

ELECTRIC HEADS

SWAPPING YOUR OLD MANUAL HEADS FOR AN ELECTRIC MODEL CAN BE A SIMPLE WAY TO IMPROVE LIFE ON BOARD. **SAM FORTESCUE** REPORTS

Marine loos can be more of an ordeal than a convenience. Yet, they are key to on board comfort. Probably the most common brand on UK boats is the well-known Jabsco 'Twist 'n' Lock' – a relatively simple and efficient manual WC made by Xylem. But we've all had the experience of pumping out in a seaway and, for some, the idea of a modern electric flush really appeals.

EXPERT TIP Don't re-use a hose that is age hardened or brittle, as it will not be secure and may leak. Manufacturers produce hoses with different characteristics and radii for tight spots

'Happily, there are several retrofitting options available'

Besides the convenience of it, an electric heads can offer low water consumption, and large-bore flush pumps for smooth operation. The macerator pump vastly reduces the chance of blockage and, despite its high electrical load, the short bursts mean that the average electric heads will get through a tiny 1Ah of your battery capacity each day.

Happily, there are several retrofitting options on the market. We run through the simple process of swapping out your old manual heads and replacing it with a Jabsco Lite Flush. Note that other brands, including Lavac, Taylors and Force 4, should also fit the same space and use the same holes for fixing.



Step 1 Before starting, flush the heads several times so that any water that drains from the pipes will be clean, and then pump the bowl dry. From there, make sure you can access the four bolts at the base of the toilet that hold it in position. Unscrew them and the unit can be released.

Step 4 Connect the inlet (19mm) and outlet pipes (38mm) at the back of the too and move it into position. The power is now ready to be connected and the base bolted down. The inlet and outlet hoses are the same diameter on all the common marine WC brands, so they should swap over easily. If the pipes are in good condition, they can be reused. Each hose should be secured with double Jubilee clips – make sure the threads of the two clips are not side by side, as this weakens the seal and can distort the hose tail.



Complete installation

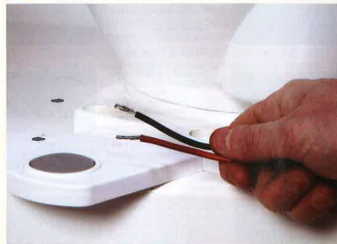
Test the installation by pushing the foot switch to rinse and flush. Check for any leaks and the heads are now ready for use. No more frantic pumping as the boat pitches in a seaway – or complicated explanations to guests!



Step 2 Close the seacocks on both the inlet and outlet pipes on the manual heads. Next, release the hose clips on the inlet and outlet on the pump, and catch any remaining water in a bucket. Lift the bowl and pump out of place, creating space for the new installation.



Step 3 The Lite Flush loo is delivered with both the flush pump and the rinse pumps attached to the bowl fitting, to ensure that connecting it up is simple. Before manoeuvring the unit into a tight space, though, attach the seat and lid with two nylon bolts.



Step 5 The next step is to connect to the boat's 12V or 24V power supply. Every boat will have its own unique cable runs, but the key is to ensure that a suitable-size fuse and wiring is used. Current draw is 15A in the 24V version, or 25A at 12V. If you need help at any point, always consult a trusted electrician before you proceed.

Step 6 Jabsco's manual and electric Lite Flush heads are exactly the same size. As with several of the main brands, both models use the same mounting holes, so that no additional drilling or GRP work is needed. Lower the loo into position and secure using suitable bolts. The new base will hide any marks around the previous base.



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