



# Hunter e36: New and Improved

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This mid-sized cruiser offers more than just a large saloon.

**BY BILL SPRINGER**

IN SOME WAYS, THE 36-FOOT HUNTER e36 is exactly what you'd expect from the company that's earned a reputation for building easy-to-sail cruising boats with ultra-comfortable accommodations. But as I learned during a test sail in light air and flat water off Annapolis, Maryland, it appears that the Hunter Design Team paid as much attention to the boat's sailing performance as it did to the accommodations plan.

This was readily apparent when we hoisted (instead of unrolled) the main. Rather than the white Dacron sails and in-mast furling with which most Hunters are equipped, our test model carried a sporty, full-roach, square-topped, laminated Mylar main and a roller-furling jib. Our test boat also had a spinnaker that sets on a remov-

able sprit. Granted, the model we were testing was equipped with the optional performance package that included a lead keel with 6 feet 5 inches of draft, but just the fact that the e36 is even available with a performance package shows that Hunter continues to embrace the idea that sailing performance matters as much as dockside comfort.

Unfortunately, the wind during our test topped out at only 8 knots, so I wasn't able to see for myself how the racy sails stood up to heavier air, but I can report that the boat cut a clean wake through the flat water and that boat speed was in the 5-knot range upwind. Off the breeze, the spinnaker kept us peacefully sailing along at almost the same speed we'd probably be doing if we'd turned on the engine.

I can't say for sure how the standard boat with Dacron sails and in-mast furling would've performed in those conditions, but I'm pretty sure that the extra sail area in the roach and more efficient sails of our test boat provided better speed in the light stuff, and the lighter sails and deep lead keel should

LOA	35' 6"	(10.82 m.)
LWL	31' 1"	(9.47 m.)
Beam	12' 4"	(3.76 m.)
Draft (standard)	4' 11"	(1.5 m.)
(performance)	6' 5"	(1.96 m.)
Sail Area (100%)	621 sq. ft.	(57.7 sq. m.)
Ballast	5,064 lb.	(2,302 kg.)
Displacement	13,900 lb.	(6,318 kg.)
Ballast/D	.36	
D/L	219	
SA/D (100%)	17.9	
Water	75 gal.	(284 l.)
Fuel	35 gal.	(144 l.)
Holding	30 gal.	(114 l.)
Mast Height	55' 3"	(16.84 m.)
Engine	29-hp. Yanmar	
Designer	Hunter Design Team	
Price	\$169,000	

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help the boat be stiff and quick when the wind gets up, too.

Since the e36 was designed to replace Hunter's long-running 356, the Hunter Design Team had to come up with a lot more than simply offering a new performance package to improve on the success of the 356. One area



## DOWN TO THE DETAILS

- 1 The updated coachroof features sleek tinted windows and flush-mounted hatches. The performance-oriented sails did well in light air.
- 2 The saloon is bright and spacious, and the varnished teak joinery and cream-colored liner and cushions help make the space feel warm and cozy.
- 3 Access to the e36's engine, located beneath the companionway stairs, is good.

Visit [cruisingworld.com/1104hunter](http://cruisingworld.com/1104hunter) to see more photos of the Hunter e36.

The other on-deck features aren't unlike what's available on previous Hunter models. The jib sheets lead to winches near the helm station. The stainless-steel traveler arch kept the cockpit free of clutter and made a great mounting point for a bimini. The cockpit seats were comfortable, and there was excellent cockpit storage. It wasn't too hard to step out of the cockpit to go forward, and the wide side decks were easy to navigate. But since all lines lead back to the cockpit, you really only need to go forward when you decide to drop the hook or tie up to a dock. And when it comes time to park the boat, you'll find six sturdy mooring cleats along with an anchoring setup that includes a single bow roller, a powered windlass, and an anchor locker.

Down below, the e36 has all the interior space and cruising comforts for

which Hunters are known. The matte-finished varnished-teak woodwork and white cabin-top liner give the overall accommodations a clean, crisp look; the large cabin-top windows and hull ports let in lots of natural light; and the simple, light teak cabin sole is a stylish improvement over traditional teak and holly. The long, straight bench seat in the saloon to port could double as a sea berth, and the standard settee to starboard is set up like a booth you'd find in some restaurants; the more conventional C-shaped version is an available option. The booth settee gives the saloon a different look and maybe a more cozy feel, but I'd probably choose the extra spot at the table and the extra sea berth that the optional C-shaped settee provides.

The galley has a good amount of Corian counter space and locker space that'll swallow a week's worth of provisions. The nav station faces aft and occupies the end of the port settee rather than having its own dedicated seat, but it has a good-sized chart table and plenty of space to mount electronics. Since most people will do their navigating on the chart plotter up in the cockpit, it seems well-suited to its intended use.

I can't really tell which cabin I'd claim if this were my boat. The forward cabin has better light and ventilation thanks to a large opening hatch over the bunk, but the square, athwartships-oriented bunk in the aft cabin is a good bit bigger than the V-shaped bunk up forward. Both cabins have a decent amount of storage space and neither has an en suite head, so I can only say that both cabins should be comfortable, just in different ways.

If you're in the market for a new mid-sized cruiser, the e36 is well worth a look. It accomplishes the difficult task of combining all the cruising comforts that a dyed-in-the-wool Hunter owner would expect with an updated look and available performance features that a soon-to-be-Hunter-owner might really enjoy.

Bill Springer is CW's senior editor and Boat of the Year director.