

Boating Safety

The most important part about responsible boating is to always practice good boating safety. The United States Coast Guard says that almost all boating accidents could have been prevented if the captain of the ship had taken a boating safety course prior to getting on the water. Boating safety is tantamount to responsible boating and it shouldn't be taken lightly.

There's no way we can cover all aspects of boating safety in this short article. What we can do, however, is to give you some basics to go from in your quest to become a responsible boater. There's nothing that can replace a good, certified boating safety course taught by a qualified individual, but everyone has to start somewhere!

* Always know the safest distance to keep away from other boats. If someone is going slower than you are and you want to pass them, know how to do so safely and with the proper signaling. Boats don't have turn signals, but you should know how to alert the other boater you will be passing them.

* When you are putting your boat in the water, be sure you know how to do this quickly as well as safely. Boating safety has to be present even before you get your vessel on the water. Knowing how to do this the right way can make the difference between friendly and unfriendly boating.

* If alcohol is part of your boating trip, be sure you are very conscious of what alcohol can do to your body when you are operating a fast-moving vehicle on top of a body of water. Alcohol use by the captain should occur in moderation above everything else. Most of the boating accidents that occur today can be directly attributed to alcohol as a contributing factor. Be smart when it comes to alcohol consumption on the water.

* Make sure that all people on board your boat have access to a life vest. Never let a child be in your boat without wearing a life vest at all times. The number one cause of death on the water is due to drowning. That is caused by people falling overboard without a life vest. This is the number one boating safety rule stressed by all instructors.

* Boating safety depends on everyone following general rules of etiquette when you are out on the water. While you can't control what the other boaters do, you sure can control what you do. Always be polite on the water and know that you are doing your part to keep the waters safe.

Like we said previously, every boater should really take a certified boating

safety course. Besides making it easier for you to get your boating license, you will be a much better boater after you take a boating safety course.