

# SAFE BOATING TIPS

## from the National Safe Boating Council

### Boat Responsibly and Wear It!



The National Safe Boating Council would like to remind you to “**Boat Responsibly and Wear It!**” “Boat Responsibly” by being alert and careful when taking out your boat, making sure you are prepared and always remember to “Wear It!” Wear your life jacket every time you are on the water. An accident can happen very quickly and unexpectedly so you must be geared up in order to help yourself and your passengers on board. According to the most recent U.S. Coast Guard statistics, over two-thirds of fatal accident victims drowned.

Out of those who drowned, approximately 90% were not wearing a life jacket. There are so many different types of life jackets today that are smaller and more comfortable; it’s much easier to “Wear It!” at all times. Life jackets are part of the gear stylish and knowledgeable boaters wear. Be a role model! Develop the Life Jacket habit!

### Know the Navigation Rules (Nautical Rules of the Road)

Knowing the nautical rules of the road is important for all boaters. Knowing what to do when meeting, crossing or overtaking another boat can prevent costly damage to your boat, personal injury or even loss of life. Whenever you believe there is a threat of collision you should slow down, stop or steer away from the situation in question. Maintaining a proper lookout and a safe speed are all a part of the navigation rules and should be an important part of boat operation.

### Stay Sober While Boating



It’s dangerous to operate a boat when drinking. Operating a boat under the influence of alcohol or drugs is illegal in all states and is a violation of Federal law. An operator with a blood alcohol content about .08 (equivalent to consuming five beers in one hour for the average 180-lb. male) – is ten times more likely to die in a boating accident than an operator with zero blood alcohol level.

### Be Aware of Carbon Monoxide

All boat engines produce Carbon Monoxide (CO)—an odorless, colorless, poisonous gas that can kill you in a matter of minutes. Boaters are killed every year because of improper cabin ventilation, poorly maintained equipment, and careless behavior. You do not have to be inside the boat to be at risk. Boaters have died from exposure on the swim platforms of their boats and in other areas where CO exhaust may accumulate or be emitted. Be aware of the early symptoms (irritated eyes, headache, nausea, weakness, and dizziness). Use CO detectors on your boat and stay off the swim platform when the engine (or generators) are running.



### Take a Safe Boating Course



Seventy percent of recreational boating accidents are caused by operator factors —such as failure to pay attention, carelessness, recklessness, inexperience, excessive speed, and failure to watch for hazards. Boating safety courses are available, inexpensive, and quick—a great way for you to learn safety and the rules of the road.

### Get Your Boat Checked

The Coast Guard Auxiliary and United States Power Squadrons® offer a free Vessel Safety Check (VSC). Contact [www.vesselsafetycheck.org](http://www.vesselsafetycheck.org) for information.



For more information on boating safety, please visit the National Safe Boating Council at [www.safeboatingcouncil.org](http://www.safeboatingcouncil.org). The National Safe Boating Council wishes you safe and enjoyable boating and reminds you to “Boat Responsibly and Wear It!”