



1. Make sure the boat is in proper operating condition, there should be no tripping hazards or fire hazards and the boat should have clean bilges.
2. Never overload your boat with more cargo or passengers than recommended by the manufacturer; see chart below:
3. Have a float plan prepared; know your position and where you're going.
4. One should have complete knowledge of both operating, and handling of the boat.
5. Drive with caution, maintain a safe speed and distance at all times.
6. Be aware of any changes in weather, avoid travel in adverse weather conditions.
7. Be aware of state markers and Federal Regulations obey them at all times.
8. Use the "One-Third Rule" for Fuel Management;
9. 1/3-For Getting There
10. 1/3-For Getting Back
11. 1/3-Emergency
12. All safety equipment that is required by law should be on board and should be in working order.
13. Maintain a clear unobstructed view forward at all times. Watch the water back and forth; most boating accidents are caused by simple inattention.

*Note that Channel 16 VHF-FM is a calling and distress channel, and should be only used in the event of an emergency.

Remember a vessel underway, when hailed by a Coast Guard is required to heave to, or position itself in such a way so to allow a boarding officer to come aboard. The Coast Guard may impose a civil penalty of up to \$1000 for failure to comply with; equipment requirements; failure to report a boating accident; or failure to comply with any other Federal Regulations.

If you need further information regarding accident reporting, please call the U.S. coast guard info-line.

General Tips for Safer Boating

- TAKE A BOATING SAFETY CLASS OFFERED BY EITHER THE COAST GUARD, RED CROSS OR LOCAL POWER SQUADRON- this will not only help you improve your skills, but will also lower your insurance premium considerably.
- KNOW YOUR BOAT'S LIMITATIONS AND RESOURCES-is safety equipment in working order and easily accessible in the event of an emergency.
- IF YOU DON 'T KNOW HOW TO SWIM, LEARN!-even good swimmers can become victims of drowning in the event of sudden submersion in cold water.
- WEAR YOUR LIFE JACKET AT ALL TIMES, FORCE OTHERS TO DO SO!- never make someone feel uncomfortable for choosing to wear a PFD.
- LEARN THE RULES IN YOUR SPECIFIC AREA...AND OBEY THEM
- DON'T OVERDO YOUR BOATING FUN, 3 HOURS OF BOATING, NOISE, MOTION, SUN, WIND AND GLARE CAN TYPICALLY DOUBLE AN INDIVIDUALS REACTION TIME.

BUI

Operating a vessel, while under the influence of any mind altering substance, is both illegal and dangerous. It became a specific federal offence on January 13, 1988. If ones blood alcohol is at, or exceeds 0.08% (zero tolerance in some states) violators are subject to civil penalty of up to \$1000 or criminal penalty of up to \$5000.00 and also subject to up to one year in prison. Please respect the safety and well-being of others, if you're going to drink, don't boat, it's as simple as that.

Balance: Alcohol can greatly influence ones sense of balance. Even a moment of dizziness or blurred vision may cause a mishap at home, but can be absolutely disastrous on the water.

Remember operating your boat is at least as complicated as driving your car and boating accidents are just as dangerous. Yet the overwhelming majority of people will refrain from driving their car while intoxicated, but feel it's safe to drive their boats while under the influence. The fact of the matter is 50% of all boating fatalities are alcohol related. OPERATING A BOAT WHILE INTOXICATED IS BOTH ILLEGAL AND DANGEROUS.

Anchoring

Anchoring is obviously important for two reasons: first to stop to fish, swim or for an overnight stay; secondly to keep one from moving around in bad weather or as the result of engine failure. Anchoring can be done both simply and safely if you follow these guidelines:

- Make sure your anchor is the proper anchor required for your vessel.
- A three to six foot galvanized chain should be attached to the anchor. The chain should stand up to the abrasion caused by rocks, sand or mud.
- A measured out piece of nylon anchor line should be used in conjunction and should be attached to the end of the chain. The nylon will eventually stretch under heavy stain and thus cushion any impacts from either wind or waves on the boat.
- Make sure to pick an area sheltered from the wind, the current and other boat traffic.
- Before laying the anchor, get a sense of the depth of the water, as well as the type of bottom (mud and sand are preferred).
- Its always important to secure the anchor line at the bow cleat at the exact point you want to stop.
- When you get to the exact spot you would like to stop, put your engine in neutral and bring the bow of your vessel into the wind or current.
- As the boat comes to a resting stop, slowly lower your anchor in. Do not throw the anchor over as this may cause damage to the anchor or your vessel.
- After all the anchor line is let out, back down on the anchor with the engine in idle reverse to help the anchor settle.
- Do not anchor by the stern! Anchoring a small boat by the stern often causes many to capsize and sink, as heavy currents can cause the water to pull the stern under.
- After the anchor is firmly set carefully monitor your position, use reference points in relation to your vessel. Check your position early and often, to make sure you're not drifting.

Fueling Precautions

Did you know that most boat fires occur during or just after fueling? To make sure your not a victim follow these guidelines:

- All portable tanks should only be re-fueled ashore. Caps should be carefully closed and checked for leaks.
- Make sure all hatches and openings on your vessel are securely closed. Turn off the engine, and all electrical equipment, radios, stoves and any other appliances.
- Any and all smoking or cooking should be immediately terminated upon fueling, and all passengers should be removed from the vessel.
- Carefully keep the fill nozzle in contact with the tank and diligently remove any spilled fuel remains.
- To get proper ventilation open all ports, hatches and doorways, consider running the blower for at least five minutes.
- Before re-starting your engine check the bilges for fuel vapors. Do the "sniff test," make sure no odor is lingering around anywhere on the vessel.

Overloading

Never fill your boat with more people or cargo than is safe for the vessel according to the manufacturer, or check the chart above for a safe estimate. Too much weight will cause the boat to become unstable and may make handling unpredictable. Try to make sure that the load is as balanced as possible, this will help the boat maintain a proper trim. Here are some rules of thumb to follow when loading your vessel.

- Make sure weight is evenly distributed both front and back and side to side.
- The lower the load the better, size and weight do matter!
- Passengers should remain seated, do not stand up in a small boat.
- In order to prevent shifting, stabilize or fasten any loose cargo.

Getting Help on the Water

Marine mishaps can be very unforgiving. What may start out as minor problem can quickly escalate to a state of emergency. It is for this reason that whenever you experience a problem on the water you should quickly notify someone, to alert them of your potential danger. The United States Coast Guard serves as the coordinator for all maritime emergencies and as such is good starting contact for any emergency. If you are in a position of distress or a situation where you find yourself in grave or eminent danger, the Coast Guard will take immediate steps to help you.

- If you are in a maritime emergency, use "MAYDAY!, MAYDAY!, MAYDAY" on your radio, or simply call in on Channel 16 VHF/FM a dedicated distress line.
- CB or Citizen Band is not as dependable and is not monitored at all Coast Guard stations.
- In the event that you do not have a radio, try to signal any boaters near you to call in. In an emergency situation, use flares or any other distress signaling device in order to catch the attention of boaters in your area.
- Tips on Non-Distress Assistance

- In an emergency situation that requires assistance, it is important that you completely understand the type and quality of the assistance before accepting into a contract.
- In the event of a tow, large amounts of physical stress can be experienced by the boat causing both electrical and physical damage to the vessels involved.
- Check to make sure the service provider has the necessary resources to fix your problem.
- Make sure the provider is properly insured to protect both his and your vessel should he/she cause any damage to you or your boat.
- Can the crew handle the situation given the conditions and the nature of the problem.
- If the provider is charging a fee, check to make sure he/she has a Coast Guard license. All private towing providers are required to have a license if they charge for the service.

How to Avoid Drowning

Any time a person goes boating there is the possibility of being thrown overboard. PFDs or Personal Floatation Devices are designed to keep your head above water and help you remain in a position favorable to breathing.

Of the 519 boaters that drowned in 2000, life jackets could have saved the lives of approximately 445. Recent statistics show that nearly 8/10 victims in fatal boating accidents were not wearing life jackets. Those who hunt and fish from boats, especially in cold weather, need to dress appropriately including a properly fastened life jacket. When purchasing your PFD make sure the labels clearly state that the vest has been approved by the US Coast Guard or the local governing body. Remember that now days life jackets can both be comfortable and attractive, which means you should be more inclined to wear them in the event of an emergency or even just as a fashion statement! Never alter your PFD.

- Every spring check your PFD for fit as well as wear and tear. Throw it away if you find any kind of air leakage

Minimum Buoyancy

Wearable Size	Type	Inherent Buoyancy (Foam)
Adult	I	22 lb.
	II & III	15.5 lb.
	V	15.5 to 22 lb.
Youth	II & III	11 lb.
	V	11 to 15.5 lb.
Child and Infant	II	7 lb.
Throwable:		
Cushion	IV	20 lb.
Ring Buoy		16.5 & 32 lb.