

## How To Test A Boat

If you think you've found the boat of your dreams, it's time to test it. Testing your boat is more than just taking it for a test drive around the harbor. You should look at everything closely, as a professional boat tester would.

Sometimes, it can be hard to tell a top quality boat from one that may have problems later on. To an untrained eye, both can look good on the surface. When you start to break everything down and give it a careful inspection, you'll be able to tell a great boat from a not-so-great boat.

By opening up all doors and access plates, you can get great insight on the the construction of the boat. You should also stick your head into the anchor locker of any boat you are considering to buy, as if they've cut any corners you'll normally be able to see it here.

Looking into the anchor locker also lets you look at the hull to deck joint. If there is light coming from through, or if the fiberglass around the joint can be seen through, it normally means the boat has poor construction.

When you buy a boat, you should put it through a rigorous visual inspection. It's also equally important to conduct a vigorous test on the water as well. A private seller or dealer will normally want to stack the deck, ensuring that the boat will perform well.

Normally, this involves a near empty gas tank, no gear or extra passengers, and keeping the boat in sheltered water. Therefore, it's up to you to insist on a more realistic test. Think of the test as an actual day out on the water, and you'll find out if the boat is indeed something you should spend your money on.

During your water testing, you should determine

if the boat performs well and meets all of your expectations. You should determine if the boat travels at the right speeds, and whether or not it is capable of doing everything that you plan to do with it after you buy it.

When test driving the boat, you should put it through all paces in open water, cutting waves at all angles. If you plan to test a saltwater boat, you should bring along a 5 gallon bucket and try throwing some water onboard. Any boat you plan to use offshore should quickly shed water through the scuppers. Some boats will pool water in the bow and drain slowly - which can be very dangerous in rough waters.

If a seller or dealer balks at the mention of any requests you have, simply find yourself another dealer or another boat. There are plenty of great quality boats available, ranging in prices. Make sure to check everything very carefully before you make any decisions.

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