

# Getting a Grip

**G**rip, comfort, durability, and dexterity are what we look for in gloves. Testers thoroughly inspected each product, noting the quality of seams, stitching, and materials.

The gloves were rated for fit and comfort by four different wearers: two experienced racing sailors and two relative neophytes. The final ratings reflect the average of those scores.

Then, we assessed the grip of each product on two kinds of line: old, half-inch doublebraid nylon, and new, 3/8-inch doublebraid polyester over Dyneema. (The low-friction characteristics of this line made it slippery and a perfect challenge.)

Each line was attached to a 50-pound Shimano spring-loaded fish scale that was firmly secured to a wall 7 feet off the ground. After donning a pair of gloves, testers used one hand to grip the line, pulling it to 50 pounds of resistance on the scale, and then holding it for a full five seconds to assess how well the gloves held the line. This was done first with the left hand and then with the right, with the lines dry and then wet. We also tested their grip on an aluminum tiller extension.

To evaluate how the gloves affect dexterity, a tester donned the gloves and attempted to operate a Velocitek S10 (a small, portable speed gauge) and a hand-

held Garmin GPSMAP76 portable GPS, each with small buttons arrayed closely together.

Finally, each pair was weighed, immersed in water, allowed to dry for 10 seconds, and then weighed again to evaluate water absorption. Each pair was then placed inside a plastic bag and left to “bake” outdoors at an average temperature of 85 degrees for two weeks to assess the gloves’ resistance to mold, mildew, and odor retention.

The top performers will be put into long-term testing aboard racing and cruising boats. We’ll keep you posted as to their durability and longevity.