Build an Egyptian Grain Ship - PART ONE

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Paul's journey to Rome is one of the most exciting stories in the Bible. However, unless you are familiar with ancient sailing ships, the details can be difficult to understand. What is undergirding? What is the ship's tackle? The ship we are concerned with here, is actually the second one of the voyage, 'a ship of Alexandria, sailing into Italy' Acts 27:6.

In the first century, there was an active grain trade between Rome and Alexandria, Egypt. The average Roman ate a lot of bread in their diet, and there was a government provision of bread for the poorest, so there was a high demand for grain. The easiest way to import grain from Egypt was by sea, rather than cart it by land some 120 kilometres. Grain ships of this time were enormous. One is described as 180 feet long, 43 ft to the top deck, and a beam (width at widest point) of 45 feet. The capacity of such a ship would be 1200 tonnes of grain!

Grain was shipped in bags, and as a cargo, it had special considerations. It must be kept dry and cool, to prevent sprouting or infestations of pests. It must be kept in place, or risk shifting the balance of the ship.

Passengers on a grain ship travelled on deck, with no shelter from the wind and waves. Paul's ship had 276 people on deck! There was a small temple on deck with an idol, that served as cover for the helmsmen. This was no easy journey at any time of year. The journey to Egypt might take 14 days, but the journey back to Rome could take up to 70 days, because the winds were adverse and the heavy laden ships had to stay close to the coastline.

Drive Thru History has some excellent videos on Paul's voyage on Youtube.

What type of ship did Paul sail on?
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tl3OaA2SpaU

Where was Paul shipwrecked on the way to Rome?
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dk-jHfF954M

1. GATHER MATERIALS

Cardstock
Markers or paint if you want to decorate.
Scissors or exacto knife
White glue
Paintbrush
Hole punch
String
1/4 inch dowel for mast pole (or use a wooden skewer, and adjust holes to fit)

You may want to play your favourite music!

2. PRINT TEMPLATES

Print on coloured cardstock for best results, or use regular printer paper and color.

3. CUT OUT TEMPLATES

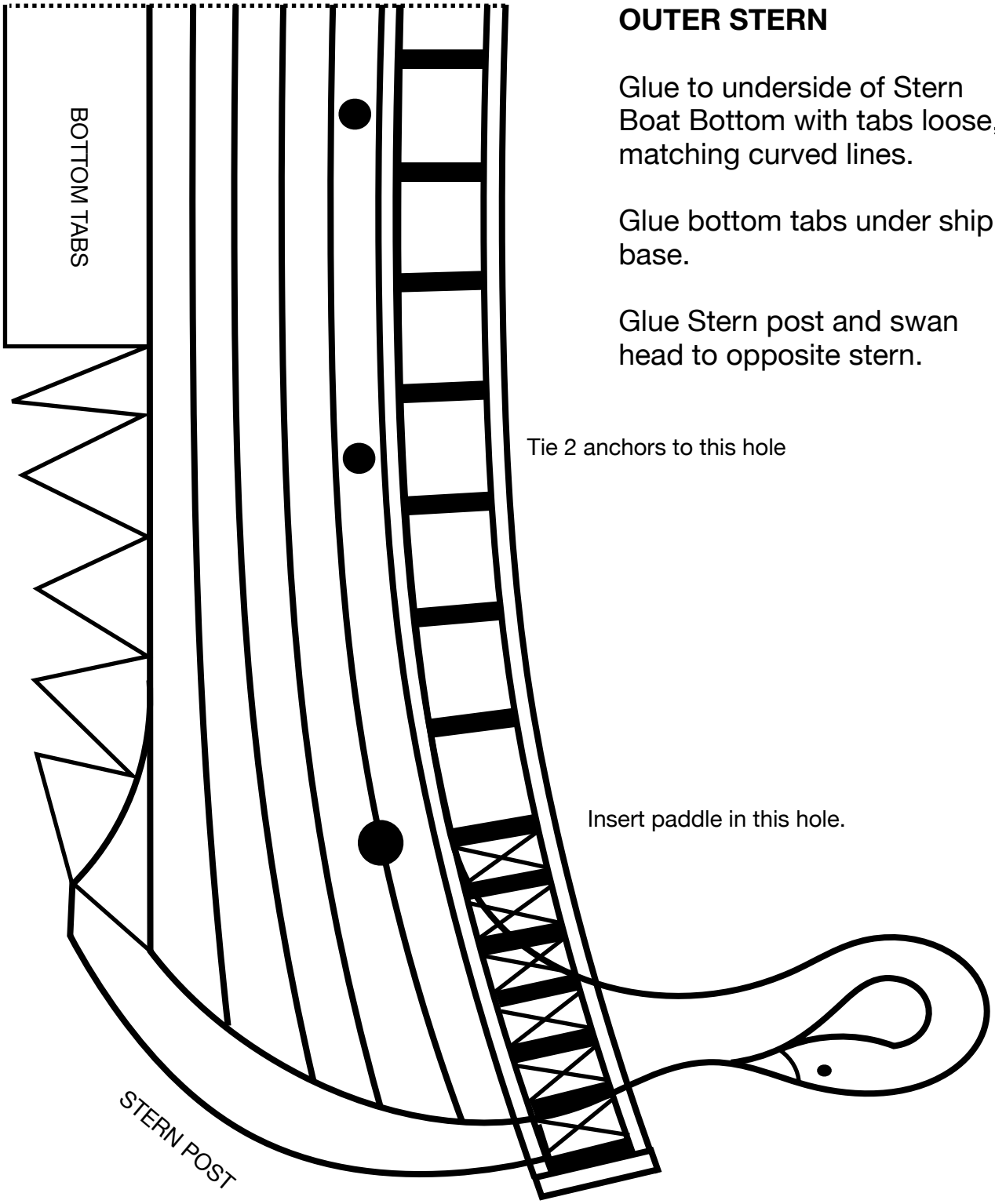
Use scissors to cut out templates, use a exacto knife for small details.

4. PUNCH HOLES

Punch all holes. Punch mast holes to suit size of dowel. Use a regular hole punch or skewer as needed.

5. Take a break! Wait for Part Two.

Cut off the dotted line, for invisible overlap

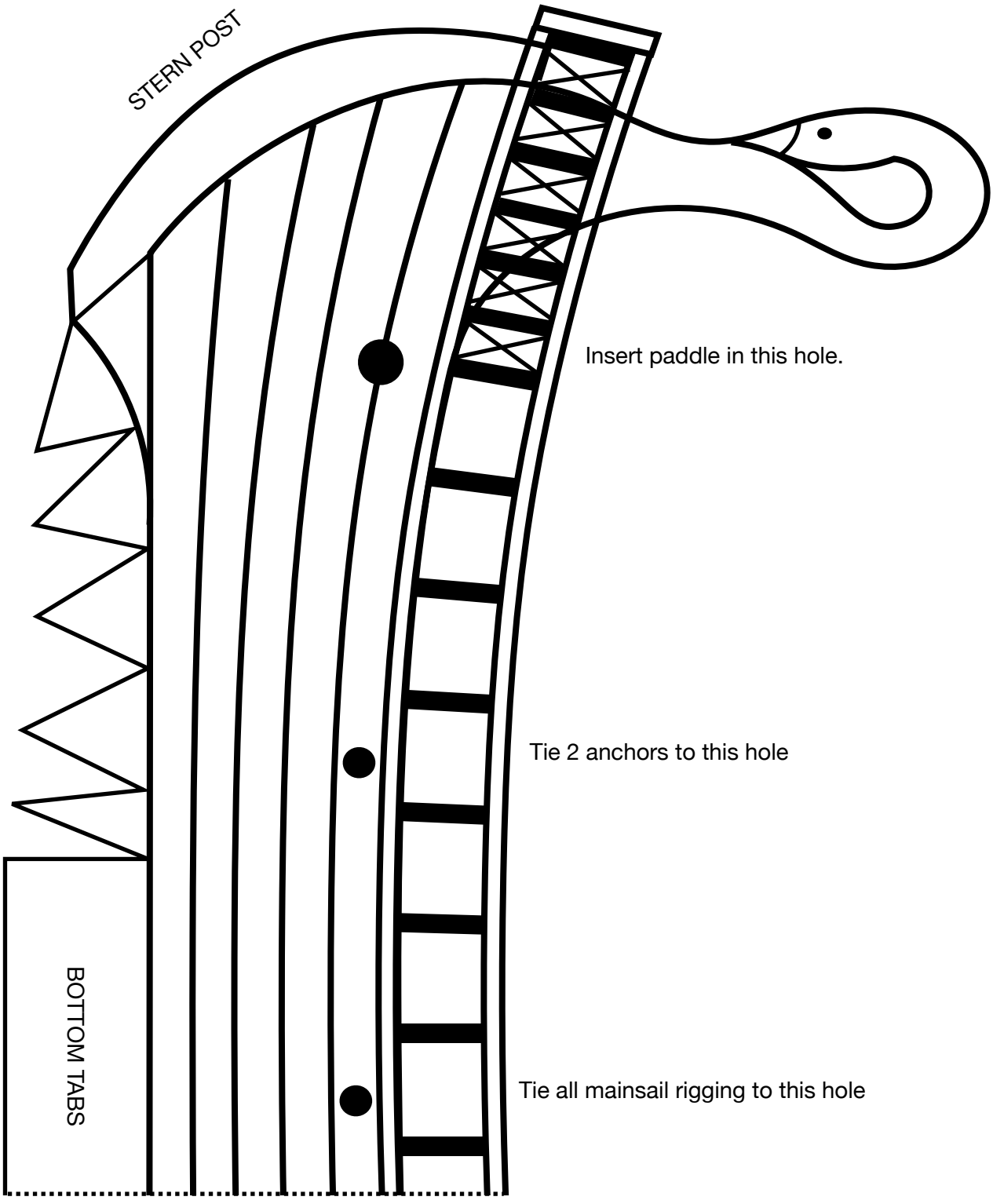


OUTER STERN

Glue to underside of Stern Boat Bottom with tabs loose, matching curved lines.

Glue bottom tabs under ship base.

Glue Stern post and swan head to opposite stern.



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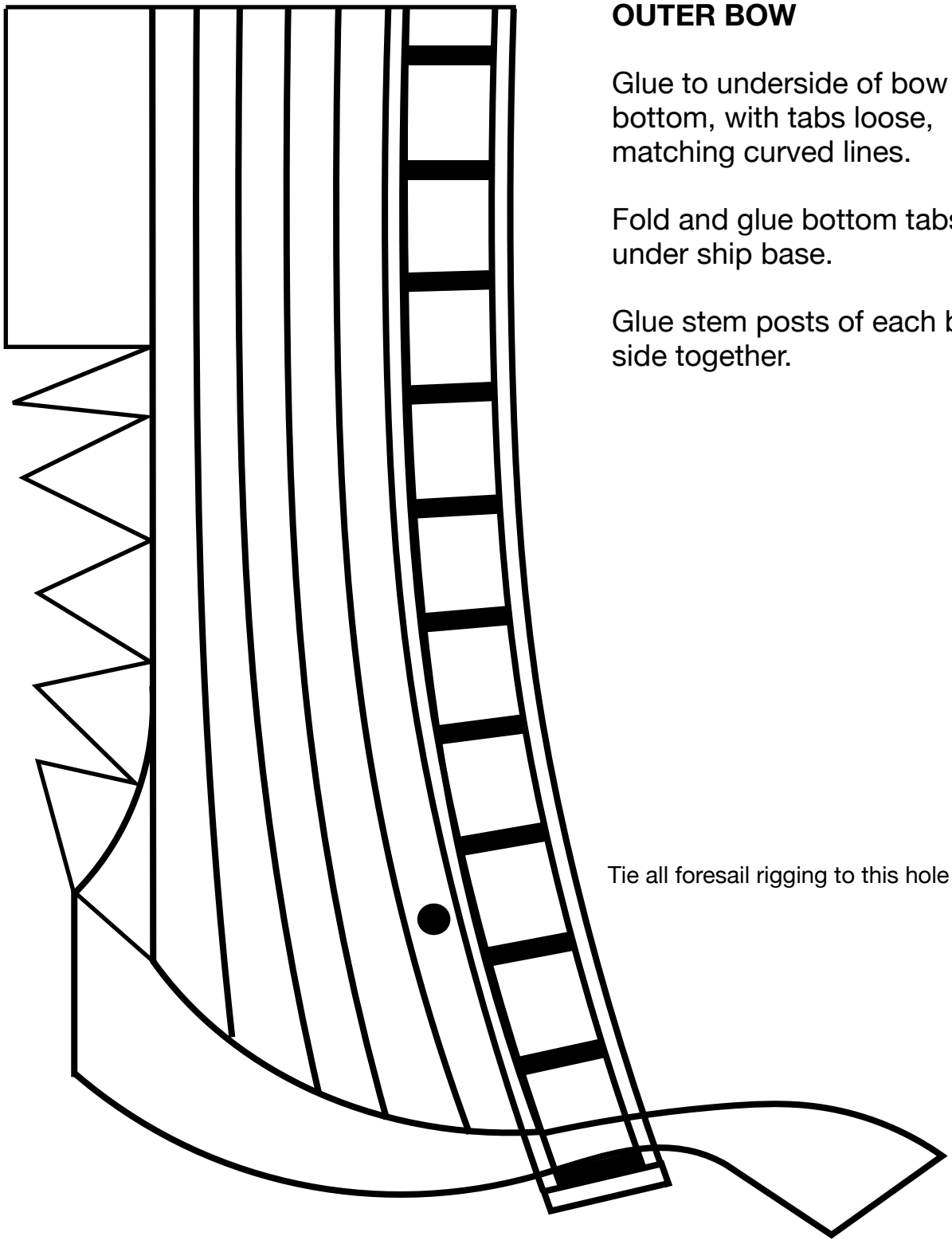


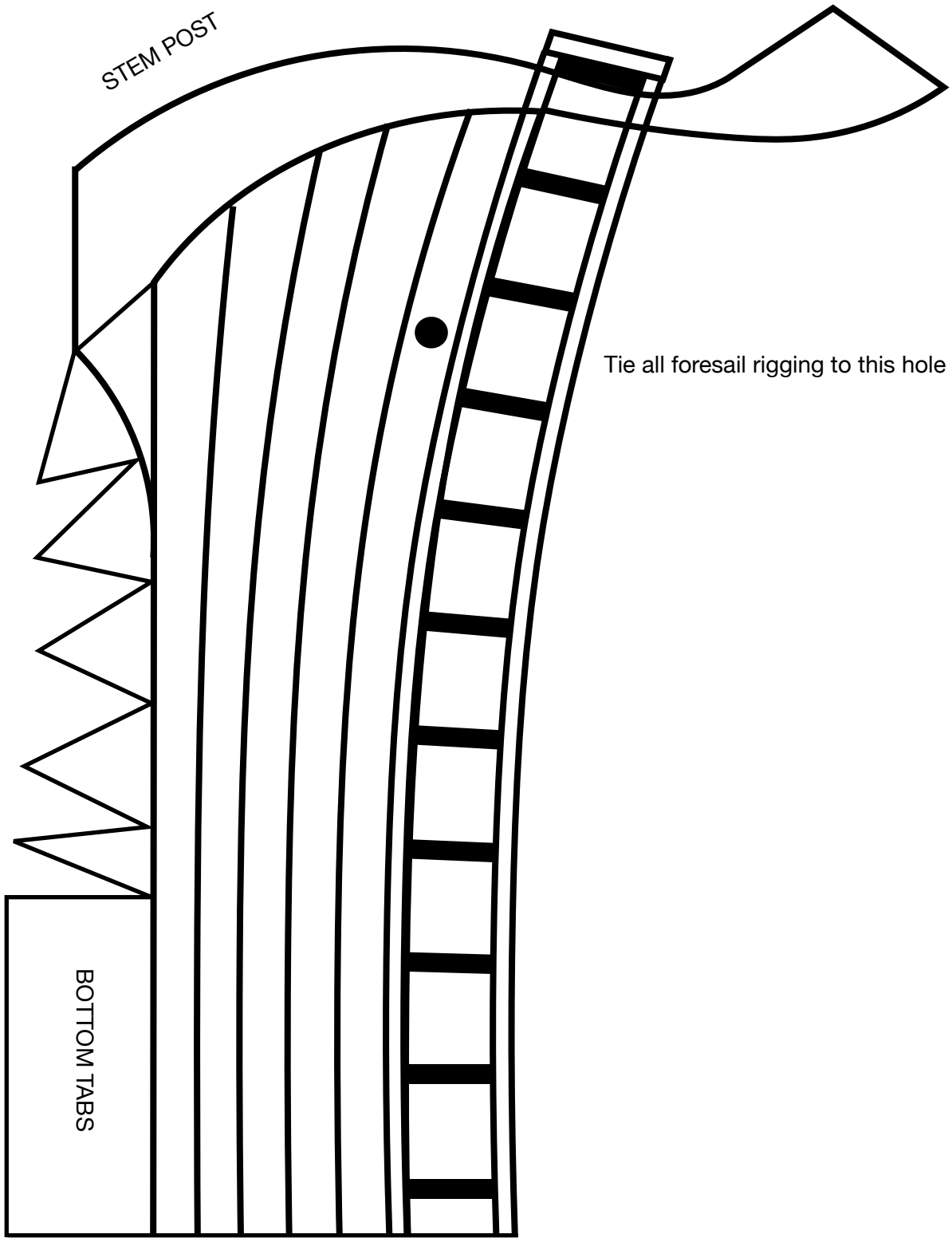
OUTER BOW

Glue to underside of bow boat bottom, with tabs loose, matching curved lines.

Fold and glue bottom tabs under ship base.

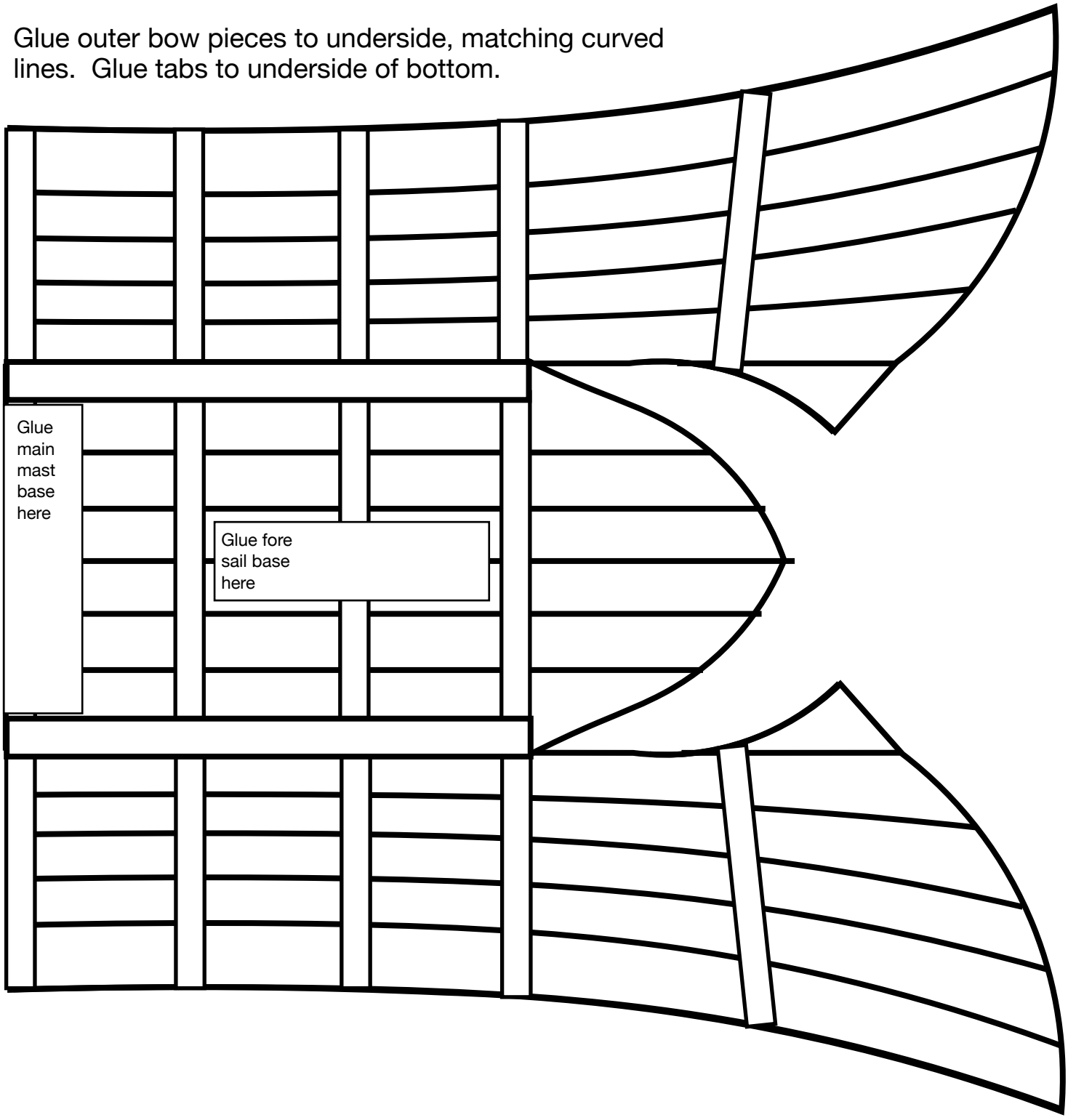
Glue stem posts of each bow side together.

Tie all foresail rigging to this hole


STEM POST
Tie all foresail rigging to this hole
BOTTOM TABS

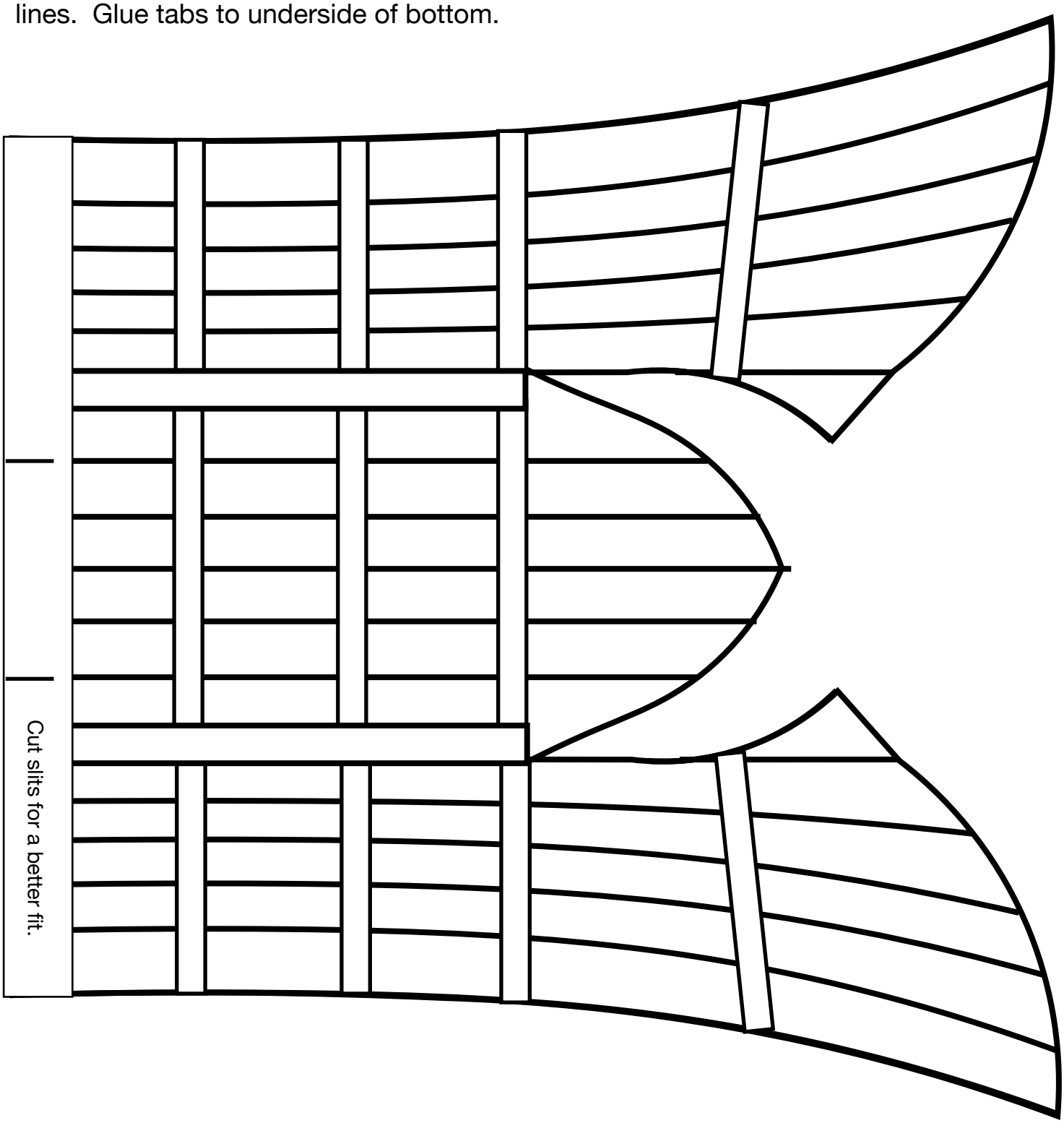
BOW BOAT BOTTOM

Glue outer bow pieces to underside, matching curved lines. Glue tabs to underside of bottom.



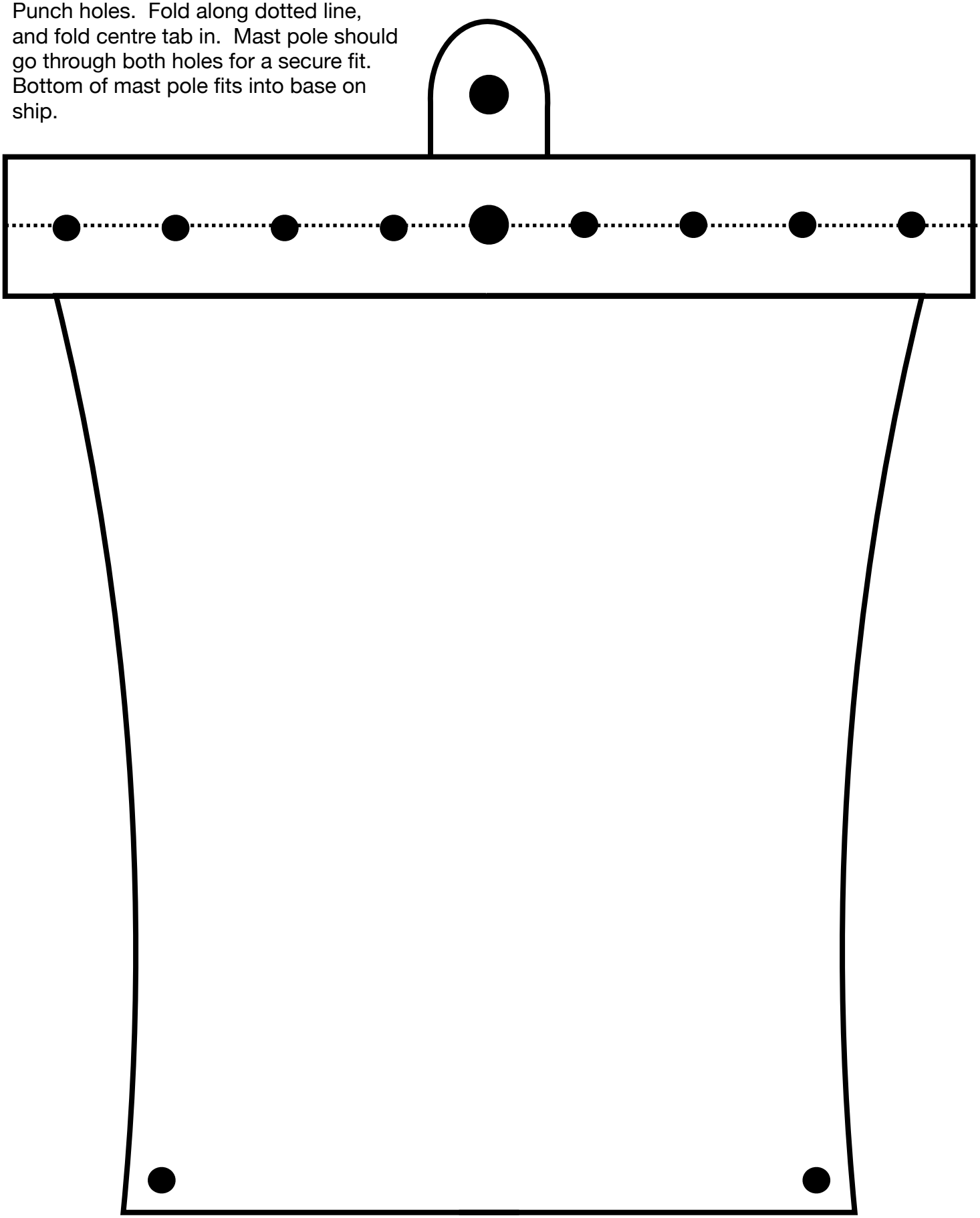
STERN BOAT BOTTOM

Glue outer bow pieces to underside, matching curved lines. Glue tabs to underside of bottom.



MAIN MAST

Punch holes. Fold along dotted line, and fold centre tab in. Mast pole should go through both holes for a secure fit. Bottom of mast pole fits into base on ship.



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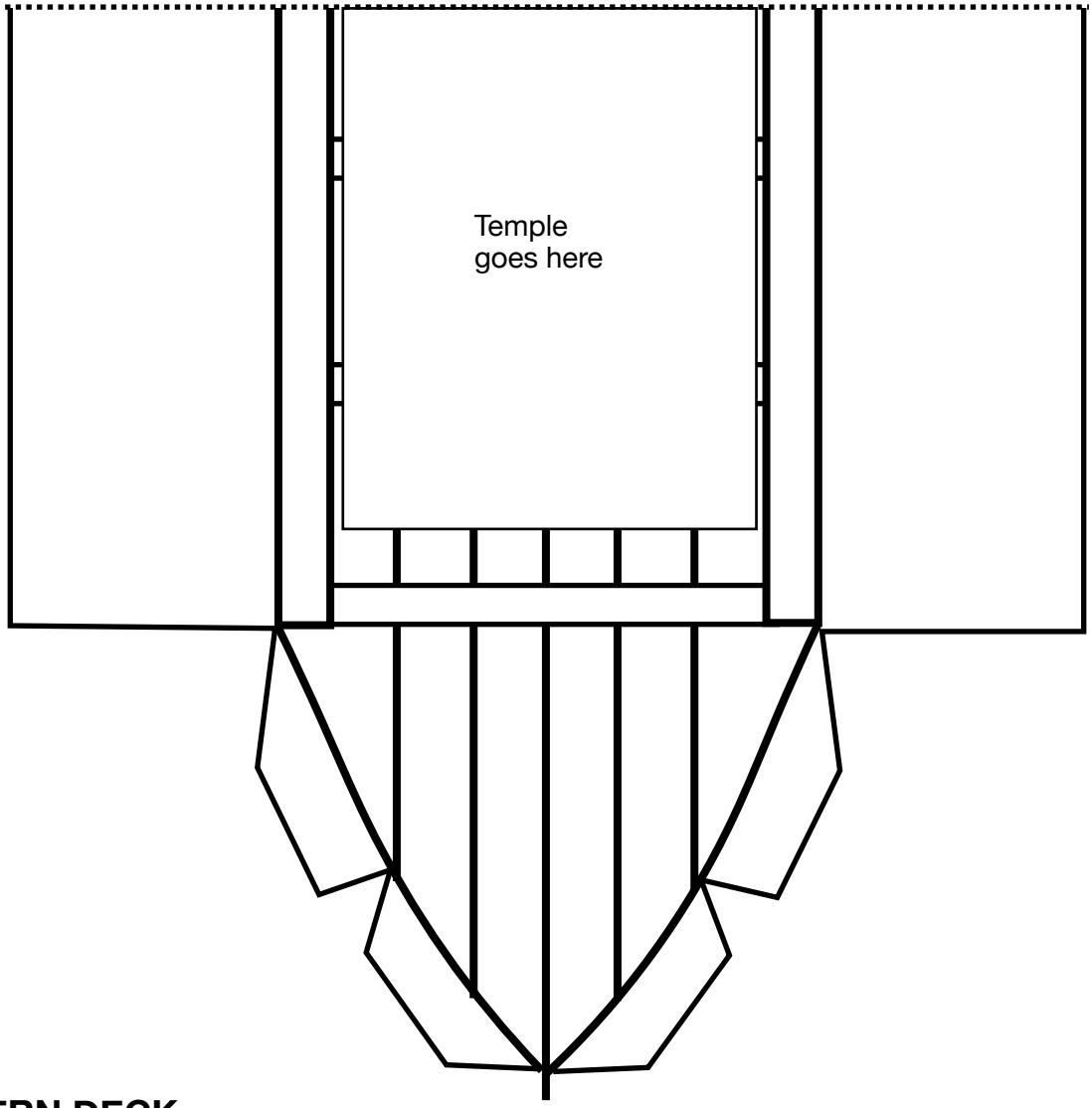
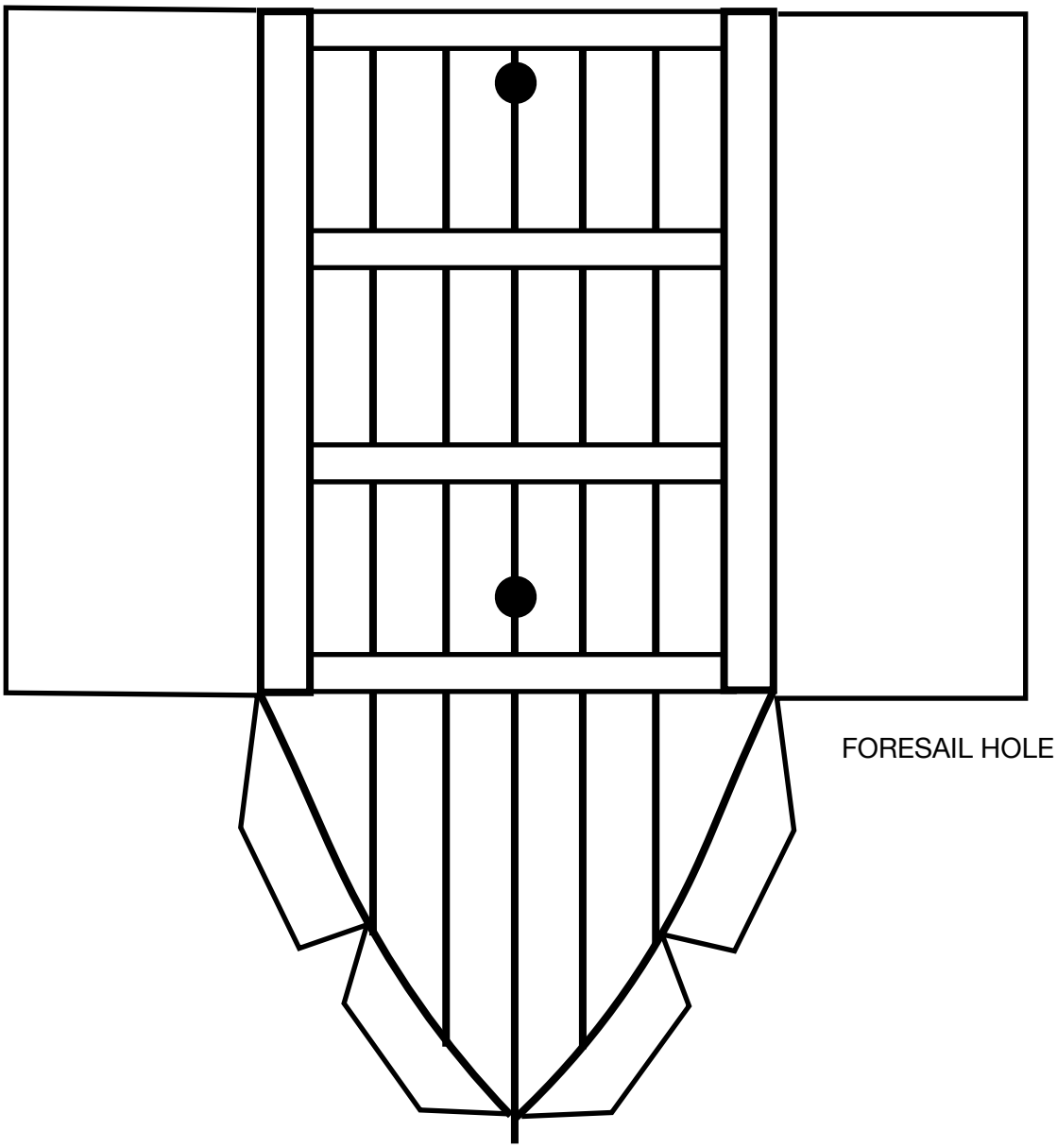


STERN DECK

Fold side tabs and glue to sides of inner stern

Glue temple to top of this deck, long sides parallel to the sides of the ship.



BOW DECK

Fold side tabs and glue to sides of inner stern

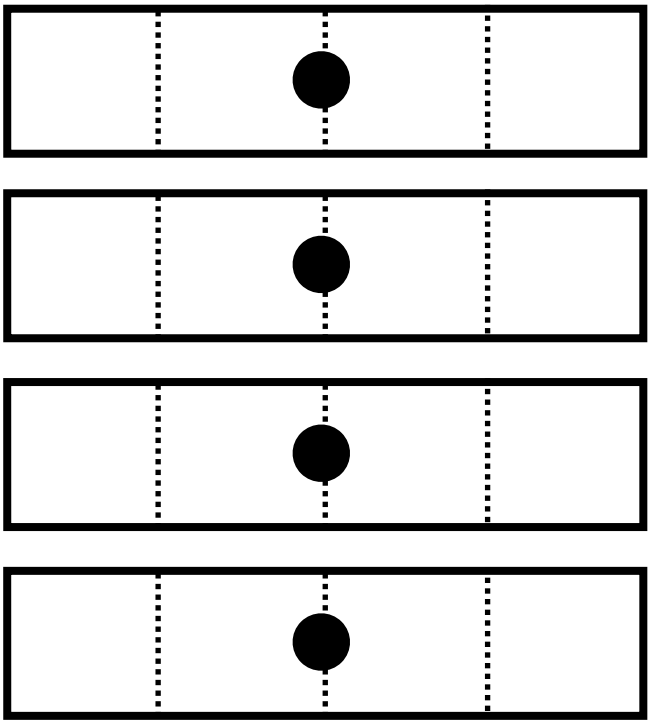
Glue temple to top of this deck, long sides parallel to the sides of the ship.

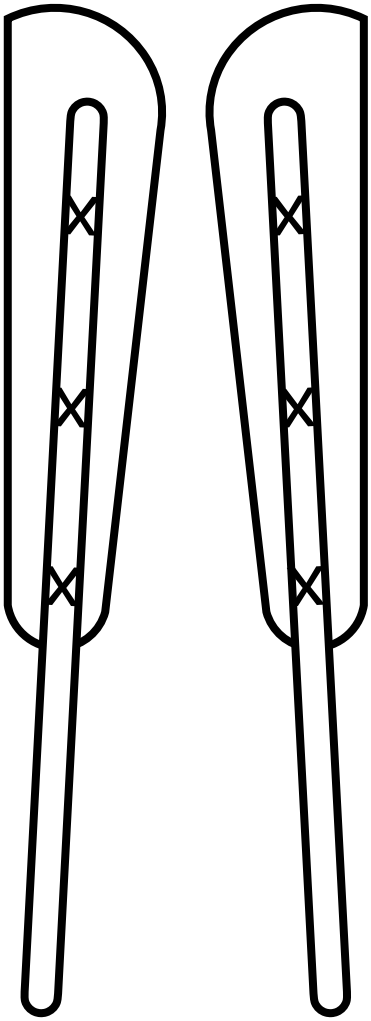
MAST BASE

Cut at least 2 from yardstick or heavy paper.

For each mast:
Fold one cardstock base into a triangle. Punch hole and face it up.

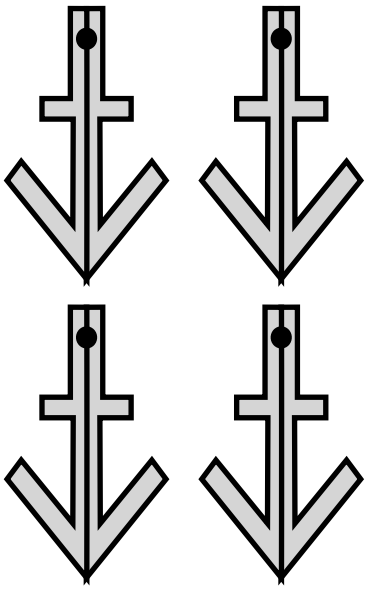
Fold one paper base and flatten it over triangle, aligning holes. Glue to ship.





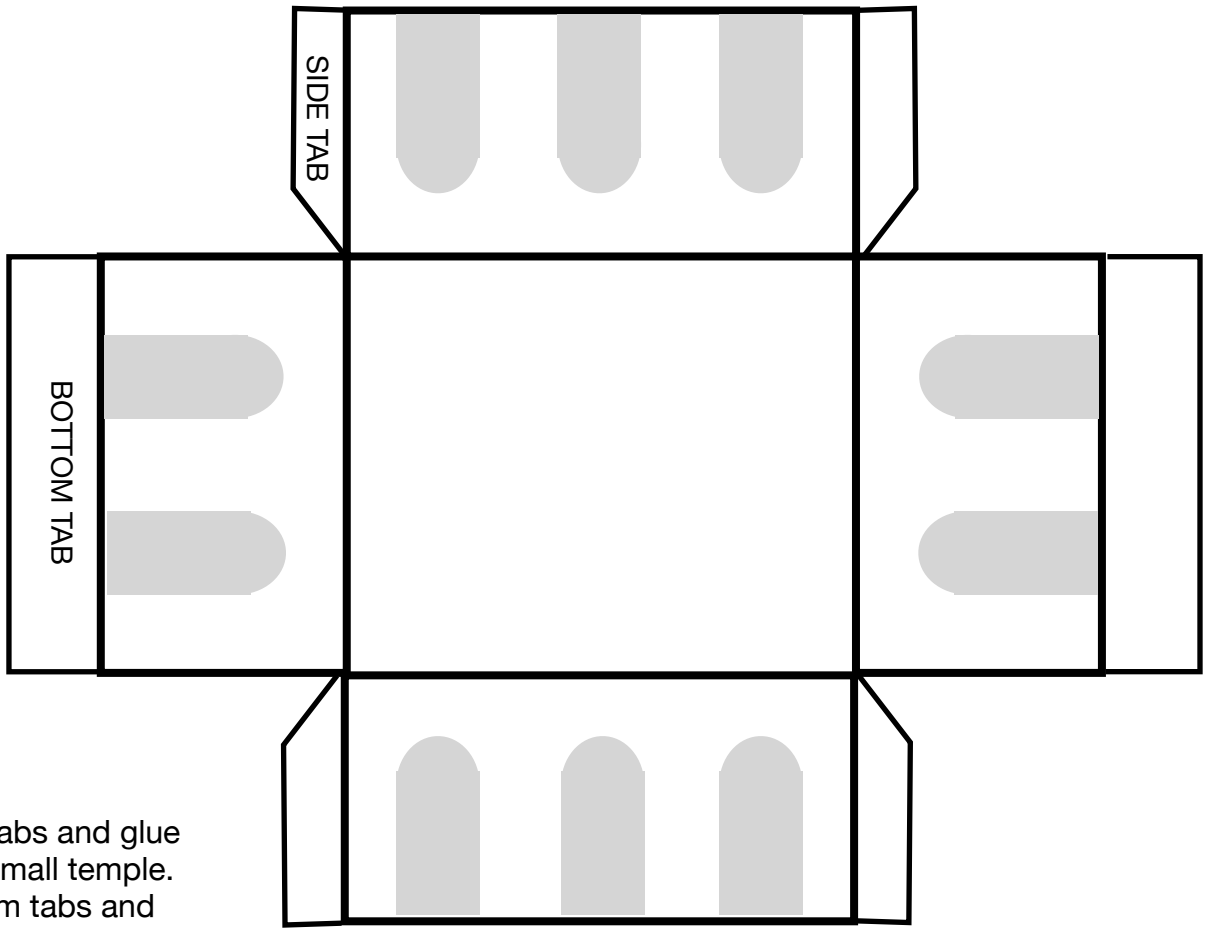
PADDLES

Attach to hole on either side of sternpost



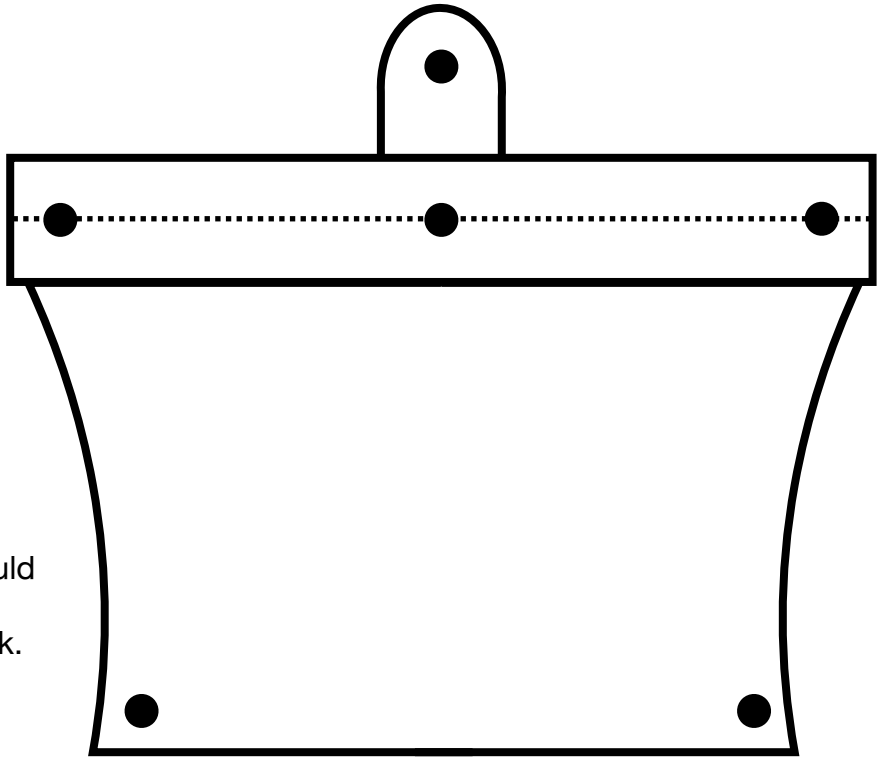
ANCHORS

Attach to stern with string



TEMPLE

Fold side tabs and glue to form a small temple. Fold bottom tabs and glue to stern deck.



FORESAIL MAST

Punch holes. Fold along dotted line, and fold centre tab in. Mast pole should go through both holes for a secure fit. Bottom of mast pole fits into bow deck.