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Boater & Boat Equipment Checklist

powerboats under 26 feet

Confident and safe boating relies upon the boat and each person aboard being properly equipped. This checklist will help ensure you have what you need, and it offers suggestions for better or upgraded equipment that will further enhance your enjoyment afloat.

	Required by		Essential Gear	Should Have	Nice to Have	Basic	Suggested Upgrade Level 1	Suggested Upgrade Level 2	Suggested Upgrade Level 3
	Federal	State							
The Boater									
Life Jacket Adult (> 16 years old)	yes					<input type="checkbox"/> Inherently bouyant Inshore	<input type="checkbox"/> Inherently bouyant Offshore	<input type="checkbox"/> Inflatable Offshore Automatic	<input type="checkbox"/> Inflatable Offshore Including harness
Inflatable Re-Arming Kit				yes		<input type="checkbox"/>			
Life Jacket Child (<16 years old)	yes					<input type="checkbox"/> Inherently bouyant Inshore - proper size	<input type="checkbox"/> Inherently bouyant Offshore - proper size		
Life Jacket - waterskiing, etc						<input type="checkbox"/> Inherently bouyant Impact rated			
Boat shoes				yes		<input type="checkbox"/> Basic			
Whistle (for life jacket)				yes		<input type="checkbox"/>			
Light (for life jacket)				yes		<input type="checkbox"/> Waterproof flashlight	<input type="checkbox"/> Waterproof strobe		
Handheld VHF					yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Basic handheld VHF	<input type="checkbox"/> DSC Handheld VHF with GPS		
Personal Locator Beacon					yes	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Protective clothing			yes			<input type="checkbox"/>			
Sunglasses				yes		<input type="checkbox"/>			
	Required by		Essential Gear	Should Have	Nice to Have	Basic	Suggested Upgrade Level 1	Suggested Upgrade Level 2	Suggested Upgrade Level 3
	Federal	State							
The Boat									
LIFE JACKETS	1 per person aboard					<input type="checkbox"/> Inherently Bouyant Type II	<input type="checkbox"/> Inherently Bouyant Type III	<input type="checkbox"/> Inflatable life jacket manual	<input type="checkbox"/> Inflatable automatic including harness
Sound Producing Device	yes					<input type="checkbox"/> Whistle	<input type="checkbox"/> Handheld air horn	<input type="checkbox"/> Electric horn	
Visual Distress Signals	yes					<input type="checkbox"/> (3) day/night handheld flares	<input type="checkbox"/> Kit including: (3) handheld day/night flares + (3) meteor flares + (1) orange smoke	<input type="checkbox"/> SOLAS flares or Kit plus parachute flares signal mirror day distress flag	
Throwable Flotation	yes					<input type="checkbox"/> Cushion +30 ft of line	<input type="checkbox"/> Life ring or horseshoe + 30ft of line	<input type="checkbox"/> Lifesling®	
Fire Extinguishers	yes					<input type="checkbox"/> (1) Type B-I	<input type="checkbox"/> (2+) Type BC-I (1+) Type BC-II	<input type="checkbox"/> (2+) Type BC-II	<input type="checkbox"/> (2+) Type BC-II + engine compartment fire suppressor



prepared by the National Safe Boating Council





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	Required by		Essential Gear	Should Have	Nice to Have	Basic	Suggested Upgrade Level 1	Suggested Upgrade Level 2	Suggested Upgrade Level 3
	Federal	State							
The Boat (continued)									
Anchor and Line		some				<input type="checkbox"/> Danforth type (14lb) + anchor line	<input type="checkbox"/> Danforth type (16lb) + combination chain/line	<input type="checkbox"/> Danforth type (25lb) all chain rode + Fortress Anchor combo chain/line	<input type="checkbox"/> Delta Anchor all chain rode + Fortress Anchor combo chain/line
VHF Radio				yes		<input type="checkbox"/> Handheld	<input type="checkbox"/> Fixed VHF incl DSC	<input type="checkbox"/> Fixed VHF/DSC + Handheld	<input type="checkbox"/> VHF/GPS combo
Paddle		some				<input type="checkbox"/> Wood paddle	<input type="checkbox"/> Folding paddle		
Bailer or Pump		some				<input type="checkbox"/> Hand bailer	<input type="checkbox"/> Electric bilge pump	<input type="checkbox"/> Multiple electric bilge pumps	
Dock Lines			yes			<input type="checkbox"/> (4) Basic laid line	<input type="checkbox"/> (4+) Braided Lines	<input type="checkbox"/> (6-8) Braided Lines	
Boat Fenders				yes		<input type="checkbox"/>			
Compass			yes			<input type="checkbox"/> Handheld	<input type="checkbox"/> 3" Fixed front-reading	<input type="checkbox"/> 4" Fixed flat card	<input type="checkbox"/> 4+" Fixed flat card
GPS				yes		<input type="checkbox"/> Handheld	<input type="checkbox"/> Fixed 3-4" Chartplotter	<input type="checkbox"/> Fixed 5-7" Chartplotter	<input type="checkbox"/> Fixed 10+" Chartplotter + External GPS
Charts				yes		<input type="checkbox"/> Chartbook	<input type="checkbox"/> NOAA Charts	<input type="checkbox"/> Charts on Demand	
Navigation Rules				yes		<input type="checkbox"/> USCG book	<input type="checkbox"/> Wing One-Minute Guide		
Boat Hook				yes		<input type="checkbox"/>			
First Aid Kit				yes		<input type="checkbox"/> Basic	<input type="checkbox"/> Local Cruising	<input type="checkbox"/> Distance Cruising	<input type="checkbox"/> Offshore
Boarding Ladder		some		yes		<input type="checkbox"/> Basic			
Spare Parts									
Engine				yes		<input type="checkbox"/>			
Propeller				yes		<input type="checkbox"/>			
Batteries (VHF, GPS)				yes		<input type="checkbox"/>			
Depth Sounder					yes	<input type="checkbox"/> sounder	<input type="checkbox"/> chart sounder fishfinder		
Radar					yes	<input type="checkbox"/> 2kw, 18" radome	<input type="checkbox"/> 2kw, 24" radome	<input type="checkbox"/> 4kw, 24" radome	<input type="checkbox"/> 4kw, 4' open array
AIS					yes	<input type="checkbox"/> AIS Receiver	<input type="checkbox"/> AIS Receiver + Display	<input type="checkbox"/> Class B AIS	<input type="checkbox"/> Class A AIS
EPIRB					yes	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Water Ski or Dive Flags		some*			yes*	<input type="checkbox"/>	* Deploy flags to indicate a diver location, or waterskiing		
Search Light					yes*	<input type="checkbox"/>	* Essential for night boating		
Float Plans					yes*	<input type="checkbox"/>	* Forms are available from U.S. Power Squadrons or Coast Guard Auxiliary		

