



## **USS Constitution – Sails & Sailing**

**22 July 1798**

USS *Constitution* sailed from Boston on her 1<sup>st</sup> voyage  
The ship's first suit of sails were made from flax (linen)

**1817**

USS *Constitution* sail plan by Charles Ware delineated 36 individual sails;  
if studding sails were added to the main topgallant and royal  
yards (mirroring the fore topgallant & royal studdingsails), the sail plan  
would then include between 46 - 48 sails – see list at the end of this report



**After 1817 sail plan of USS Constitution – US Navy photo**

**Fall, 1881**

USS *Constitution* sailed under her own power for the last time in her  
active career



Only known photo of *Constitution* under sail, summer, 1881, Hampton Roads, VA – US Navy photo

**1931-34**

USS *Constitution* traveled around the United States' 3 coasts on her "National Cruise"; although towed by the mine sweeper USS *Grebe*, *Constitution* was outfitted with a full suit of canvas sails and they were set during the cruise for pier-side demonstrations



*Constitution* with fore topsail set, San Francisco, February, 1933 – US Navy photo

**21 July 1997**

USS *Constitution*, outfitted with 6 Oceanus™<sup>1</sup> synthetic canvas sails – 2 jibs, 3 topsails, & spanker – sailed under her own power for 1 hour off the coast of Marblehead, MA in honor of her 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary



USS *Constitution*, 12noon, 21 July 1997, sailing off Marblehead, MA – US Navy photo

**2012**

USS *Constitution* has 11 Oceanus™ sails available to be "bent" onto her yards – 2 jibs, 3 topsails, 3 topgallant sails, 1 main topmast staysail, 1 mizzen topmast staysail, & 1 spanker

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<sup>1</sup> "Oceanus™" is a polyester synthetic cloth developed by North Cloth/North Sails for square-rigged sailing vessels. For more information, see [www.northcloth.northsails.com/Product/OceanusCloth/tabid/579/Default.aspx](http://www.northcloth.northsails.com/Product/OceanusCloth/tabid/579/Default.aspx) - accessed 16 April 2012.

**USS CONSTITUTION'S FULL SAIL COMPLEMENT**

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<u>Name of Sails by Mast</u>	<u>Number of Sails on Each Mast</u>	
<i><b><u>BOW</u></b></i>		
Flying Jib		Fore Topmast Staysail
Jib		Fore Topgallant Staysail
		4 total
<i><b><u>FORE MAST</u></b></i>		
Fore Sail (Course)		Fore Sail Studding Sails (2)
Fore Topsail		Fore Topsail Studding Sails (2)
Fore Topgallant		Fore Topgallant Studding Sails (2)
Fore Royal		Fore Royal Studding Sails (2)
Fore Skysail	5 total	
		8 total
<i><b><u>MAIN MAST</u></b></i>		
Main Topmast Staysail		
Middle Staysail		
Main Topgallant Staysail		
Main Royal Staysail	4 total	
Main Sail (Course)		Main Sail Studding Sails - Possibly (2?)
Main Topsail		Main Topsail Studding Sails (2)
Main Topgallant		Main Topgallant Studding Sails (2)
Main Royal		Main Royal Studding Sails (2)
Main Skysail	5 total	
		6 or 8 total
<i><b><u>MIZZEN MAST</u></b></i>		
Mizzen Staysail		
Mizzen Topgallant Staysail		
Mizzen Royal Staysail	3 total	
Mizzen Topsail		
Mizzen Topgallant		Mizzen Topgallant Studding Sails (2)
Mizzen Royal		Mizzen Royal Studding Sails (2)
Mizzen Skysail	4 total	
		4 total
<i><b><u>SNOW MAST</u></b></i>		
Spanker (Driver)		
Ringtail		
Mizzen Gaff (Top) Sail	3 total	

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TOTAL # OF SAILS ON ALL MASTS                      46 or 48                      (More than 1 acre of canvas)