



Pre-Departure Boating Checklist

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1. Weather & Trip Plan

- Check the weather forecast and wind conditions.
- Review tides and currents if applicable.
- Tell someone where you're going and when you expect to return.
- Verify any local boating advisories.

2. Fuel & Fluids

- Fuel tank(s) full or sufficient for the trip (follow the one-third rule: one-third out, one-third back, one-third reserve).
- Engine oil checked.
- Coolant level checked (if applicable).
- Hydraulic steering fluid checked (if applicable).
- Freshwater tank filled if needed.

3. Batteries & Electrical

- Battery switches turned on.
- Battery voltage normal.
- Navigation lights working.
- Horn functioning.
- Bilge pumps operate properly.
- Electronics power up (GPS, VHF, fish finder).

4. Safety Equipment

- Enough life jackets for every passenger.
- Throwable flotation device onboard.
- Fire extinguisher charged and accessible.
- Visual distress signals current and onboard (where required).
- First aid kit stocked.
- Sound-producing device (horn or whistle).
- Anchor with adequate rode.
- Emergency tool kit.

5. Engine Check

- Inspect engine compartment for leaks.
- Check belts and hoses.
- Ensure seacock/open cooling valves are in the correct position.
- Verify seawater strainers are clear.
- Start engines and confirm proper water flow.
- Check for alarms or warning lights.

6. Navigation

- GPS/chartplotter operational.
- VHF radio tested.
- Navigation charts loaded or onboard.
- Compass functioning.

7. Dock Lines & Fenders

- Remove unnecessary dock lines.
- Stow fenders after departure.
- Secure loose gear.

8. Passenger Briefing

- Show everyone where life jackets are stored.
- Explain emergency procedures.
- Identify location of fire extinguishers.
- Explain how to use the VHF radio.
- Review man-overboard procedures.

9. Before Leaving the Dock

- Close and latch hatches.
- Secure cabin doors and windows.
- Disconnect shore power.
- Stow shore power cord.
- Verify steering operates smoothly.

10. Final Departure Check

- Lines ready to cast off.
- Engines at normal operating temperature.
- No warning alarms present.
- Crew accounted for.
- Navigation route confirmed.