

So ear-ly in the morning  
the sailor likes his bottle-o.

1. The mate was drunk and he lay below  
to take a swig of his bottle-o!

**So ear-ly in the morning  
the sailor likes his bottle-o.**

The bottle-o, the bottle-o  
the sailor loves his bottle-o

**So ear-ly in the morning  
the sailor likes his bottle-o.**

A bottle of rum and a bottle of gin,  
and a bottle of Irish whisky o

**So ear-ly in the morning  
the sailor likes his bottle-o.**

2. Tobaccy-o, tobaccy-O  
the sailor loves his baccy-o

**So ear-ly in the morning  
the sailor likes his bottle-o.**

A packet of shag and a packet of cut  
and a plug of hard tobaccy-o

**So ear-ly in the morning  
the sailor likes his bottle-o.**

3. The lassies-o, the maidens-o,  
The sailor loves the judies-o.

**So ear-ly in the morning  
the sailor loves the lassies-o.**

A lasses from the Bull a gal from the Tyne  
The lassies so fine and dandy-o)

**So ear-ly in the morning  
the sailor loves the lassies-o.**

4. A bully rough-'ouse, a bloody rough-'ouse  
the sailor likes a rough-house o,

**So ear-ly in the morning  
the sailor likes his bottle-o.**

A tread-on my-coat, and all hands in  
And a bloody good rough-and tumble-o

**So ear-ly in the morning  
the sailor likes his bottle-o.**

5. A sing-song-o, a sing-song-o,  
the sailor likes a sing-song-o,

**So ear-ly in the morning  
the sailor likes his bottle-o.**

A drinkin' song, a song of love,  
a ditty of seas and shipmates-o

**So ear-ly in the morning  
the sailor likes his bottle-o.**

Hear **Tom Sullivan** sing this version at  
<https://youtu.be/6tVqgy0Eso>



George Cruikshank (d. 1878) **Saturday Night At Sea**, "A group of sailors singing to amuse themselves while off duty." From the book "**Songs, naval and national**" by Thomas Dibdin, 1841.

#### Notes:

Sung at **halyards**, **capstan** and **pumps**.

**Other names:** Early in the morning, So early in the morning, The Bottle-o, The sailor likes his bottle-o,

**Early** is pronounced err-lye (as we do in Sussex)

**Hugill**, Stan, 1994: **Shanties from the Seven Seas** writes:

"This is another shanty telling of Jack's shore amusements. It was used for both **halyards** and **pumps**.

"**Terry** ..The first line is the chorus sung as an introduction when they were in doubt as to whether a greenhorn crowd knew the refrain or not. This ... became so common that many shanties are now written in this fashion, for example Shallow Brown, Drunken sailor, Lowlands, etc.

"**C F Smith** thinks the tune is much like a nursery rhyme which runs "Fiddle de dee, the fly has married the bumblebee", and **Sharp** likens it to a folksong, "Gently Johnny my Jingalo".

"According to my informant, this shanty was one in which improvisation was the thing, anything and everything a sailor was likely to "love" was brought in by a versatile shantyman.

"**Early** was always pronounced ear-**lye**, a common trick even with shore folk-song singers.

"**Miss C F Smith** writes that it was a favourite in the old Blackwallers. ... Ezra Cobb, a Bluenose (Nova Scotian) seaman of the old school, gave me a variant sung only at pumps, although he did say that "'Twere used sometimes at **Caps'n**."