stains. \$20 to \$118; 303products.com

