



How to find your Lyman Hull Number

Because the Lyman Boat Works kept meticulous production records, your hull number can be used to verify the Model Year the boat was produced, the length of an Inboard boat and, in some cases, the boat's original configuration.

Before you start to look for your Lyman hull number, you should probably know what you're looking for. Beginning around 1946, the Lyman Boat Works used two different formats for assigning hull numbers – one for Inboard models and a different one for Outboard models.

Wood Hull Inboard Models:

Inboard Lymans have a five-character hull number. The first character is a letter that corresponds to the length of the boat. The next four characters are sequential numbers (normally beginning with 1000) that were assigned by the factory in the order the boat was produced.

Some of the later, larger Inboards may have a second letter character that further identifies the specific model (Offshore, Cruisette, Express Cruiser, etc.).

Wood Hull Outboard Models:

Except for 18-foot Outboards produced from 1958 to 1960, all Outboard models were assigned a 5-digit sequential number regardless of the length of the boat.

NOTE: From 1958 through 1960 18-Foot Outboards were assigned hull numbers O-1000 through O-2240. From 1961 on, they were assigned a sequential 5-digit hull number in amongst the other outboards produced during those years.

Wood Hull I/O Models:

Lyman Boat Works chose to use the hull number format in use during the model year for the typical propulsion used on a hull. For example: a 16 foot I/O would have a five-digit hull number where a 20 foot I/O would have an Alpha Numeric hull number.

Fiberglass Hull Models:

As there were, at least, three separate parent companies producing Fiberglass Hull Lymans, the format used for hull numbers varied through the years. We will elaborate more at the end of this tutorial.

Now that you know what you're looking for, you need to know what it looks like. Lyman Boat Works stamped hull numbers into various locations on the boat. Generally, they were $\frac{5}{8}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ inch high characters.

Inboard hull numbers would look something like this;

S 1 0 4 9

Outboard numbers would look something like this;

3 1 6 5 7

So, where are they?

- 1 **Inboard** models would have a hull number stamped on the aft end of the keel (just above the rudder). These are normally very difficult to read as years of wear, scraping, sanding and layers of bottom paint obscure them. But, at one time, they were there. (*Example shown is from a 1967 22 foot Inboard*)



- 2 **Inboard** models may also have the hull number stamped on one (or both) engine stringers. This practice appears to have stopped in the late 1940's to mid 1950's.



- 3 **Outboard** models should have the hull number stamped on the bottom peripheral transom reinforcement in the chine area (in the area of the floorboard cleat).



- ④ **Inboard** and **Outboard** models may have the hull number stamped on various interior components that are easily removed. Examples follow;

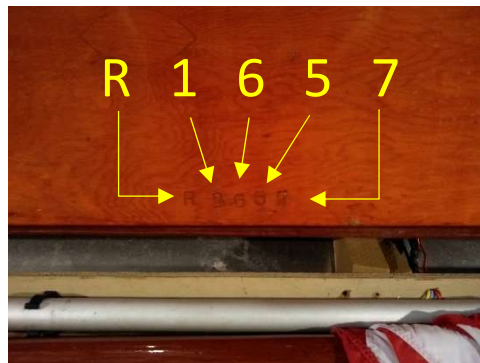
- The underside of seat bottoms. (*Example shown is a hinged rear seat in a 1959 18-foot Outboard*)



- This example is from a 1956 18-foot Outboard.



- This one is from a 1973 26-foot I/B Sleeper (Rear bench seat).

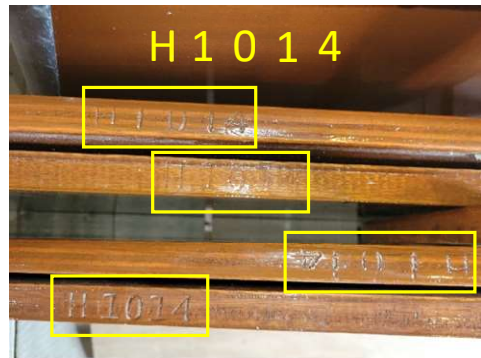


- This one from the same boat (R-1657) except it's of the Forward Passenger seat. (Stamp is upside-down)



NOTE: The last two examples shown are from a 26-foot I/B. But all of the 1960's Inboards that have mahogany plywood seats *may have* the hull number stamped on the underside of the seat bottom

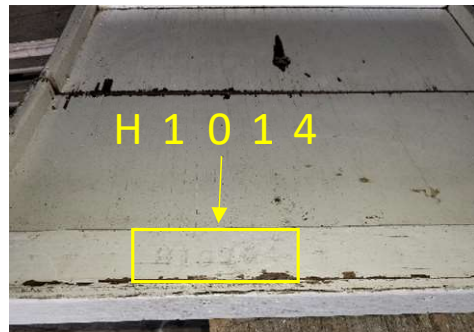
- In some cases, the hull number may be stamped on the edges of the plywood seat bottoms. (*Examples shown are from a 1961 24-foot Sleeper.*)



- Example shown is underside of the helm seat from a 1956 18-foot I/B Runabout. The hull number is written in pencil.

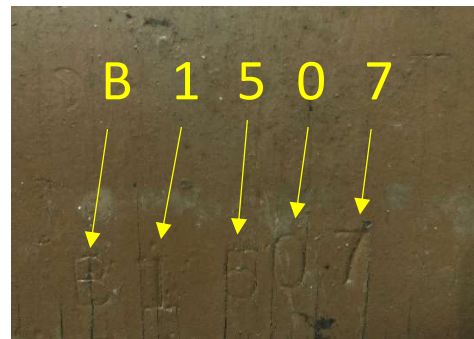


- Models with a Cuddy Cabin often have a hinged section of the bunk platforms in the center. The hull number may be stamped on the frame underneath this hinged panel.



⑤ **Inboard** and **Outboard** models may have the hull number simply written in pencil or marker on the underside of the floorboards. Obviously, if the underside of your floorboards have been painted, these are probably not still visible.

- Others will have a stamped hull number on the underside of a floorboard. (*Example shown is from a 1956 18-foot I/B Runabout*)



- ⑥ All states have now standardized the Hull Identification Number (HIN) to comply with a Federal mandate issued by the USCG as each boat manufacturer used different formats for their factory assigned HIN. **IF** your boat requires a state issued Title **AND** it was titled to you before your state began to issue standardized HIN's, then the Lyman assigned hull number *may* be shown on the boat's title.

If this is not the case, perhaps your state can search prior issued titles for you.

- ⑦ As a last resort, hopefully the person from whom you bought the boat included the Lyman Hull Number in the documents you received such as a Bill of Sale. Look carefully through these documents to see if there's an item that matches the hull number format used by Lyman for your specific type and year boat.

It is possible, especially if your Lyman has had a moderate to extensive restoration, that some (or all) of the components listed above (keel, transom, seats and floorboards) have been replaced. It is doubtful that a DIY restorer (owner) would restamp a hull number in a component that they replaced. In talking to several professional restorers, they sometimes (but rarely) include the hull number on a replaced component.

Fiberglass Hull Models:

I will preface this section by freely admitting I know very little about the fiberglass hulls produced by Lyman Boat Works or the subsequent parent companies that produced fiberglass Lymans. But – this is what I have learned so far:

In or about 1971, the Federal Government (specifically the *Boating Safety Act*) mandated that all boats produced after 1972 display a 12-character HIN. Accordingly, for the **1972** model year only, Lyman assigned their typical 5-character inboard hull number. (For example, a 1972 24-foot inboard fiberglass hull would have a hull number of "G" followed by a four-digit sequential number.) I have no idea where on the boat Lyman placed the factory assigned hull number. I assume (because it would be difficult to stamp a number in fiberglass) that they installed a metal "Builder's Tag" with the hull number stamped on the tag.

Then, beginning with the 1973 model year, Lyman complied with the 12-character hull number mandate. The first three characters (LYM) represent the Manufacturer code designated by the USCG. The next five digits are the sequential numbers that correspond to the build order. The last five characters are alpha numeric and *may* represent Manufacturing (Certification) Year, Month of manufacture and/or Model. Again, I'm assuming Lyman stamped the HIN on a "Builder's Tag" and rivetted it (or embedded it in the gelcoat) somewhere on the boat.

It is important to recognize that, if your 12-character HIN begins with two letters that represent the state followed by a “Z”, then you have a **state assigned** hull number. The letter “Z” is a dead give away that this is a state assigned hull number and NOT a **factory assigned** hull number.

Location:

Beginning in 1984, the *Boating Safety Act* was amended to mandate that the HIN be permanently affixed on the exterior of the boat to the upper, right hand (starboard) side of the transom within two inches of the gunwale.

Summary

It appears that there was no standard procedure in place that defined where (or how) the factory assigned hull number should be applied. This *could* be due to the fact that there were basically no Federal requirements in place for boat manufacturers until the *Boating Safety Act* was enacted in 1972. However – Lyman took great pride in building quality into each and every boat that was shipped out of the Lyman Boat Works. As someone who has spent over 40 years in Quality Assurance, I suspect the Lyman Boat Works had, at least, a rudimentary traceability system in place for bulk raw materials and major components should a field failure occur. If, for nothing else, to double check their jigs and fixtures or to enhance their process to minimize operator error. Why else would they spend the time and effort to maintain in excess of 57,000 records that included the hull number?

Rest assured that, when your boat left the Lyman Boat Works, it had a factory assigned hull number affixed to it in some manner and, more than likely, it's still there. There is more than enough anecdotal evidence that indicates once you find the first hull number, they will start popping up everywhere. It just takes due diligence and a keen eye to find that first one.