

P PREPARATION

Education

The California Department of Boating and Waterways (DBW) recommends taking a boating safety class offered by the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, U.S. Power Squadrons, or certain chapters of the American Red Cross before you begin boating. For more information on Coast Guard Auxiliary and Power Squadron classes, visit www.dbw.ca.gov or contact:

U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary: www.cgaux.org/boatinged

U.S. Power Squadrons: 800-SEA-SKIL (800-732-7545)

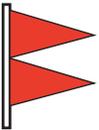
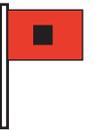
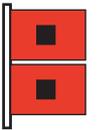
U.S. Coast Guard Customer Infoline: www.uscgboating.org

As noted, DBW offers a home study guide called the “California Boating Safety Course.” In addition, aquatic centers operated by colleges, universities and non-profit organizations throughout California offer on-the-water boating safety courses. Please visit our Web site at www.dbw.ca.gov and click on “Safety and Education” for more information.

Weather

Before getting underway, check the latest local conditions such as weather, currents, rapids, flow levels, and hazards, including low-head dams. The latest coastal conditions and wave forecasts can be found on the DBW Web site. Detailed information can also be obtained by tuning to local radio stations or the National Weather Radio broadcasts on frequencies of 162.400, 162.425, 162.450, 162.475, 162.525, and 162.550 MHz in areas where available or by consulting local news sources.

At selected locations in and near boating areas, storm advisories are displayed by flag hoists or lights. Coast Guard stations and many marinas no longer display storm advisory flags. Remaining display points are located at some park ranger stations, marinas or municipal piers. Become familiar with area display stations and the meanings of the signals.

STORM ADVISORIES				
Daytime Signals				
Night Signals				
	Small Craft Winds up to 38 mph	Gale Winds 39 to 54 mph	Storm Winds 55 to 73 mph	Hurricane Winds 74 mph and up

NOTE: In some areas, the display of storm advisory flags has been discontinued. Boaters should check current weather conditions before starting their trip.

EPIRB or VHF Marine Radio Licensing Information

For information on getting a license for a VHF marine radio or Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB), contact the U.S. Federal Communications Commission (FCC) at 800-418-3676 for forms or 888-CALL-FCC (888-225-5322) for assistance.

Fueling

Most fires happen after fueling. To prevent fires, follow these common sense rules:

- Don't smoke or strike matches.
- Shut off motors. Turn off electrical equipment.
- Close all windows, doors and openings.
- Take portable tanks out of the boat and fill them on the dock.
- Keep the filling nozzle in contact with the fill pipe or tank.
- Wipe up any spilled gas with petroleum-absorbent pads. Discard the pads in a safe manner.
- Ventilate for at least five minutes. Make sure there is no odor of gasoline anywhere in the boat.
- Periodically check the system for fuel leaks.
- Visually check for leaks or fuel in the bilges.

Boat Capacity

Single-hull motorboats less than 20 feet in length that were manufactured after 1972 must display capacity and safe horsepower information. The maximum weight in people, gear and motors is offered as a guide to boaters and should not be exceeded.

While local, state, and federal laws may differ, please, keep in mind that other states may cite operators who exceed capacity and horsepower limitations. Some insurance companies will not insure craft exceeding horsepower maximums, and some boat manufacturers will void any applicable warranties for the same reasons. Boaters using vessels and personal watercraft without capacity plates should refer to the owner's manual and state law.

Loading

As the operator, it's your responsibility to see that supplies are carefully loaded and all passengers are properly seated. For safety onboard, remember to:

- Spread weight evenly.
- Fasten gear to prevent shifting.
- Keep passengers seated.
- Don't overload your boat.



Photo courtesy of U.S. Coast Guard

CHECKLIST AND FLOAT PLAN

CHECKLIST

Before embarking on a cruise:

1. File a Float Plan (see below)
2. Give consideration to basic safety items, including the following:

<input type="checkbox"/> Vessel in good condition	<input type="checkbox"/> Tools
<input type="checkbox"/> Vessel properly loaded	<input type="checkbox"/> Extra starting battery
<input type="checkbox"/> Ample supply of fuel	<input type="checkbox"/> Life jackets/Throwable devices (Coast Guard-approved)
<input type="checkbox"/> Check weather reports	<input type="checkbox"/> Fire extinguishers (Coast Guard-approved)
<input type="checkbox"/> Compass and charts	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual distress signals
<input type="checkbox"/> Good anchoring equipment	<input type="checkbox"/> Oars or paddles
<input type="checkbox"/> Bailing Device	<input type="checkbox"/> Marine VHF radio
<input type="checkbox"/> Spare parts	<input type="checkbox"/> Flashlight
<input type="checkbox"/> First-aid kit	
3. Cancel your Float Plan when you return

FLOAT PLAN

Operator

Name and address of operator _____

Phone number _____

Searches for an overdue boat have a much greater chance of being successful if the Coast Guard or other rescue agencies have certain facts. For your own safety and before leaving on a cruise, complete this form and leave it with a reliable person who will notify authorities if necessary.

If overdue, contact _____

Name and phone number of rescue agency near point of departure

Vessel

Name _____

CF Number _____

Length _____

Power, Inboard - Outboard _____

Rig, If Sail _____

Hull Color _____

Type/Style _____

Range _____

Speed _____

Persons

Number Persons Aboard _____

Radio

Frequencies _____

Departure from

Place _____

Date/Time Depart _____

Car Parked License # _____

Trailer Parked License # _____

Where Parked _____

Destination

Place _____

Stops en Route _____

Date/Time Return _____

DISCLAIMER: *The Float Plan and checklist is not a definitive list of everything that may be required for safe boating on any particular boat or boating excursion. Knowing what is required is the responsibility of each individual boater.*

IMPORTANT: Don't forget to *cancel* your Float Plan when you return

Also available at: www.dbw.ca.gov/PDF/FloatPlanForm.pdf