

Help Protect our Fragile Coral Reefs & Seagrass Beds!

Avoid Anchoring! Use the Mooring System

- Coral reefs are among the most diverse, productive, and complex ecosystems in the world.
- Corals are **fragile living animals**, most growing only a fraction of an inch per year.
- Coral Reefs and Seagrass Beds provide fish, sea turtles, and marine organisms with shelter, food, and breeding grounds. They also help protect our shorelines and beaches.

How You Can Help:

It is **strictly prohibited** in both the U.S.V.I. and B.V.I. **to anchor in coral or seagrass beds**. Anchors and anchor chains can damage and destroy coral and seagrass beds, so **use moorings** whenever possible: It's the safest and easiest way to secure your boat.

If You MUST Anchor:

1. Carefully select an anchorage by observing the bottom and making sure there is no coral or seagrass below. Do not throw the anchor if you do not know what is below!
2. **Only anchor in the sand.** If you are unsure of the bottom type, use an experienced snorkeler to find a sandy spot or move to another location. In addition to helping protect marine resources, a sandy bottom provides the most secure anchorage.

U.S.V.I. Anchoring and Mooring Regulations:

South Shore of St. John:

1. Vessels between 16ft–60 ft. in length must use mooring within Park waters on the south side of St. John, anchoring is prohibited.
2. Vessels under 16ft. in length may anchor in sand within Park waters on the south side of St. John.
3. Anchoring is prohibited anywhere within the V.I. Coral Reef Monument.

Elsewhere around St. John:

1. Vessels 60ft in length or less are required to use NPS moorings if available.
 - If moorings within a bay are occupied, vessels may anchor in sand 200 ft. seaward of moorings (except on the south side of St. John — see above).

B.V.I. Anchoring and Mooring Regulations:

Vessels are required to use moorings if available.

1. If moorings within a bay are occupied, vessels may anchor in sand, 300 ft. seaward of the moorings.
2. Exception: Anchoring is prohibited anywhere within the marine park of the wreck of the Rhone.

