

# HOW TO CHOOSE A FLOATING DOCK

What you should look out for in a floating jetty

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**PICTURES COURTESY OF DOCKPRO**

**T**he jetty, or pier, has recently celebrated its 200th birthday. Having provided us safe passage over the water and keeping our boats off of rocky shores for two centuries means jetties are here to stay; but while the ideology has its gum poles firmly planted into the sandy banks of our boating future, the modern floating jetties do not.

The first thing to remember is that floating jetties should provide convenience for you as a boater – and nowhere is this more essential than in areas where the water level fluctuates such as in dams and rivers. DockPro, the exclusive Southern Africa importer for CanDock, has made customisation, installation and maintenance easier than it ever has been as it follows a modular construction design and can therefore be built to your requirements with an unlimited number of potential configurations.

We chat with DockPro's Rob Clarke for tips on choosing the right jetty.

## **FREEBOARD**

Ideally you're going to want a good height of freeboard above the water to not be too high or too low, allowing you easy access onto and off of your boat. DockPro's jetty

systems are designed to be stable and provide around 330 mm of floor height above the water. "We find this to be just right for the multitude of boat sizes on the water and you might want to base your ideal jetty on that freeboard height," says Clarke.

## **ANCHORING**

Depending on the use, some docks will need to be securely fastened to the shore with bracing arms, while others may need to be firmly anchored in place. A sandy bed and calm water is the easiest bed for anything to anchor in. A clay or rocky bottom is more difficult, but nothing is impossible – so do ensure you spare a thought on how you'd securely anchor your jetty.

## **GANGWAY**

Any jetty using a gangway is going to need the proper equipment to make it work effectively. Dockpro's jetties have fittings that allow the dock to move up and down with the water level without putting additional stress on the jetty as well as the gangplank's fixture to the shore – and you'd want something which offers this type of free movement in the dock you're looking for as it will provide you with the longest use.





### CORROSION RESISTANCE

The key to choosing the best jetty comes down to how long your purchase will last. Spending its life on the water, your dock gets punished with all-day direct sunlight, as well as being subjected to constant water corrosion. Make sure fittings are stainless steel or hot-dipped galvanised, which is superior to those which are electroplated, if you go that route. However, if you want absolute peace of mind, CanDock modular jetties are made from high-density polyethylene resin which is remarkably resistant to impact, climate change, the adverse effects of water, the sun and a wide range of chemical products.

### THE 'DO-IT-ALL' APPEAL

In choosing a jetty, you can have the traditional type which simply offers fenders over the side to keep your boat

from bashing up against the dock. But times have changed and so have the options to protect your boat or PWC. CanDock offers a solution for ultimate protection; a JetSlide system with air assist is an add-on, built into your CanDock configuration, and allows you to simply drive your boat on to it and out of the water. When you want to use your boat again, a simple reverse will do the trick. Keeping your hull out of the water in this way will mean less marine growth and damage to your boat.

### HEAVY WEIGHTS

Ideally, you want a jetty which can handle a lot of weight while remaining stable. Any good floating dock should offer you this, but DockPro guarantees that their modular jetty system can keep up with your requirements as each cube of the

system weighs just 5.5 kg but can support up to 68 kg. Similarly, if your jetty is to support the weight of your boat (like our JetSlide system), you're going to want a jetty which can handle the demand of the boat's weight as well.

### ELECTRICAL WORK

An electrical outlet on the dock you choose isn't an absolute must-have, but it's always going to be great when you do need shore power – for running a light for night time fishing, powering a charger for your boat battery, or those times when you need to plug in the compressor to pump up the tubes. We'd suggest getting an electrical supply as they do come in handy – in which case, make sure the wires are well insulated and won't short in the water or shock any of your guests. DockPro's electric units are run as part of the dock

under the flooring in a G2 service channel, keeping wiring well hidden and safe.

### PLAY IT SAFE

Naturally, docks get wet – and the last thing you want is a slippery surface. CanDock jetties are finished off in an anti-slip pattern to keep you from skidding around when you least need it. The right jetty for you should offer a high level of safety in this respect.

### MAINTENANCE

Most jetties will require some level of maintenance, whether it be coating steel work or sanding and varnishing wood. But,

even the best paints and varnishes have a limited lifespan in such harsh environments. CanDock modular systems do not require any maintenance and will not degenerate over time. They also require no cleaning or coating. Ideally, you'd want your jetty to remain the red carpet walkway to your boat with as little hassle as possible over the years to come.

### REPAIRS

Accidents happen; it's a fact of life. Whichever jetty you decide to use, make sure that parts and spares are readily available in case you need them. DockPro forms part of an

international company, and as such, will always be around to support their clients. Need to replace a cube? No problem – simply unscrew the four locking points, remove the cube, and put the new one in. It's as easy as that! But, don't count on needing DockPro's support, as their product is built to last. In fact, they give you a warranty which shows confidence in their product and which should give you peace of mind.

For more information on CanDock floating jetty systems, contact DockPro South Africa on (011) 966 8009 or email [info@dockpro.co.za](mailto:info@dockpro.co.za) <sup>LB</sup>

