



Cargo Ship



museum & workshop

915 Whitney Avenue, Hamden, CT 06517

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What was this boat used for?

A cargo ship, also known as a freighter, container, or merchant ship, is designed for transporting cargo across bodies of water. Cargo ships are an essential part of the global shipping industry, making up a system that carries more than 90% of all traded goods.¹ Cargo ships have large storage areas, and feature cranes, hoists, or conveyors for loading and unloading operations. Some cargo ships have refrigerator holds for perishable goods or tankers for liquid cargo.² Connecticut is a strong manufacturing state that exports a variety of goods, such as aircraft parts, engines, machinery, electrical equipment, medical devices, pharmaceuticals, and agricultural products, while also importing energy and consumer goods via cargo ships.³

Who uses these boats and where?

Cargo ships are used globally but their areas of operation vary based on trade patterns, shipping demand, and geopolitical factors.⁴ Connecticut has three major deepwater ports for large cargo vessels in Bridgeport, New London, and New Haven, which is the highest volume commercial port between Boston and New York City, accommodating ships up to 40,000 deadweight tonnes.⁵

When was this boat used?

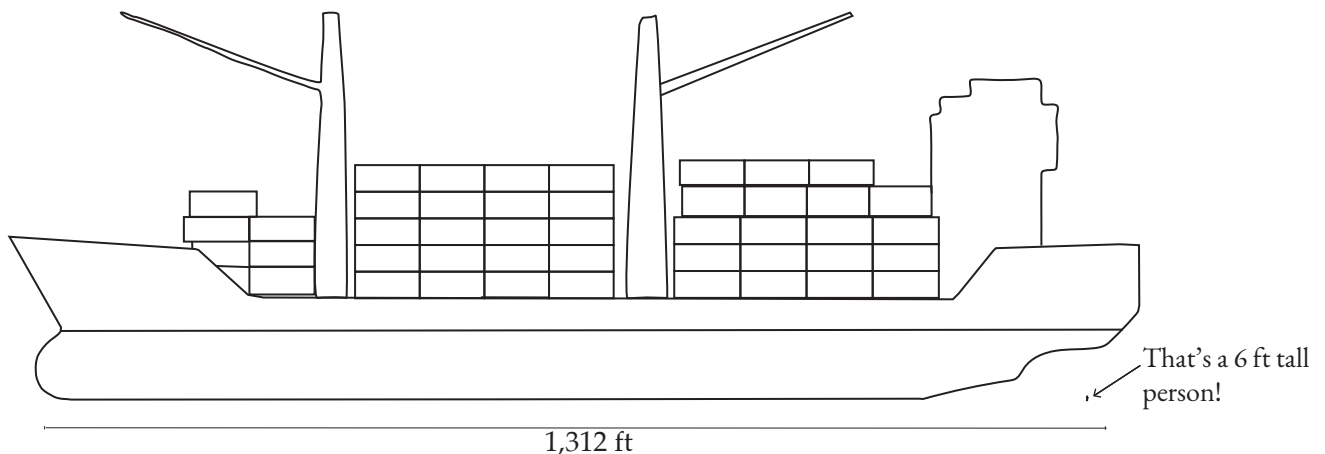
In Connecticut, the use of cargo ships began in the colonial period when trade expanded along coastlines and rivers.⁶ Cargo ships in the 17th and 18th centuries were sailing vessels, until steam-power became prevalent in the 19th century.⁷

How was this boat made?

Common materials used in the construction of cargo ship are steel, aluminum, fiberglass reinforced plastic, and wood.⁸ Today, cargo ships are built of welded steel plates, each wider than a city bus. They generally have a life expectancy of 25-30 years before being scrapped. Most of the global cargo shipbuilding is done in China, South Korea, and Japan.⁹

Where to Visit:

Visit the 1885 Tall Ship Wavertree at the Seaport Museum in New York City. This permanently-moored 19th century cargo sailing vessel allows access to the captain and crew quarters, kitchen, and massive cargo area.¹⁰



- 1, 8. <https://www.marineinsight.com/types-of-ships/what-are-cargo-ships/>
2. <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/policy/army/fm/55-17/ch8.htm>
3. https://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/Press-Release/current_press_release/ft900.pdf
4. <https://www.marsh.com/pr/en/industries/marine/insights/top-global-maritime-issues-facing-the-shipping-industry.html>
5. <https://www.newhavenct.gov/government/departments-divisions/port-authority/port-of-new-haven#:~:text=The%20Port%20of%20New%20Haven,Boston%20and%20New%20York%20City.>
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10. <https://southstreetscaportmuseum.org/wavertree/>