

Boating Safety Checklist



Before Departure

- ☐ Check weather forecasts, tides and currents
- ☐ File a float plan with a trusted contact ashore (on reverse)
- ☐ Follow safe fueling practices; make sure blower fans are in working order
- ☐ Check operation of bilge pump, auto switch and alarms
- ☐ Ensure you have appropriate-size life jackets in good repair and make sure all children onboard wear them at all times
- ☐ Brief crew on locations and operation of safety equipment including: life jackets, life sling, or throwable flotation; sound-producing device; flares/visual distress signals; fire extinguishers; and a spare engine cutoff lanyard, if equipped
- ☐ Turn on VHF radio. Show passengers how to select Ch. 16, how to use mic, and when/how to transmit a Mayday. Brief on how/when to use and not use the DSC feature if you have it; ensure the MMSI is programmed in
- ☐ Check operation of navigation/running lights
- ☐ Ensure that one anchor and rode is ready for immediate use
- ☐ Before starting a gasoline inboard engine, run blower for at least 4 minutes
- ☐ Attach engine shutoff switch lanyard or device, if fitted



On The Water

- ☐ Store a "go home" waypoint on the GPS as you depart the harbor
- ☐ Know the waters you're navigating. Refer to local charts, stay within marked channels, be aware of tides, currents, and areas such as inlets with challenging seas
- ☐ Avoid distracted driving, scan the horizon continually for other boats' movements
- ☐ Be weather-aware (watch for wind/cloud changes, monitor weather channels)
- ☐ While underway, no passengers on the bow, gunwales, or transom
- ☐ Monitor fuel consumption and remaining range. Use the "Three-Thirds" rule: one-third outbound, one-third inbound, one-third reserve
- ☐ Designate a lookout if engaging in watersports activities
- ☐ Turn the Engines Off if people are swimming
- ☐ Drink plenty of water, wear sunscreen and don't boat under the influence



Access our safe boating checklist any time on westmarine.com





Float Plan

1. Phone Numbers

Coast Guard: _____
 Marine Police: _____
 BoatUS 24 Hour Dispatch: 800-391-4869

2. Owner/Skipper Information

Owner/Skipper (Filing Report): _____
 Phone: _____ Age: _____
 Address: _____
 Marina (Home Port): _____ Phone: _____
 Auto Parked At: _____
 Model/color: _____ Lic. # _____
 Trailer Lic. # _____

3. Description of the Boat

Boat Name: _____ Hailing Port: _____
 Type: _____ Model Year: _____
 Make: _____ Length: _____ Beam: _____ Draft: _____
 Color, Hull: _____ Cabin: _____ Deck: _____ Trim: _____ Dodger: _____
 Other Colors: _____ # of Masts: _____
 Distinguishing Features: _____
 Registration No: _____ Sail No: _____
 Engine(s) Type: _____ Horsepower: _____ Cruising Speed: _____
 Fuel Capacity, Gallons: _____ Cruising Range: _____
 Electronics/Safety Equipment Aboard
 VHF Radio: _____ Cell Phone: _____ CB: _____ SSB: _____
 Frequency Monitored: _____
 Depth Sounder: _____ Radar: _____ GPS: _____
 Raft: _____ Dinghy: _____ EPIRB: _____



4. Trip Details

Additional Persons Aboard, Total: _____
 Name: _____ Age: _____
 Address: _____ Phone: _____
 Boating Experience: _____

Name: _____ Age: _____
 Address: _____ Phone: _____
 Boating Experience: _____

Name: _____ Age: _____
 Address: _____ Phone: _____
 Boating Experience: _____

Name: _____ Age: _____
 Address: _____ Phone: _____
 Boating Experience: _____

Name: _____ Age: _____
 Address: _____ Phone: _____
 Boating Experience: _____

Departure Date/Time: _____ Return No Later Than: _____
 Depart From: _____
 Destination: _____
 ETA: _____ No Later Than: _____
 Phone: _____

Anticipated Stopover Ports: _____
 ETA: _____ No Later Than: _____
 Phone: _____
 ETA: _____ No Later Than: _____
 Phone: _____
 ETA: _____ No Later Than: _____
 Phone: _____
 ETA: _____ No Later Than: _____
 Phone: _____
 ETA: _____ No Later Than: _____
 Phone: _____

Plan Filed With: _____
 Name: _____ Phone: _____

Get in the habit of filing a Float Plan. It can assure quicker rescue in the event of a breakdown, stranding or weather delay. Fill out the permanent data in Sections 1, 2 and 3. If you file a Float Plan with someone not at your home, such as a harbormaster or boating friend, be sure to notify them as soon as you return. Don't burden friends or authorities with unnecessary worry and responsibility if you are safe.