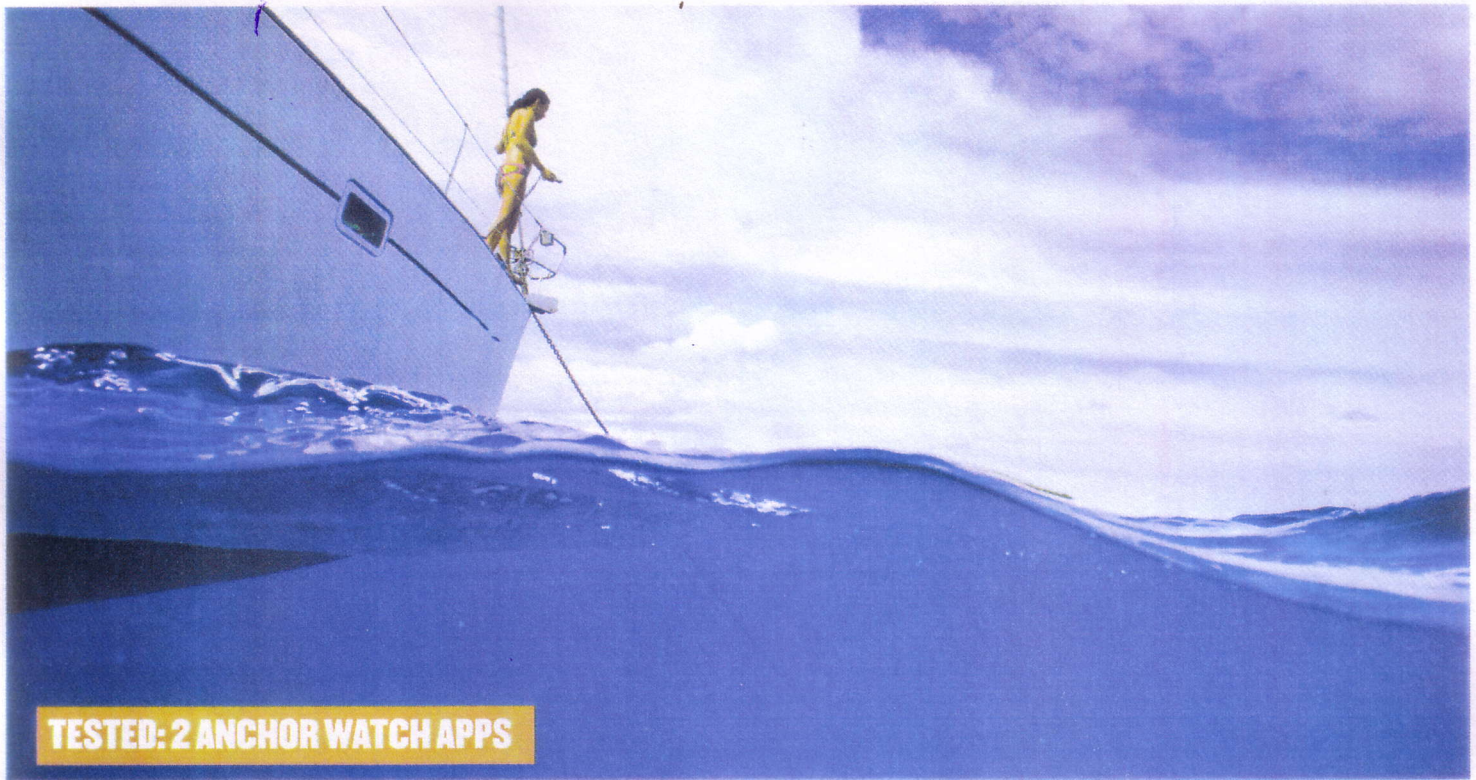


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TESTED: 2 ANCHOR WATCH APPS

Electronic anchor watch

When it comes to anchoring, I'm by no means an early adopter of gadgetry. I've never put much faith in depth alarms, because they don't necessarily warn of a change of position on a changing wind or tide and I'm wary of anything that might encourage a sound night's sleep if it's not really warranted. Getting in synch with the sounds and feel of a boat is something that takes time to build up.

So I wasn't immediately sold on the new generation of ultra-low-cost anchor watch-guards – smartphone and tablet anchoring applications that rely on the device's built-in GPS. The signal and its reliability vary, so how accurate could they be?

So I asked Swedish cruising sailor Jonas Svanberg, who uses iPad and other apps widely when cruising in the Med.

He tested the two anchoring apps available, Anchor Watch HD by developer Luky Soft (£1.49 for iPad) and iDrifter XL by Green Turtle Apps (£6.99 for iPad), on board his boat and has given both a thumbs-up.

Anchor Watch HD

Svanberg reports: 'I've used this with the iPad [3G version] built-in GPS and online maps using a 3G connection for download. From my point of view, the software is good enough to be used as an anchor watch, although it has created false alarms owing to fluctuating signal levels.

'The major problem I've found has been to define the diameter to use because you seldom have time to mark "Drop anchor" when you are actually dropping the anchor. We will most likely add a Bluetooth GPS to the iPad to achieve a better

GPS accuracy during next season.

'Nevertheless, we relied totally on Anchor Watch from March to September and it worked well. In September and October we used our Furuno GPS-80 in parallel with the same set-up and they reacted more less at the same time.

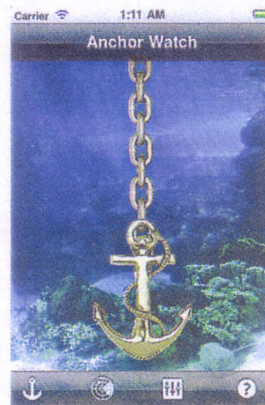
'We have dragged once in winds over 50 knots (in the Aegean Sea) and were alerted. The rest of the alarms have been the result either of too narrow a diameter or a drop in GPS signal levels.

'On the positive side, this app is easy to use, has regular updates and the software is now stable. On the negative side, the software tends to freeze when in continuous use for more than two days.

'In summary, this is a good app, and its ease of use trumps most of the competition. We will continue to use it and extend its use with add-on functions and features.'

iDrifter XL

'My overall impression is that iDrifter is fast and easy to use and serves its purpose well, giving the



Anchor Watch app given the thumbs up by Swedish cruiser Jonas Svanberg