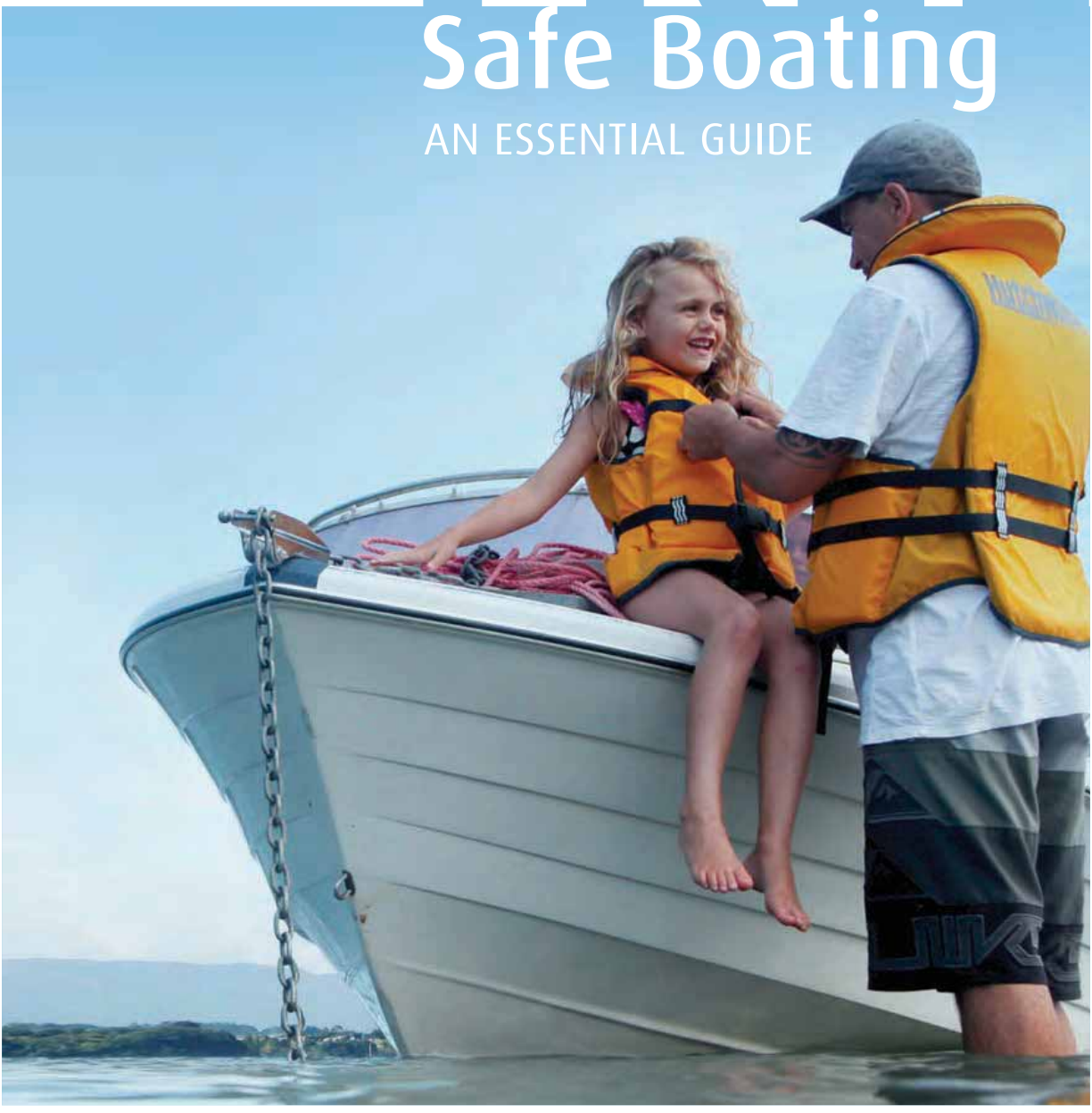
FREE

Safe Boating

AN ESSENTIAL GUIDE



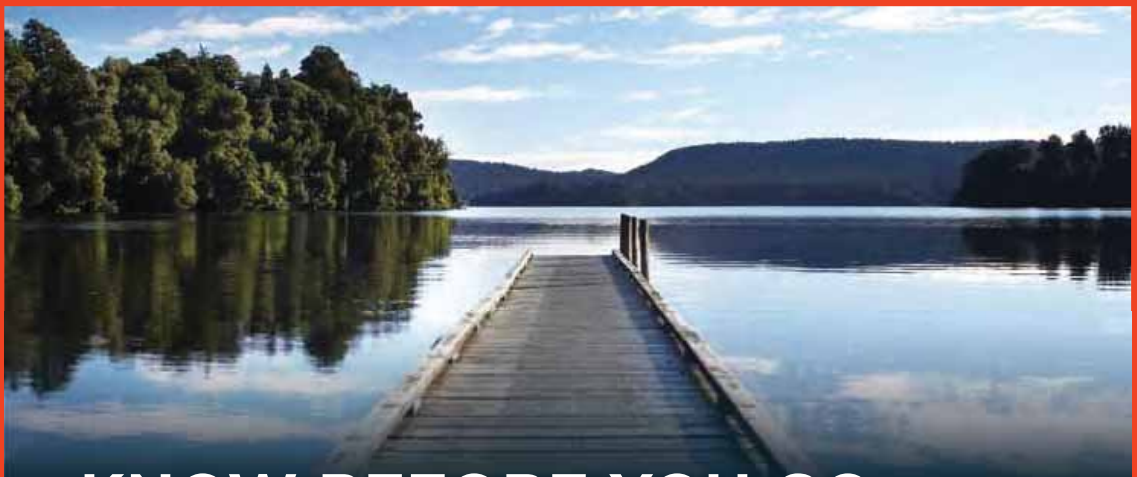
STAY ON TOP

MARITIME NEW ZEALAND

COASTGUARD Boating EDUCATION

Water Safety NEW ZEALAND

www.adventuresmart.org.nz



KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

The Boating Safety

CODE

Before you go boating on our seas, lakes and rivers, get familiar with New Zealand's Boating Safety Code, no matter what kind of boat you use.

5 simple rules to help you stay safe:

1. **Life jackets**
   Take them – Wear them.
   Boats, especially ones under 6m in length, can sink very quickly. Wearing a life jacket increases your survival time in the water.

2. **Skipper responsibility**
   The skipper is responsible for the safety of everyone on board and for the safe operation of the boat. Stay within the limits of your vessel and your experience.

3. **Communications**
   Take two separate waterproof ways of communicating so we can help you if you get into difficulties.

4. **Marine weather**
   New Zealand's weather can be highly unpredictable. Check the local marine weather forecast before you go and expect both weather and sea state changes.

5. **Avoid alcohol**
   Safe boating and alcohol do not mix. Things can change quickly on the water. You need to stay alert and aware.

Also available:

The Water Safety CODE

The Outdoor Safety CODE

For more information about safe boating education and how to prepare for your boating activity, visit **www.adventuresmart.org.nz**

Welcome

to the world of pleasure boating.

This booklet gives you essential information for an enjoyable and safe time on the water – sea, river or lake.

Keeping safe means understanding the environment, knowing the rules, having all the right equipment and using plenty of common sense.

If you are a responsible skipper the water will be a safer place for all of us to enjoy.

SAFE BOATING

The information in this booklet and more safety tips, along with local knowledge of many boating places is available on Youtube.

YouTube

Go to: www.youtube.com/user/boatsafetyinnz
or search: boatsafetyinnz

Revised and reprinted November 2012

ISBN #978-0-908979-55-4

CONTENTS

BUYING A BOAT

Before you buy a boat, think about the type of boating you want to do and understand your own knowledge and experience. It is essential that you get a boat that matches your needs and capabilities.

Here are a few points to consider when buying a boat:

- whether you choose a new or used boat, buying from a Marine Industry Association (MIA) member ensures you will receive sound advice backed by an industry code of practice
- a new boat should have a CPC Compliance Plate, which is a safety certification from Coastguard and MIA
- nearly all boating fatalities occur in boats under 6m and involve swamping or capsize
- if you are buying a used boat, get it structurally checked by a marine surveyor, boat builder or similar expert
- get professional advice on the engine, mechanical systems and other fitted equipment before you buy a used boat
- join a local boating club and attend a Coastguard Boating Education course – no matter how experienced you are, changing technology means there are many developments and updated information that only a course will provide
- make sure you understand the limitations of the boat you are looking at buying, what it is suitable for, whether it can handle rough water, or whether it should only be used in calm conditions
- know the maximum number of people your boat is suitable for, the maximum load it can carry and make sure you buy enough lifejackets for all.
- boats that will remain afloat even when swamped or after a capsize will be much safer – better still, try to make sure the buoyancy fitted or included in the design will ensure the boat will remain level, even if it remains inverted after a capsize.

Don't forget to allow for the cost of safety equipment and the ongoing maintenance of your boat. Most calls for assistance are the result of mechanical failure.

SKIPPER RESPONSIBILITY

– managing the risks

Safety is the skipper's first priority. No matter how big or small, every boat has a skipper who is responsible for the safety of those on board, and that means managing the risks of being on the water.

Going out in any boat entails some risk. If those risks are properly managed there is very little danger, but if they are not addressed, the danger to those on board is increased.

Understanding the risks is very important – perhaps the greatest danger inherent in boating is an accident that results in the crew suddenly finding themselves in the water. Understanding the body's response to sudden immersion (cold water shock) will reduce the tendency to panic and increase survival chances.

A skipper who ensures that those on board are prepared for an unexpected accident by wearing life jackets and carrying effective waterproof communication equipment reduces the possibility of a fatal accident by at least 80%.

The skipper is legally responsible for the safety of the boat and for all the people on board.

Even though no licence is required to operate a pleasure boat in New Zealand, ignorance of any maritime rules or bylaws is not accepted as an excuse. Failure to comply can lead to fines or prosecution.

You should also encourage your crew and passengers to take part in the operation of the boat to increase their knowledge and enjoyment.

If you are the skipper you must:

- ensure you have aboard the necessary equipment for the trip you intend to make
- make sure everyone on board knows what safety equipment is carried, where it is stowed and how it works
- have on board a life jacket or buoyancy aid that meets NZ Standard 5823:2005 (or has otherwise been accepted by Maritime New Zealand), in the right size and type for every person on the boat
- **it's a legal requirement to wear life jackets at times of heightened risk, such as when crossing bars or after drinking alcohol. Ensure that children and non-swimmers always wear them**
- in many places, navigation safety bylaws require all persons to wear a life jacket on boats under 6m unless the skipper has given permission to remove them due to low risk at the time
- always operate your boat in a way that does not endanger people or property
- never overload your boat with people or equipment
- make sure everything on board is properly stowed and secured
- ensure everyone is sitting safely and holding on when in choppy seas or when travelling at speed
- always maintain your boat, its motor, electrics and equipment – and check everything before you go out
- get a marine weather forecast before you head out, listen for regular updates while you are out and remember to check the tides – **if in doubt, don't go out**
- always carry two means for communicating distress and, in boats under 6m, make sure at least one means is waterproof
- avoid or limit alcohol intake on board your boat. Alcohol affects reaction times, your ability to cope if something goes wrong, and survival time in the water
- report any accidents on the water to Maritime New Zealand and the local harbourmaster within 48 hours.

For maritime rules that apply to boating visit www.maritimenz.govt.nz.

ESSENTIAL EQUIPMENT

Navigation

You will need a chart and compass in all but the smallest of boats if you go more than a mile or two from shore. A GPS and a depth sounder are also very useful. Exactly what you carry will depend on the size and type of your boat and how far from land you go. Talk to Coastguard or Maritime New Zealand for advice.

Communication equipment

This includes distress beacons (EPIRB or PLB), VHF radio, flares, and cell phones. On any trip you need to carry **two** means of waterproof communication and **three** means if you are over 2 miles from shore.

Don't drown because you cannot tell someone you need help. The number of lives lost could be reduced by 60% if a **waterproof means of communicating distress** was carried on all boats under 6m.

Bailing system

Even if you have an electric bilge pump, always carry a bucket or bailer. It can also be used to put out fires and has many other uses.

Anchor

To determine the right size for your boat, the anchor should weigh not less than 1.5kg per metre of boat length, with chain at least equal to the length of the boat. A non-floating rope well secured to the boat should be as long as is practical.

First aid kit
Your kit should contain enough supplies to cover minor accidents or injuries. Remember to carry a remedy for sea sickness as well as sun block.

Alternative power
A spare outboard motor, oars or paddles will help you manoeuvre the boat in the event of a power failure or if the wind dies away while sailing.

Fire extinguishers
If you have an engine or cooker on board always carry at least one fire extinguisher that is suitable for your type of boating. Know how to use it and ensure it is serviced regularly.

Rope
Always carry an extra length (or two) of rope – you never know when you might need to use it.

Boat hook
As well as being used to pick up lines, buoys and objects in the water, your boat hook can be used for checking the depth of water, pushing off, or helping recover a person overboard.

Throwing line
A floating line at least 12m in length with a floating weight at one end.

Torch
Always carry a torch with spare batteries and bulb.

Life jackets and Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs)
Maritime law requires ALL skippers to carry enough life jackets of the right size and type for everyone on board. Wearing a life jacket is mandatory at all times unless the risk is very low.

Knife
Has many uses – keep it sharp.

Radar reflector
Assists other vessels to see small boats at night.

Protective clothing
Carry adequate warm, protective clothing.

LIFE JACKETS AND PFDS

(personal flotation devices)

Always wear life jackets in boats less than 6m. Only remove them if the skipper determines that the risk is very low.

Over 70% of all those who drown when boating could have avoided death simply by wearing a life jacket.

You must carry a correctly sized, serviceable life jacket or buoyancy aid, which meets NZ Standard 5823:2005 or another standard accepted by Maritime New Zealand, for each person on board. If not being worn they must be stowed so that they are at hand and immediately available. This rule applies to all boats, including tenders for larger craft.

As the skipper, it is your legal responsibility to ensure that life jackets are worn in risky situations, such as when crossing a bar, in rough water, by non-swimmers and during an emergency.

We recommend that you wear a life jacket at all times when boating unless you are inside an enclosed place such as a cabin. Most accidents occur suddenly with no warning. There may be no time to grab a life jacket unless it is close at hand. The only time they need not be worn in a boat less than 6m is when the risk is exceptionally low.

It is important to have the right type of life jacket. Consider the type of boating you do, the distance from shore you intend to go, and the kind of conditions you are likely to encounter.

Life jackets provide more than flotation. They allow a person in the water to keep still thereby conserving energy and helping to avoid the effects of cold on breathing and muscle coordination. They also provide protection from injury in collisions or running aground.

Talk to your supplier or contact Water Safety New Zealand, Maritime New Zealand or Coastguard Boating Education for some expert advice.

Buoyancy vests

Designed for ease of movement if you are involved in activities like kayaking, sailing and water skiing. While they meet the legal standard, they will not turn an unconscious person to a face-up floating position in the water.

Inflatable life jackets

Available in pull-to-inflate style or water activated. Suitable for all vessel related recreational activities and fishing, they are very comfortable to wear. They provide the same amount of buoyancy as open waters jackets. The gas cylinder in inflatable life jackets needs to be inspected regularly for corrosion and fit.

Inshore PFDs

Designed to keep you afloat until help arrives. In rough water these jackets may ride up and a crotch strap is recommended, especially in children's life jackets. Ensure they are the right type and fit and are securely fastened.

Open waters life jackets

With increased buoyancy, these will keep you in a safe floating position in rough, open water. Required for offshore and commercial vessels, they are uncomfortable and not suited to every day use.

ONLY INFLATABLE AND OPEN WATERS JACKETS ARE DESIGNED TO TURN AN UNCONSCIOUS WEARER FACE-UP IN THE WATER.

Crotch straps – prevent riding up

Even small waves cause life jackets/PFDs to ride up. A crotch strap is essential, especially in children's life jackets. They are inexpensive to buy and can be easily retro-fitted to existing life jackets.

Rescue buoys

Designed to help you stay afloat in the water, these include things like life buoys, life belts and buoyant cushions. They should be brightly coloured and fitted with a light, whistle or flag for marking position in the water.

Wetsuits

These provide warmth and a level of buoyancy. They are not an approved alternative to life jackets, unless worn by boardsailers and on dive boats within 5 miles of shore.

LIFE JACKETS – USELESS UNLESS WORN!

MARINE WEATHER

Many fatal boating accidents occur in bad weather. If in doubt, don't go out.

Use the 5-day marine forecast to plan ahead.

Always check the weather before you go out boating. Weather conditions can make the difference between an enjoyable day out and a dangerous, perhaps tragic trip. Remember that the weather can change suddenly and without warning. Head for shelter at the first sight of worsening weather.

Marine forecasts are almost always accurate when predicting major weather events, such as gales. They can be less accurate when predicting local changes of conditions, so you should always be prepared for the unexpected.

When the wind starts to blow, the water becomes very rough, very quickly, especially on lakes and rivers. Forecasts are only the best prediction at any given time.

Make sure you always use a **marine weather forecast**. Land and general forecasts do not take into account wind speed over water (which is double that over the land) or the size of waves. If you are planning ahead or intend to be away for a day or two, obtain a long-range weather forecast.

Coastal and local marine weather forecasts consist of the following parts:

WARNINGS

These are issued for gales, storms or squalls anywhere on the New Zealand coast. A strong wind advisory is issued in recreational areas if the wind is expected to be over 25 knots (about 40km/hr).

SITUATION

A description of the position and movements of highs, lows and frontal systems expected to affect the New Zealand coast within the next 36 hours. It also names those areas affected by warnings.

RECREATIONAL AREAS

Most boating areas are covered by the recreational marine forecast.

FORECAST DETAILS

A description, covering the next 24 hours of expected average conditions over open water.

wind – direction, such as north-west, is the direction the wind is expected to come from. Speed is given in knots, and 1 knot is approximately 2km/hr. This is an average speed, so always expect that gusts may be 50% higher. Also allow for funnelling between headlands, causing the wind speed to double.

sea – a description of the waves formed by the local wind.

swell – caused by longer waves that come from the ocean. Swells increase in height when they reach shallow water.

visibility – given when visibility is expected to be less than 6 miles (10km).

outlook – **all marine forecasts are for up to 48 hours, with the outlook for a further 3 days.**

WIND AND TIDE

When the wind is opposing the tide, expect a much rougher sea.

When the wind is with the tide, expect a calmer sea.

SOURCES OF MARINE WEATHER FORECASTS

NOWCASTING

Details of current wind strength and direction are available on VHF Channel 20, 21, 22, 23 in most areas.

The two most convenient sources of 5-day marine forecasts are VHF radio and telephone.

VHF radio – Maritime New Zealand Maritime Radio provides forecasts which are announced on Channel 16 at 0133, 0533, 0733, 1033, 1333, 1733 and 2133 hours.

MetPhone – dial 0900 999 + map area number.

Other sources of marine forecasts include:

- local Coastguard stations on VHF radio
- on the internet: www.metservice.co.nz
- local newspapers, but remember they can be published many hours earlier, making them out of date
- local radio stations, especially in summer
- on National Radio at 0405 hours
- private coastal radio stations and fishermen's radio.

MetPhone Coastal
Dial 0900 999 + map area number

Brett	60	Chalmers	69
Colville	61	Foveaux	70
Plenty	62	Puysegur	71
Portland	63	Milford	72
Castlepoint	64	Grey	73
Cook	65	Stephens	74
Abel	66	Raglan	75
Conway	67	Kaipara	76
Rangitata	68	Chatham Islands	78

Recreational marine forecasts around New Zealand:

North Island	
Bay of Islands Marine	0900 999 98
Auckland Marine	0900 999 99
Coromandel Marine	0900 999 07
Bay of Plenty Marine	0900 999 07
Lake Rotorua	0900 999 18
Lake Taupo	0900 999 13
Hawke's Bay Marine	0900 999 06
Kapiti Coast Marine	0900 999 17
Mana Marine	0900 999 14
Wellington Marine	0900 999 22
South Island	
Christchurch Marine	0900 999 44

Marine Forecast Areas

METPHONE

Dial 0900 999 followed by the two digit area code.
e.g. Brett: 0900 999 60. Calls cost $1.30 per minute incl GST.

For further information or assistance, please write to MetService, PO Box 722, Wellington or visit their website www.metservice.com

KEEP IN TOUCH

If you can't call for help no one can rescue you. The ability to communicate from your boat or the water is vital!

Always carry at least TWO reliable forms of emergency communication that will work when wet.

MARINE VHF RADIO

A **hand-held** waterproof marine VHF radio is one of the cheapest and most reliable forms of communication currently available to boaties. Using a VHF radio means that other vessels in the area will often hear a distress message and be the first on the scene.

Every boat with a VHF radio should stay tuned to Channel 16 (the distress channel) while at sea, to provide the best possible safety network for all.

Many boaties have a fixed VHF radio. If the radio or battery is swamped, it stops working instantly – so a reliable alternative means of communication, such as a hand-held radio, is essential.

CELL PHONES

While not a suitable substitute for a hand-held VHF radio, a cell phone can be useful. Keep it in a sealed plastic bag and in your pocket and conserve the battery for essential communication.

The simple act of putting your phone in a bag will probably save your phone if you end up in the water and it could save your life.

DISTRESS BEACONS

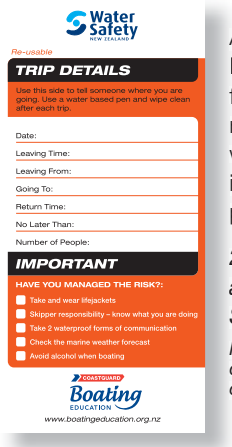
A distress beacon is one of the surest means of signalling you need help in an emergency. Registering your beacon is a legal requirement and making sure the registration details are up to date will mean that rescuers can quickly obtain information about your vessel and eliminate false alerts. Having a GPS-equipped beacon will result in a quicker response and earlier rescue.

VISUAL COMMUNICATION

Flares and waterproof torches are very effective, widely recognised and should be carried by all boats.

SHARE YOUR PLANS – TRIP REPORTS

Use your VHF radio to file a trip report with Maritime Radio or your local Coastguard, letting them know where you are going, how many people on board and when you expect to return. Don't forget to cancel your trip report when you return safely.



A good back up is the 2 Minute Form. Fill out the form and leave it with a reliable friend or relative who can raise the alarm if you do not return as planned.

2 Minute Forms are available free from Water Safety New Zealand.

More information on emergency communications can be found on page 28.

LAUNCHING AND RETRIEVING

When you arrive at the boat ramp, park well out of the way of other boats as you prepare your boat for launching and make final safety checks.

Make up a checklist for your boat, and use it!

Preparations include:

- put in bungs and check they are secure
- check that all your safety equipment is aboard and working
- check that you have enough fuel
- make sure your radio is working
- brief your crew and passengers – remember you are responsible for their safety
- move away slowly from the ramp – remember the 5 knot rule.

At the end of the day, retrieval is the reverse process. Remember to wash off all the salt from your boat and put protective spray or grease on your boat's vulnerable parts.

OVERHEAD POWER LINES

It is extremely dangerous to pass under a power line when a vessel's total height exceeds that given for SAFE CLEARANCE (as shown on the marine chart of the area) because electrical arcing may occur.

When rigging yachts near launching ramps or at the beach, always check the area for overhead wires before you put the mast up and remember to keep a careful watch for power wires over lakes, rivers and estuaries. Serious burns to those aboard could occur if any contact is made with power wires.

STARTING OUT

You must understand the operation of your boat before you head out on the water.

Remember, it is an offence to operate a boat in a manner that causes unnecessary risk to a person or property.

Read the instruction manual and become familiar with starting and running your boat.

Some general points to remember:

- with all motors, make sure the engine is in neutral before starting (although some models can be started in gear)
- with outboards, make sure the hand pump (fuel bulb) is pumped up hard and there are no fuel leaks
- sit down in your dinghy and make sure the throttle and choke are correctly set
- before pulling the manual start cord, ensure no one is sitting where your elbow may strike them
- allow the motor to warm up and run smoothly without choke before applying power
- if you have an electric start, make sure you understand how to use the warm-up lever, and ensure the engine is properly warmed before leaving the trailer or berth
- skippers should ensure that everyone on board is wearing a lifejacket and they are done up and fit properly – they are useless unless worn
- all boats, including tenders, must carry a correct size life jacket for each person.
- **when operating an outboard engine, always attach the ignition cut-out cord to your wrist or clip it to your life jacket.**

STEERING

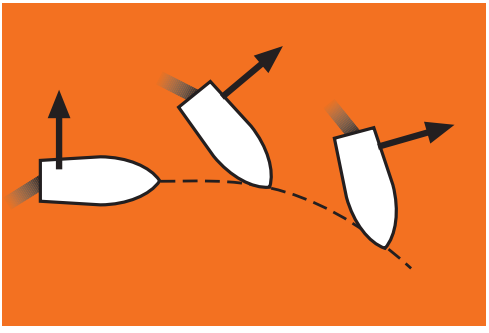
Unlike a car, when you steer a boat, it is the **stern** (back) that swings across when you turn the wheel or move the tiller.

You also have to allow for some sideways slip by the whole boat when you are steering, particularly at low speeds.

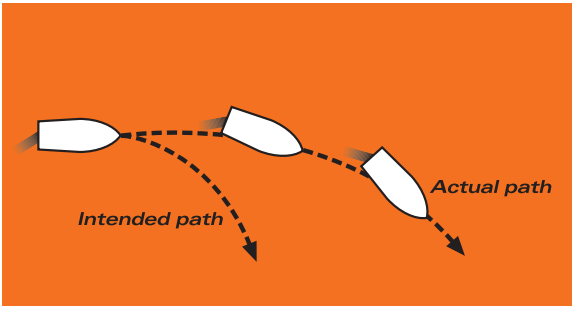
Pick a calm day to get comfortable manoeuvring your boat. Practise starting and stopping, turning, driving and picking things up out of the water.

Take your time to become competent and confident – new skills take a while to master. Make sure your family and regular crew develop their skills too, in case you need them.

Make sure all your passengers are sitting comfortably and holding on at all times. Those standing up can be thrown off balance easily and it is important to operate the boat with the optimum trim.



Stern swings



Side slip

BOAT HANDLING – POWER CRAFT

You will almost certainly encounter a host of different water conditions in your boat, each with its own peculiarities.

All these conditions have a varying effect on the safe speed you can maintain and affect the way you trim and steer.

Head seas

The waves are coming directly toward your bow (front).

Slicing through the waves is an option, provided they are not huge. Adjust your speed to avoid waves breaking over the bow. When crossing the wake created by another boat, always try to move with the bow at an acute angle to the wave formation.

Following seas

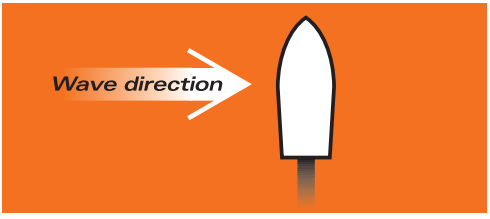
The waves are behind and following you.

The boat will seem to be nose heavy. Vary the throttle constantly to keep the nose up. The build-up of a wave at the stern will give the effect of surfing, and can adversely affect the steering capabilities. Try to keep at right angles to it and ride the crest and back of the wave. Don't get ahead of the wave or it may swamp you. If you do have to turn, do it while in the trough between waves – and do it quickly.

Beam seas

The wave formation is coming from your side or 'beam'.

Glide up each wave, moving from wave trough to wave trough gently at a 45 degree angle. Then slide down the other side, maintaining the same angle. Slow down so that the boat does not become airborne.



Should you get caught in a larger sea than anticipated, re-adjust the weight in the boat to stabilise it. Put heavy things on the floor, securely stowed, keeping the centre of gravity as low as possible. Get your crew to sit on the floor of the boat.

If in doubt about the conditions, slow down. Come off the plane and try to keep the bow (front) from dipping. If you have bilge pumps fitted, make sure they work. Otherwise, have a securely fastened bailer handy just in case.

If you take in a lot of water, try to keep the boat moving. Once you stop it can be difficult to get going again.

'RULES OF THE ROAD' ON THE WATER

Most boating accidents involve the skipper not having enough boating knowledge and experience.

It is the skipper's responsibility to ensure safety, which includes knowing and understanding the rules that apply, before heading out on the water. **If you have an accident, ignorance of the law is not accepted as an excuse. Heavy fines or prison sentences are possible for breaches of maritime rules.**

LOOKOUT

You must keep a good lookout at all times. It is your responsibility to stay alert for other boats, swimmers, dive boats, kayaks, hazards and obstacles. Keep focused on the water ahead, especially at speed. Listen as well as look.

SPEED

All boats must travel at a safe speed, taking into account the boat traffic in the area, weather conditions and when visibility is affected by glare.

Specifically, you must not exceed a speed of **5 knots** (a fast walking speed) if you are:

- within 200m of the shore
- within 200m of a boat displaying a divers' flag
- within 50m of any other boat
- within 50m of a person swimming
- on a power boat if any person has any part of their body outside the rails or edge of the deck.

Unless very closely supervised by an older person who is in constant reach of the controls, you must be over the age of 15 to operate any power boat that is capable of speed exceeding 10 knots. This includes dinghies and personal water craft.

Always check your wake effects. You must not create a wake that causes unnecessary danger to other boats or people.

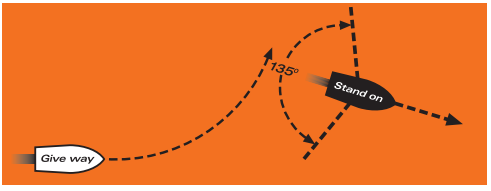
WHEN TWO BOATS MEET

When two boats are approaching each other, one has the right of way and it is called the **stand on** boat.

The other boat is called the **give way** boat. The **give way** boat must make an **early** and **obvious** manoeuvre so there can be no confusion.

The **give way** boat must pass astern of (behind) the **stand on** boat, while the **stand on** boat maintains the same course and speed.

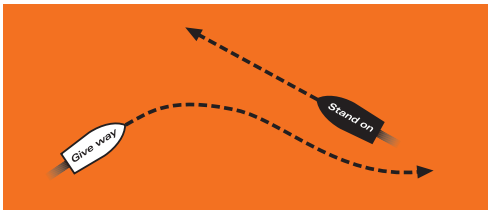
Every boat that is **overtaking** must give way. You are overtaking if you are approaching another boat anywhere in a 135 degree sector at its stern.



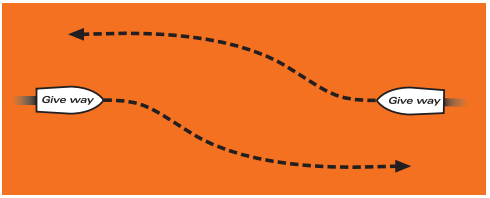
In channels and harbours:

- every boat must keep to the starboard (right) side of any channel
- inside a harbour (normally shown on the pilotage limit on the chart) you must keep out of the way of any ship over 500 tons (which is about 50m in length). Stay at least 500m clear when ahead of the ship
- you must not anchor in a channel or anywhere that could be dangerous to other craft
- all small craft must keep out of the way of larger vessels that are restricted by the channel
- stay 200m away from tankers.

When power meets power:

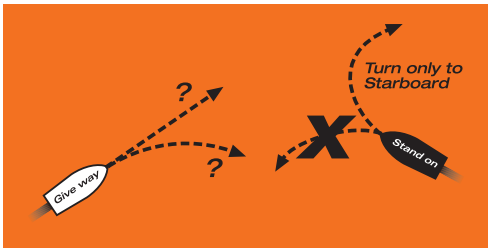


- you must give way to another boat on your starboard (right).



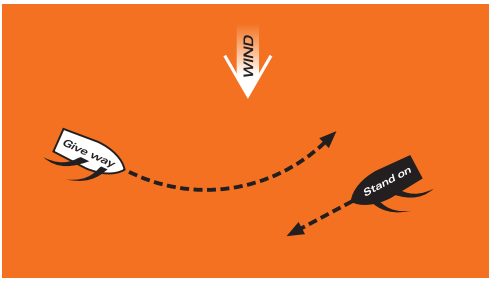
- if you meet head on, both boats must turn to starboard (right).

When things go wrong:

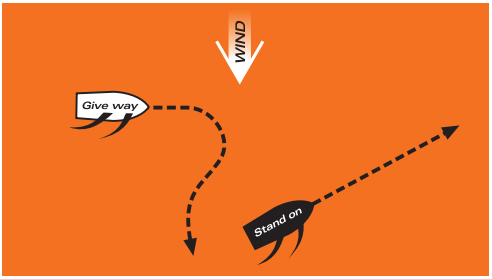


- if the give way boat does not appear to be giving way, the stand on boat must take action. The stand on boat should turn to starboard (right). If it turned to port it could turn in to the path of the give way boat.

When sail meets sail:



- when the wind is coming from different sides, the boat with the wind on the port (left) side has to give way.



- when both boats have the wind on the same side, the windward (upwind) boat has to give way
- special rules may apply between yachts competing in the same race.

When power meets sail or a boat being rowed or paddled:

- the power boat gives way (unless the other boat is overtaking)
- a sailing boat has to give way to a special case power boat, which displays certain lights or day shapes
- sailing boats should avoid sailing in a narrow channel. They have to keep out of the way of power boats restricted by the channel.

Remember, you can be fined or prosecuted for breaking maritime rules or bylaws.

RADIO

VHF RADIO

RECEIVE forecasts and messages and CALL for help if needed

VHF radio offers group protection by allowing many boats in the area to listen to calls. In distress situations or when a boat breaks down, VHF radio is the most efficient means of communication. The only significant limitation of VHF radio is that it will be useless if swamped by a wave or if the boat's battery is underwater. A hand-held VHF radio that is waterproof or kept in a sealed plastic bag can be used.

If you are considering using a cellphone as your **only** means of communication, remember the advantages VHF radio has over your cellphone:

- better coverage and fewer shadow areas
- collective safety with both shore stations and other boats listening – if you are in distress you want everyone possible to know
- batteries in a VHF radio last longer
- there is no need to remember phone numbers
- you are not relying on just one person to pass on the message
- cellphone coverage varies with the area, and the volume of phone traffic.

Everyone should keep a constant listening watch on **VHF Channel 16, the international distress channel.** However, a cellphone that is in a sealed plastic bag and kept in your pocket may be a lifesaver if you capsize suddenly, provided you are in an area where there is coverage. Dial 111.

All operators of VHF radios must hold an operator's qualification and need a call sign. This qualification involves about six hours tuition.

To obtain a call sign, contact Coastguard Boating Education on 0800 40 80 90 for details on how to obtain a VHF qualification and a call sign. Advise Coastguard Boating Education if you are buying or selling a boat equipped with VHF, or changing address.

If your boat capsizes or swamps, water will make the VHF radio inoperable. Back up the VHF radio by carrying a cellphone in a sealed plastic bag.

RULES FOR RADIO USE:

- **always use the name of the boat you are calling first, then identify yourself using your call sign and boat name**
- listen before transmitting
- don't make unnecessary calls and keep all calls as brief as possible
- use Channel 16 for making your initial call, then move to an agreed working channel
- return to Channel 16 when you have completed a call
- for emergencies, stay on Channel 16 unless you are directed to another channel by Maritime New Zealand Maritime Radio or Coastguard
- when making a distress call you are not required to have an operator's qualification and call sign.
- always stow your microphone correctly to avoid accidental transmissions, which will lock up the channel
- don't allow children to play with the radio

Nationwide, Maritime New Zealand Maritime Radio keeps a 24 hour listening watch on Channel 16. There are also many volunteer coastal and Coastguard stations keeping a listening watch on Channel 16 and other channels locally. Some operate a 24 hour service.

NAVIGATION

Navigation is knowing at all times where you are in relation to the land, hazards and obstacles, and other vessels.

The level of skill and navigational equipment required will depend on the type of boat you have, the areas where you go boating and how far you go from shore. The further from shore you go, the more knowledge and equipment you need.

Take a Coastguard Boating Education course to help you learn about navigation.

Always keep an eye on the weather. It can change very quickly with a sudden reduction in visibility. Finding that you can no longer see land is a very frightening experience. VHF radio is the best source of up-to-date weather information.

Navigational aids:

Compass

Necessary if you are going any distance from shore, or have reduced visibility.

Tide information

You can find high and low water times in your newspaper, in other marine tables, boating magazines, on Teletext and in the *'New Zealand Nautical Almanac'* available from Land Information New Zealand.

Depth finder

This displays the depth of the water and should be switched on at all times. Keep an eye on your depth finder so you know when you are getting close to shallow water.

Global positioning system (GPS)

GPS gives you an accurate position, but to use it you will need to carry the correct chart and understand how longitude and latitude are marked. The GPS also displays other useful information, so make sure you have read the manual and fully understand it.

CHARTS

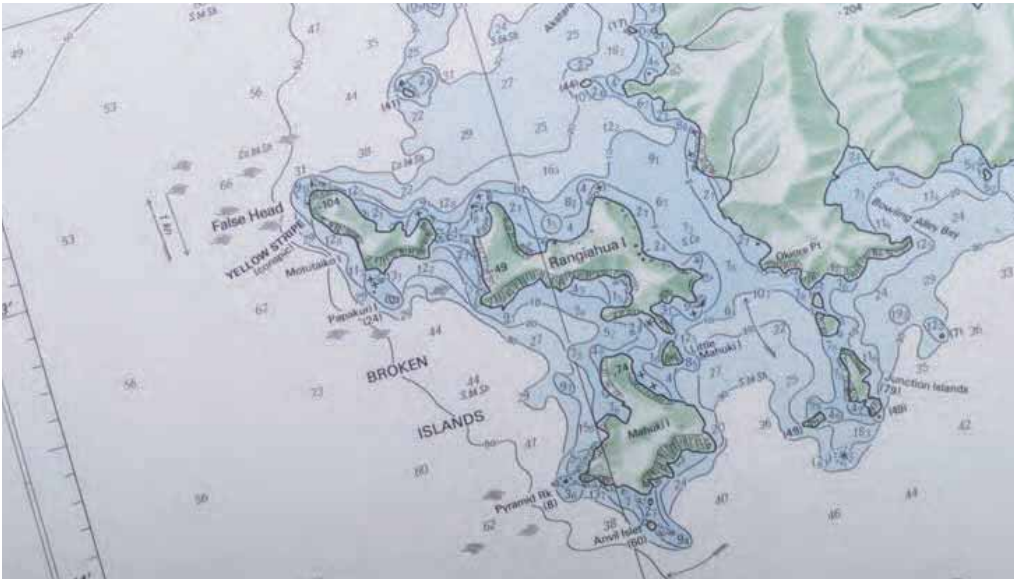
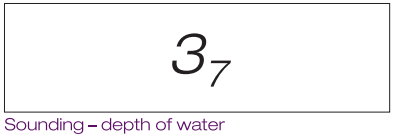


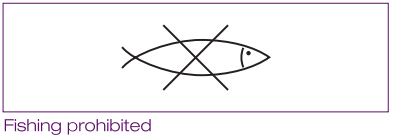
Chart
A chart shows things such as water depth, rocks above and below the water, underwater cables, tidal flows, buoys, beacons, lighthouses and the coastline. Make sure you have the largest scale chart of any area where you go boating.


Tide rips and overfalls


Anchoring prohibited



Sounding – depth of water


Fishing prohibited


Rocks – all dangerous to boats

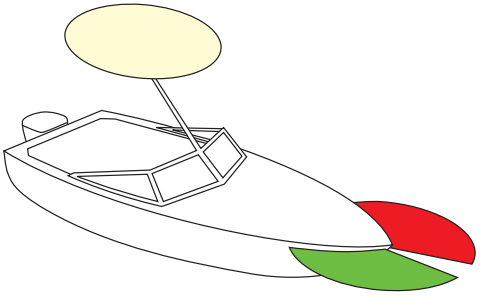
CATCH FISH – NOT CABLES
Don't anchor or fish near cables marked on the chart. They are very easily damaged.

LIGHTS FOR SMALL CRAFT

At night all boats are identified by the pattern of lights they display. This pattern of lights also helps you to know which way a boat is heading.

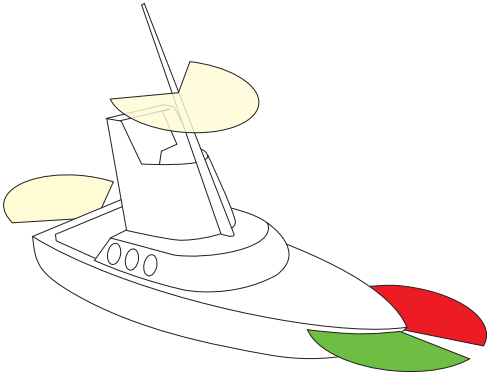
- All boats must comply with the lighting regulations. Check that the lights fitted to your boat are showing through the correct arc.
- Lights must be switched on from sunset to sunrise and in rain and fog.
- Failure to display the correct lights may result in fines or prosecution.

There are lighting requirements for all vessels underway:



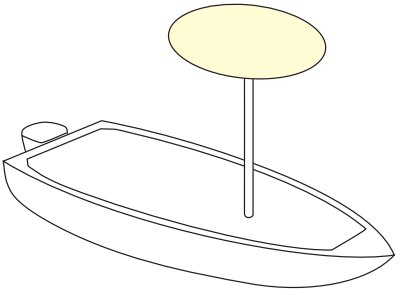
Powerboats less than 12m in length

May combine their stern and masthead lights to display one all-round white light.



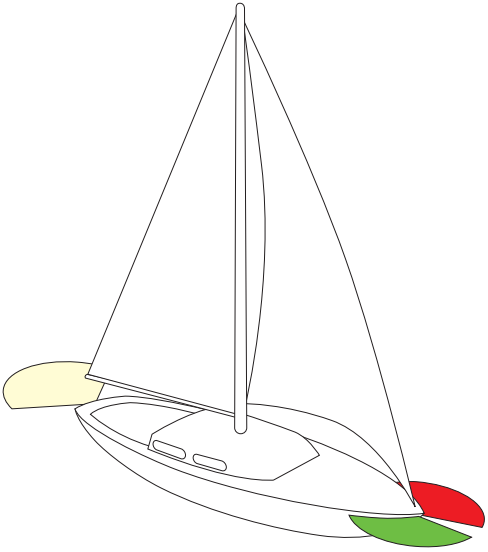
Powerboats over 12m in length

This includes a sailing boat if it is operating its engine. Display red and green sidelights, a white sternlight and a white masthead light.



Powerboats less than 7m in length and not capable of speeds over 7 knots

Need only display an all-round white light.

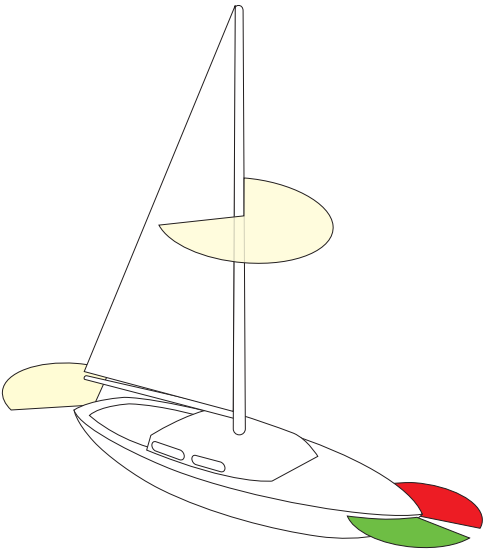


Sailing boats

Must show red and green sidelights and a white sternlight. These three lights may be combined into a single tri-colour light mounted at the top of the mast on yachts less than 20m in length.

Dinghies and kayaks

All non-powered boats under 7m in length, such as a rowing dinghy, canoe, kayak or sailboat must show a white light or torch to indicate its presence.



Sailing boats motoring or motor-sailing

Are considered to be powerboats and must display sidelights, a sternlight and a masthead light.

MASTHEAD LIGHT

Masthead lights shine forward in a 225 degree arc and must be at least 1m above the sidelights.

ANCHOR LIGHT

Every boat at anchor must show only a white light that is visible from all directions between sunset and sunrise.

RANGE OF LIGHTS

On boats up to 12m in length, white lights must have a range of 2 miles and sidelights a range of 1 mile.

BUOYS AND BEACONS

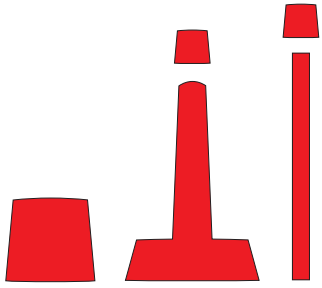
These are the 'road signs' on the water. The meaning of each navigational buoy or beacon is found in its shape, symbol on the top (top mark), and its colours.

Take time to study the buoys to familiarise yourself with their meanings.

CHANNEL MARKERS

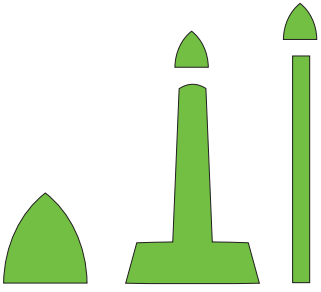
These show well-established channels and indicate port (left) and starboard (right) sides of the channels. One of the following may be used:

LATERAL MARKS (RED OR GREEN)



Port mark

A red can shape. At night, a red flashing light may be shown.



Starboard mark

A green conical shape. At night, a green flashing light may be shown.

Coming in

Upon entering a harbour, the red port mark should be kept on the boat's port (left) side, and the green mark on the boat's starboard (right) side.

Going out

When leaving a harbour, the red port mark should be kept on the boat's starboard (right) side, and the green mark on the boat's port (left) side.

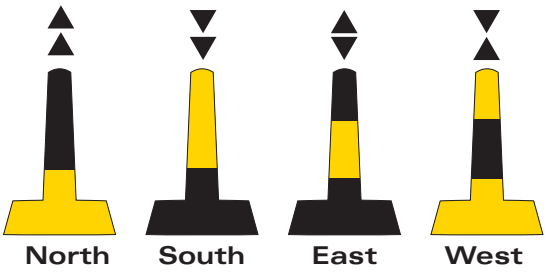
Water-ski access lanes

Black and orange bands.

Reserved areas

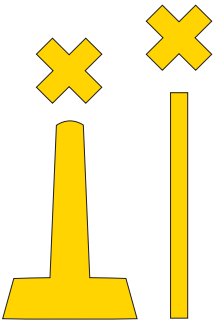
Black and white bands.

CARDINAL MARKS



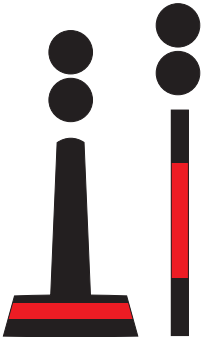
Yellow and black

Each indicates where there is deep water close to a danger and they show this relative to the compass – deep water is to the north of a north cardinal mark, to the east of an east cardinal mark.



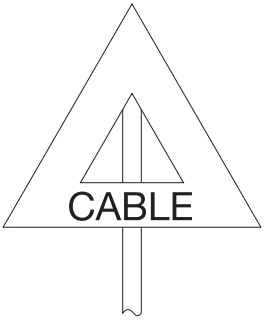
Special marks – yellow

Indicates a special area and that you should use caution. Coloured yellow and, if lit at night, shows a flashing yellow light. The top mark is a single yellow cross. Check your chart to identify what is special in that area.



Isolated danger – red and black

Indicates an isolated danger, such as a submerged rock, and tells you not to pass too close. This mark is coloured black with one or more horizontal red bands. If lit at night, it shows a group of two white flashes. The top mark has two black spheres.



Underwater cable marks

These are indicated by a white triangle on the foreshore. When in pairs, they indicate the direction of the cable. Do not anchor near these cables. The skipper of a boat that damages a cable will be held responsible, with fines up to $100,000.

For further information, refer to the Maritime New Zealand book, 'New Zealand's System of Buoys and Beacons'.

CATCH FISH – NOT CABLES
Don't anchor or fish near cables marked on the chart. They are very easily damaged.

RIVER BARS

There are three types of bars along a typical New Zealand coastline: the dangerous bar, the very dangerous bar, and the excessively dangerous bar.

The secret to understanding the techniques for crossing a bar lies in gaining local knowledge.

This means understanding the state of the bar, being able to interpret the conditions, and assessing the ever-changing shape and location of the channel through the bar.

Before you leave, talk to the locals, check weather and tides, and inspect the bar at low tide.

Secure all moveable objects in the boat and ensure that weight, including your passenger load, is kept down low. Check that your engine and steering are performing correctly. Make sure you and all your passengers are wearing life jackets. **You must wear a life jacket when crossing a bar. Not doing so is an offence.**

Before you cross the bar, ensure everyone is wearing a lifejacket, warm up the motor, observe the state of the bar, secure all hatches and approach with caution. Study the nature of the seas to find the best route to take.

The best time to cross a bar is at high water. Avoid crossing when the tide is going out. Put in a call on your VHF radio to the local Coastguard or Maritime Radio immediately **before and after** crossing the bar.

Going out should be done slowly and cautiously, picking up the rhythm of the waves, seeing the opening and following it. Once you are on your way, don't turn back. Keep the bow (front) of your boat directly into the waves. Throttle back at the top of the wave, then get ready for the next one.

Coming in involves preparing your boat and crew the same as for going out. Keep the weight low and aft (towards the rear) in the boat to help avoid digging in the bow and broaching (slewing round sideways). It is much more difficult to read the waves from out at sea than ashore.

Wait until the conditions are suitable before you cross, or come ashore at a less dangerous place if possible.

Cross when the tide is coming in, keeping the boat on the back of a wave. Be ready to either slow down or accelerate as conditions dictate.

Remember to report to Coastguard or Maritime Radio when you are safely across the bar.

EMERGENCIES

MOST SERIOUS EMERGENCIES OCCUR UNEXPECTEDLY AND VERY QUICKLY. BEING PREPARED MAY SAVE YOUR LIFE.

CAPSIZE

85% of boating fatalities are the result of swamping or capsizing in boats under 6m.

Almost always, a capsize is totally unexpected and happens in a few seconds. There is no possibility of grabbing anything other than what is immediately to hand. Countless people have died very soon after a capsize, before help could reach them. Men on a fishing trip are the most likely casualties.

Being prepared means:

- realising that an accident can happen to anyone, no matter how experienced they are, or how safe their boat is
- wearing life jackets in boats under 6m. In larger boats, life jackets must be immediately accessible – not stowed under seats
- knowing whether your boat will sink, will float with just the bow above water, or will float level. Almost certainly, equipment such as distress flares or a distress beacon will be able to be retrieved from a boat that is floating level, even if it is upside down. Many accidents have shown that equipment cannot be retrieved if the boat floats bow up, even for experienced swimmers or divers
- understanding that cold water shock can kill very quickly. Initial response to sudden unexpected immersion causes a number of changes to a person's breathing and pulse rate. Many people inhale water and drown, suffer heart problems or panic. Without a life jacket many people do not survive the first minute or two
- ensuring you have the means to tell someone you are in trouble once you are swimming beside a capsized boat. Unless sealed in a plastic bag, a VHF radio will not work after immersion, although some hand-held VHF radios are waterproof. Cell phones may provide the communication needed to save lives but only if sealed in a plastic bag. They should be kept in a person's pocket for immediate access. There is no loss of signal strength if cell phones or VHF radios are used while in a bag
- knowing that red hand-held flares are the best visual distress signal and can be used by day or night. They work well in spite of immersion. Orange smoke is a daytime signal. Every boat should also carry a powerful waterproof torch.

Having equipment that is not able to be retrieved or will not work when wet is pointless. If your boat floats bow up or sinks, ensuring safety equipment is available will almost certainly turn a capsize from a fatal accident into an inconvenience.

SINKING

If your boat starts taking in water, the first thing to do is ensure everyone on board has their life jacket on and that it is properly fastened.

Try to locate the cause of the leak and reduce the flow of water by pushing something into the hole. Make a distress call and head towards shallower water.

Bail the water out as best you can.

Should the boat submerge or turn over, **stay with the boat** – you have a much greater chance of being found. Never attempt to swim to shore unless you are wearing a life jacket.

Accidental immersion

The first reaction when suddenly entering cold water is shock, with breathing difficulty and increased heart rate, which can cause death in a few minutes. Those who survive then rapidly lose heat from the limbs, causing severe loss of muscle strength and inability to carry out simple tasks, such as putting on or manually inflating a life jacket or setting off a flare.

Wearing a life jacket with a secure crotch strap (to prevent it riding up) will help you to survive the cold shock and will reduce loss of strength. It will also remove the need to tread water or move the arms to keep afloat, thereby preserving warmth in the body. Heat loss is greater in water than in air of the same temperature.

A life jacket can reduce the chance of death by 70%, provided there is means to call for and get help.

If you are in the water with floating objects e.g. upturned boat, then raise as much of your torso out of the water as possible.

For more on how to survive in cold water, visit www.maritimenz.govt.nz

FIRE FIGHTING

In the event of a fire, remove one of the following:

- **fuel** – turn off the gas or petrol supply, or remove combustible material
- **heat** – apply cold water
- **oxygen** – smother the fire with CO_2 dry powder or foam, or cover with a fire blanket. When using an extinguisher, keep low and aim at the base of the fire.

Prevention of fires

NEVER smoke while refuelling!

- Ventilate the boat thoroughly after refuelling. Petrol and LPG vapours are heavier than air and will accumulate in the lowest areas where they may be ignited by a spark.
- Remove all rags and materials that have flammable products on them, such as oily or turps-soaked rags.
- Maintain the electrical systems on your boat to prevent shortouts and sparks.
- Fit a smoke detector in the cabin.

Extinguishers

- There are different types of fire extinguisher, each suited to a particular type of fire. A dry powder extinguisher is a good general purpose type which will work well on most fires. It needs to be shaken occasionally to prevent the powder compacting.
- Fire extinguishers should be kept outside the engine space in places where they can be reached from the open deck or cockpit after the fire starts.
- Ensure all on board know where the extinguishers are stowed and how to use them.

- Protect fire extinguishers from salt spray and the elements and have them serviced regularly.
- **Under no circumstances should water be used on fuel or electric fires.**

PERSON OVERBOARD

The four basic things to remember when a person goes overboard are:

SHOUT very clearly MAN OVERBOARD so that everyone on board is aware of the emergency.

THROW a life buoy, throwing line, cushion or anything else to hand that will help the person in the water to float, and mark the position.

WATCH the person in the water carefully, and have someone on the boat point continuously at the person. Record the position on GPS if you have one.

STOP immediately to keep the distance between the person in the water and the boat to a minimum.

Remember that when you turn, the **stern** (back) of the boat swings and therefore the propeller swings when you alter course. To avoid injury, turn the **stern** (back) of the boat away from the person in the water.

Agree on, and practice, your person overboard drill with all those on your boat, so that everyone is aware of what to do in an emergency situation.

Person overboard is a distress situation. Do not hesitate to call **mayday** on your VHF radio if you are unable to rescue the person in the water immediately.

RECOVERY OF PERSON OVERBOARD

Ensuring you are clear of the person in the water, approach the person from downwind (into the wind). Stop the engine when you are near the person, so you can throw a line or they can swim to you.

In small open boats and those with a low freeboard, boarding should be over the boat's bow (front) or stern (back). If your boat doesn't have a boarding ladder, use a rope to make a loop over the side for the person in the water to put their foot into.

REPORTING ACCIDENTS

On average there are 15 deaths in pleasure boats each year, most of which could have been avoided.

Understanding the reasons for boating accidents is an important function of Maritime New Zealand. They need your help in reporting accidents, so lessons learned can be shared with the boating community.

It is an offence if you do not report an accident within 48 hours to Maritime New Zealand and, if the accident is inshore, to the harbourmaster.

You can report accidents online at: www.maritimenz.govt.nz/report-online

DISTRESS SIGNALS IN LIFE-THREATENING SITUATIONS

There are some important distress signals you need to know if you find yourself in a life-threatening situation on the water.

Use one or more of the following:

RADIO

Use Channel 16 on your VHF radio to call MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY. Give the name of your boat and your call sign, then give your **position** and details of your distress.

In an emergency situation you do not have to have an operator's qualification to use a VHF radio. Make sure all your passengers know how to use the radio in case of emergency.

ARMS

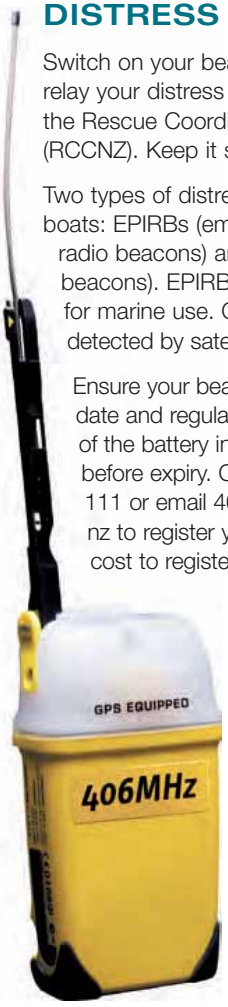
If you have no other method, raising and lowering your arms repeatedly is a recognised short distance distress signal.

DISTRESS BEACONS

Switch on your beacon and the satellite will relay your distress signal and position to the Rescue Coordination Centre New Zealand (RCCNZ). Keep it switched on until help arrives.

Two types of distress beacon can be used on boats: EPIRBs (emergency position indicating radio beacons) and PLBs (personal locator beacons). EPIRBs are specifically designed for marine use. Only 406MHz beacons are detected by satellites.

Ensure your beacon registration is up to date and regularly check the expiry date of the battery in your beacon, and replace before expiry. Call RCCNZ on 0800 406 111 or email 406registry@maritimenz.govt.nz to register your beacon. There is no cost to register your beacon but it is a legal requirement



If you have activated your beacon inadvertently, phone RCCNZ on 0508 472 269 immediately, or call Maritime Radio on Channel 16. There is no charge for an inadvertent beacon activation if the report is made as soon as the activation is discovered.

CELL PHONES

Call 111 and ask for the Police. Give your position, information about your emergency, and cell phone number, so that you can be called if further information is needed by rescue services.

Keep your cell phone in your pocket in a sealed plastic bag or purpose-made waterproof container so it will not be useless in a capsize or swamping. Keep the cell phone in a plastic bag when you use it.

Make sure the battery is always fully charged and carry spare batteries. If you rely on your cell phone for safety, conserve the battery. Do not use it for other calls.

Misuse of any distress signal can result in substantial penalties.

VISUAL DISTRESS SIGNALS

LIGHTS

Send an SOS (··· – – – ···) by any signal method such as a bright touch.

FLARES

Ensure that you and your crew know how to use them. Regularly check the expiry date on your flares, and replace when expired.

There are three common types available.

Orange smoke flare

Effective as a line-of-sight distress signal for daytime use only.

Red hand-held flare

Effective as a line-of-sight distress signal by day or night, with a good visibility range. Very visible from aircraft, this flare burns for up to 60 seconds.

Red parachute flare

Capable of attracting attention in daylight for up to 10 miles. Night time range is up to 40 miles. The rocket launches the flare up to 300m. The flare burns for 40-60 seconds as it slowly descends under the parachute.

Always hold a flare outside the boat when firing. Never fire into the wind – always downwind, preferably at a 15-20 degree angle off vertical.

In an emergency, fire one flare as soon as you realise you are in distress. Keep other flares until you need to attract the attention of searchers.

Familiarise yourself with the firing instructions on each type of flare before you need to use them. You will not be able to read the instructions in the dark.

PREVENTING INJURIES ON BOATS

All the advice outlined in this safe boating guide is aimed at helping you enjoy safe, injury-free boating. It could help you save a life. Below are a few important facts you should also know about injuries on boats.

The people most likely to get injured on boats are male. The types of injury commonly sustained are more severe than you might first think – injuries to the face and jaw (teeth), broken bones, severe head injuries and burns.

The most common cause of injuries on board a boat is people losing their balance and falling over, or people colliding with one another or a hard object. Lung and brain injuries can result from inhaling water.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

As a responsible skipper:

- set the example – wear your lifejacket
- before setting out, brief your passengers about safety
- always apply throttle changes gently
- avoid excessive speed, especially when conditions are rough
- know the 'rules of the road' at sea so you can avoid collisions
- make sure you keep the boat well balanced when you stow gear
- minimise the amount of alcohol you drink before or during a trip.

To make your vessel a safe one:

- ensure appropriate safety equipment is on board and in working condition
- install hand rails
- stow things away properly – avoid clutter
- on yachts – watch out for the boom
- have everyone wear life jackets; they help with flotation and provide protection from chest injuries in collisions and groundings
- ensure someone else on your boat knows how to operate the boat if you can't.

As a passenger:

- wear a life jacket – you are less likely to inhale water in an accident or mishap
- maintain your balance – one hand for the boat, one hand for yourself
- go backwards down ladders
- sit down in rough weather
- don't go overboard with alcohol.

Don't let your family or friends become a statistic on the water.

For more information, check out **www.maritimenz.govt.nz**

BOATS AND YOUNG CHILDREN

Children and boats are a great combination – spending time out in the fresh air, learning about the world around them and having fun.

As the skipper, you are responsible for all those on your boat, but children need extra care aboard the boat and around water.

Here are some important points to consider, before you head out:

- children and non-swimmers should wear life jackets at all times
- a life jacket must fit properly – a child will slip out of an adult-sized life jacket in the water. Life jackets fitted with crotch straps are essential for children. These can be easily retrofitted
- use a child safety harness for young children when appropriate
- teach children about the dangers and risks when boating
- work through an emergency plan for all those on board, thinking about situations like person overboard, capsize, running aground, fire and collision
- don't go out alone with young children. You need to have another adult aboard who can cope if something happens to you
- make sure everyone is sitting safely and holding on when travelling
- alcohol affects judgement, balance and survival time in the water. With children on your boat, your alcohol consumption will affect their survival chances as well as your own
- anyone supervising young children on the water must know how to swim and be familiar with water survival techniques
- the minimum age for being in charge of a power boat capable of 10 knots or more is 15 years old. This includes PWCs and dinghies. Those under 15 are allowed to operate the boat if an adult remains within reach of controls.

Remember that children look to adults for examples of appropriate behaviour. Wear your life jacket and they will wear theirs. Teach children the pleasures and the risks of boating and they will have taken the first step on the way to becoming responsible boaties themselves.

If you plan to take children boating, it is your responsibility to ensure that they have the appropriate survival skills. **Make sure they learn to swim** and teach them boating skills and survival techniques in the water.

Remember, when children can take part they learn quickly and act responsibly. Encourage them to 'have a go' at tasks when appropriate.

WATER-SKIING AND TOWING

This includes riding sea biscuits, wakeboarding and towing anyone.

- It takes a minimum of **three** people for water-skiing – one to ski, one to drive the boat and the third person, who must be at least 10 years old, to keep an eye on the skier so the skipper can concentrate on driving the boat safely.
- Skiers are required to wear an appropriate buoyancy aid.
- Avoid shallow water.
- When picking up a skier, turn the boat towards the side the skier is on, so that the propeller swings away from the skier.
- The 5 knot rule applies unless you are in a **ski access lane**, where you can go right to the beach at speed.
- You must keep to the **right** going in and out of an access lane.
- Access lanes are marked by posts painted with **orange** and **black** bands.
- Water-skiers have priority rights to use access lanes ahead of other users. If skiers are outside an access lane they must not go within 200m of shore or a boat with a dive flag. They must keep at least 50m from other craft or swimmers.
- You must not water-ski between sunset and sunrise.
- **If the skier wears bright headgear they will be more easily seen when in the water. Likewise the towing boat should display a red flag when anyone has fallen off skis or a biscuit. This communicates to other boaties that there is a person in the water, potentially some distance from the towing boat.**

DIVING

It is a legal requirement that a divers' flag is displayed. It must be able to be seen and readily identified from 200m away. The minimum legal flag size is 600mm high by at least 600mm long. It must be clearly visible even when there is no wind. Either a watch keeper left on the dive boat must wave the flag so that it can be seen when any vessel is approaching, or a three dimensional rigid mounted flag must be displayed if no watch keeper stays on board.

The divers' flag means a diver is in the water, so keep well clear and move at a slow speed.

Divers sometimes drift away from their support boat, so expect them to be well away from the boat. Maintain at least 200m distance from the flag or keep your speed down to under 5 knots.

A diver's head is hard to see in the water or they may be just below the surface.

Remember to dive safe:

- always dive with a buddy
- get professional instruction
- maintain your equipment
- take a refresher course
- plan your dive and dive your plan

BOARD SAILING

Sail boards and kite boards are classified in law as sail boats, and are subject to all the normal sailing rules.

For safety reasons, they must not be used at speeds over 5 knots within 200m of the beach or 50m of other boats or swimmers.

Unless wearing a wet suit, sail boarders and kite boarders are required to wear a life jacket or buoyancy vest.

Additionally, wearing non-skid footwear, a helmet and knee protection is advised.

Many board sailors have been blown out to sea after becoming exhausted, so avoid using sail boards or kite boards in offshore winds unless you are very proficient.

Always take a waterproof means of signalling for help in case of gear failure or injury.

JET BOATS

Jet boats operate mainly on shallow rivers. In addition to the normal boating rules, boats heading upstream in rivers must keep out of the way of boats going downstream.

Check with the local council for permitted speeds in rivers.

ROWING DINGHIES, SMALL BOATS AND PADDLEBOATS

No formal 'rules of the road' apply when these different types of boats meet, so courtesy and good seamanship is expected.

Good seamanship says:

- the boat that is in the best position to give way should do so. This will often be the faster or more manoeuvrable boat
- it is very important that an early and obvious change is made so that the other boat is able to respond appropriately
- power boats give way to rowing and sailing boats
- life jackets should be worn at all times
- fit buoyancy to all dinghies and small sail boats.

KAYAKS

BE SAFE – BE SEEN

Kayaks are common on lakes, rivers and around the coast. Used properly, they are very safe, but their limitations need to be understood.

- When kayaking in areas used by other craft, make sure you will be seen. A kayak can be almost invisible to skippers of other craft. Wearing bright clothing, having brightly coloured paddle blades with reflector strips, and displaying a bright orange or red flag about a metre above the water on a rod will greatly reduce the chance of being run down accidentally.
- Only experienced, fit paddlers should use a kayak in rough water.
- Kayaks tend to float on top of the water and can be difficult or impossible to control in strong winds, unless handled by an expert paddler.
- Kayaks can easily capsize. It is essential to have buoyancy fitted to make sure it stays level so it can be re-boarded.
- Getting in and out safely requires much practice, especially in deep water, where you always need a paddle float.
- Always wear a buoyancy vest or life jacket designed for kayaking.
- Make sure you do not become separated from your kayak following a capsize.
- Kayaks, especially the 'sit-on' style, blow rapidly across the water in a light breeze.
- Between sunset and sunrise a kayak must display a white light. It can be a 360° fixed white light or a torch, but a flashing light or strobe is not acceptable (strobe lights are used to mark a man overboard). The white light should be bright enough to be seen 2 miles (about 4km) away. Colours other than white are not allowed.
- Get tuition at a kayaking club or take a Coastguard Boating Education course. Phone 0800 40 80 90.
- **Watch the kayak module online at www.boatingeducation.org.nz**

PERSONAL WATER CRAFT

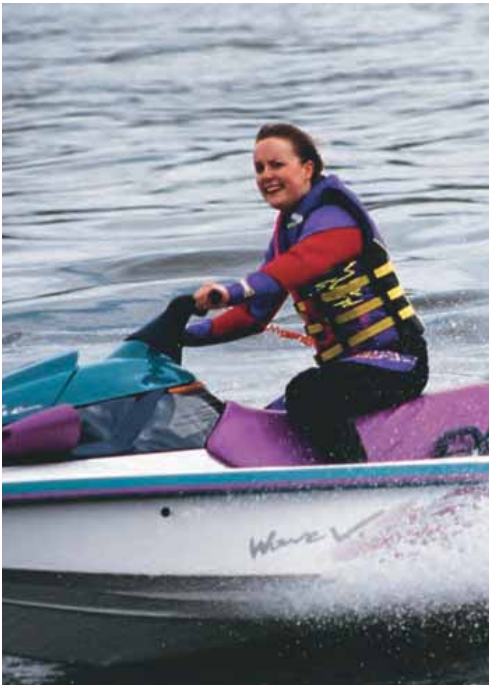
Personal water craft (PWCs), sometimes called jetskis, are very popular at beaches and on our waterways during the summer. They give us quick and easy access to the water, with the thrills of high-speed boating.

With the thrills come the dangers. Follow the guidelines listed below and ensure your experiences on your PWC are safe and enjoyable for yourself as well as others.

Remember, a PWC is considered a **power boat** in law, and the relevant rules apply to its use.

Keep your distance from other PWCs – collisions at speed are very dangerous.

Unless fitted with the required navigation lights (page 20) a PWC must not be used between sunset and sunrise.



Wear a life jacket

- It could save your life
- It is mandatory to wear a life jacket in some regions
- **Watch the PWC module online at www.boatingeducation.org.nz**

Obey speed limits

Keep to 5 knots (9.25km/hr) or less within:

- 200m of shore
- 200m of vessels flying a dive flag
- 50m of another person in the water
- 50m of another vessel, including other PWCs.

Know the age limit

As a PWC is a power boat, you must be 15 years or older to operate one.

Noise annoys

Keep away from residences or areas where people will be annoyed by noise.

Don't drink and drive

Alcohol and PWCs don't mix.

Know how to swim

Be a survival swimmer.

Turn safely

Apply throttle to turn. When you throttle off completely, you lose steering control.

Education is the key

Get more out of your PWC – take a Coastguard Boating Education Course.
Phone 0800 40 80 90.

Check local bylaws

Check with your regional council regarding bylaws, which may restrict areas for PWC use or reserve special places for their use. Some councils require registration of PWCs.

Watch out for swimmers!

ENVIRONMENT

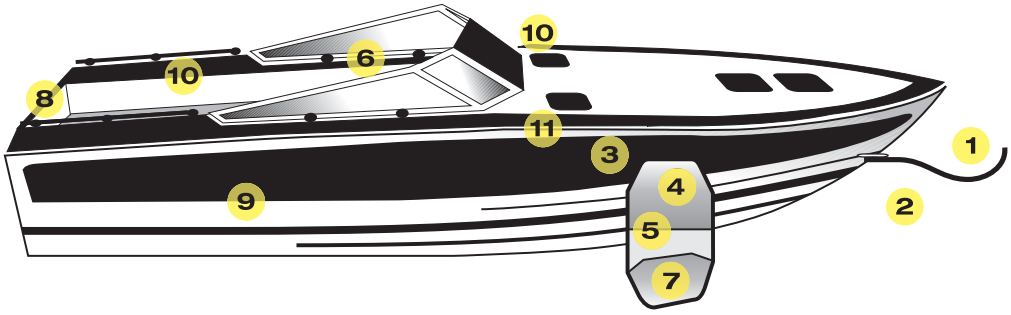
The water is our playground, sports arena, holiday spot and a great source of food. Marine pollution law requires that we respect and care for the marine environment to ensure it is sustained for our children and grandchildren. Remember, you can be fined or prosecuted for offences.

Here are a few simple guidelines:

- **never** dispose of plastic or synthetic fishing gear overboard, no matter where you are
- take cans, bottles, paper and other rubbish back to shore with you
- minimal amounts of food scraps, cut up very small, may be thrown overboard as far out to sea as possible, but must be at least 3 miles from shore
- untreated sewage must not be discharged into the sea within 500m of the high water mark, within 500m of a marine farm, or in water less than 5m deep
- do not discharge properly-treated sewage within 500m of a marine farm
- fishermen must stick to the rules regarding size and limit of catches and must not fish in prohibited areas
- keep well clear of underwater cables, which are clearly marked on charts. There are heavy penalties for damaging a cable while anchoring or fishing
- you must not anchor where you could damage another boat
- take great care to avoid spillage when refuelling your boat – use a sorbent pad around the fuel inlet
- if you see an oil spill in our coastal waters, report it immediately to the local authority or council
- do not create a wake that can cause injury or damage – it is an offence.

For more information visit www.cleanboating.org.nz

TERMS USED IN BOATING

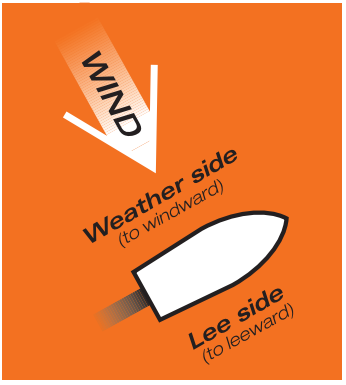


1	**PAINTER –** a rope tied to the bow of a small boat
2	**BOW –** front end of the boat
3	**DECK**
4	**BULKHEAD –** an interior wall in a boat
5	**CABIN –** room
6	**COCKPIT –** an open area with partial shelter
7	**BILGE –** the lowest area inside a boat
8	**STERN –** back end of the boat
9	**HULL –** the body of a boat
10	**PORT –** left side of the boat
11	**STARBOARD –** right side of the boat

FREEBOARD – the height of a boat's deck above the water

KNOT – (speed) one nautical mile per hour (1.85 km/hr)

LEE SHORE – shoreline to leeward of a boat



COASTGUARD BOATING EDUCATION

Coastguard Boating Education is New Zealand's leading provider of boating courses. There are courses for all levels of knowledge and ability.

Core courses are delivered throughout the country. Specialty and practical courses are available at selected venues. Course study options include classroom, home study and online. Course duration times are indicated.

For more information, including a course schedule, contact Coastguard Boating Education:

Phone: 09 361 4700
Free phone: 0800 40 80 90
Email: info@boatingeducation.org.nz
Website: www.boatingeducation.org.nz

CORE COURSES

Day Skipper (15 hours)
Unit Standard 26542 available

An introductory course for all members of the family or crew, including those new to boating. Applies to all vessels including yachts, launches, power boats, jet skis, sea kayaks, and waka.

Boatmaster (30 hours)
Unit Standard 26541 available

A comprehensive course for boaties with some existing knowledge and experience. Applies to a range of vessels including yachts, launches, and power boats.

Maritime VHF Radio Operator Certificate (6 hours)
Unit Standard 19491 v2 available

A requirement for all users of marine VHF radio. Marine VHF call signs are also available from Coastguard Boating Education.

SPECIALTY COURSES

Coastal Skipper (55 hours)

An advanced course covering coastal navigation, weather, passage planning, and seamanship, relevant to those wanting to undertake coastal voyages.

Ocean Yachtmaster (72 hours)

An advanced course covering ocean navigation and passage making, for skippers and crew intending to race offshore or cruise overseas.

Radar (6 hours)

A comprehensive course to help you understand and safely operate the radar set on your vessel.

GPS Operator (8 hours)

Covering all principles and limitations, including use of chart plotters and techniques for more complex navigation tasks.

Coastal Medic (16 hours)

An intermediate course to manage trauma for up to 24 hours. (Recognised by Maritime New Zealand for commercial qualifications.)

Offshore Medic (16 hours)

An advanced course to manage trauma and medical emergencies offshore, where medical assistance is not available.

Outboard Engine Maintenance (6 hours)

An essential course covering outboard care and trouble-shooting.

Inboard Engine Maintenance (15 hours)

A comprehensive course covering diesel engine care, maintenance, and fault finding.

Basic Sea Survival (4 hours)

An essential classroom-based course covering sea survival techniques and equipment.

Advanced Sea Survival (16 hours)
Unit Standard 12309 available

A two-day course required by crew competing in offshore races (category 1). Recognised by Yachting New Zealand and ISAF.

Club Safety Boat Operator (8 hours)

A practical on-water training course for operators of yacht club safety boats.

Sea Kayak (3 hours)

A short course covering sea kayaks, equipment, communication, emergencies, planning, weather, rules, and navigation.

Maritime Restricted Operator Certificate
Unit Standard 12309 available

A legal requirement for commercial operators and users of HF/SSB radio.

Bar Crossing

A practical course for all vessels likely to encounter bar crossing situations.

PRACTICAL COURSES

(In association with the Royal Yachting Association)

Introductory through to advanced practical courses specific to:

- **Powerboating** (runabouts, RIBs (rigid inflatable boats), and other outboard-driven craft)
- **Sail Cruising** (keelers and multihulls)
- **Motor Cruising** (launches)
- **PWC** (personal water craft).

RYA/MCA Certificates of Competence (Sail or Power) and commercial endorsements are available.

SCHOOL PROGRAMMES

Safe Boating Programme

A teaching and learning resource designed for year 5-8 students, which links to the Health and PE, Science, Technology and English curricula. The programme provides preparation for Education Outside The Classroom boating experiences such as kayaking, yachting and power boating. Free to download from www.boatingeducation.org.nz (search “school programmes”).

Day Skipper Experience

A half-day practical experience for intermediate and secondary school students, to discover the thrill of crewing a vessel and learn essential boating safety.

FURTHER INFORMATION

This booklet has outlined some of the important areas you need to know about as a responsible skipper.

For more information:

- read *Safety in Small Craft* and *The Rules of the Road at Sea*, published by Coastguard Boating Education
- join a boating or yacht club and get some local knowledge and safety information
- make sure you have marine charts and boating guides for your area
- take a Coastguard Boating Education course
- check local bylaws.

For information on courses or for VHF radio call signs and changes to VHF details contact:

Coastguard Boating Education
PO Box 91322, Victoria St West,
Auckland 1142
Ph 09 361 4700 or 0800 40 80 90
Fax 09 376 4775
Email: info@boatingeducation.org.nz
Website: www.boatingeducation.org.nz

For boating and general water safety information contact:

Water Safety New Zealand
PO Box 10126, Wellington 6143
Ph 04 801 9600
Fax 04 801 9599
Email: wsnz@watersafety.org.nz
Website: www.watersafety.org.nz

For boating safety information and reporting accidents:

Maritime New Zealand
PO Box 27006, Wellington 6141
Ph 04 473 0111 or 0508 22 55 22
Fax 04 494 1263
Email: recreational.boating@maritimenz.govt.nz
Website: www.maritimenz.govt.nz

Watch boat safety clips on YouTube:

35+ modules, including:

- launching and retrieving boats
- navigation lights and charts
- rules of the road on the water
- radios, flares, phones and signals.

Visit Boat Safety In New Zealand on YouTube:

Visit: www.youtube.com/user/boatsafetyinnz

OTHER INFORMATION

Accident Compensation Corporation
Website: www.acc.co.nz

Discover Boating
Website: www.discoverboating.co.nz

Jet Boating New Zealand
PO Box 313, Rangiora 7440
Ph 03 315 6694
Fax 03 315 6693
Email: jetboat.assn.nz@xtra.co.nz
Website: www.jbnz.co.nz

Kiwi Association of Sea Kayakers (KASK)
PO Box 23, Runanga, West Coast 7841
Email: kask.admin@xtra.co.nz
Website: www.kask.co.nz

NZ Marine
(Marine Industry Association)
PO Box 90448, Auckland 1142
Ph 09 360 0056 or 0800 600 242
Fax 09 360 0019
Email: info@bia.org.nz
Website: www.nzmarine.com

New Zealand Jet Sports Boating Association
PO Box 80154, Auckland 0643
Ph/Fax 09 478 0908
Email: nzjsba@xtra.co.nz
Website: www.nzjetsport.co.nz

Whitewater NZ
PO Box 284, Wellington 6140
Ph 027 209 6101
Email: nzrca@rivers.org.nz
Website: www.rivers.org.nz

New Zealand Trailer Boat Federation
PO Box 301748, Albany 0752
Ph 09 476 5959
Fax 09 476 5959
Email: info@nztbf.org.nz
Website: www.nztbf.org.nz

New Zealand Underwater Association
PO Box 875, Auckland 1140
Ph 09 623 3252
Fax 09 623 3523
Email: nzu@nzunderwater.org.nz
Website: www.nzu.org.nz

Nga Waka Federation
PO Box 9570, Wellington 6141
Ph 04 801 7914
Fax 04 801 9412
Email: toimaori@xtra.co.nz
Website: www.maoriart.org.nz

Coastguard New Zealand
PO Box 33559, Auckland 0740
Ph 09 489 1510
Fax 09 489 1506
Email: info@coastguard.co.nz
Website: www.coastguard.co.nz

Sea Kayak Operators Association of New Zealand (SKOANZ)
PO Box 35123, Browns Bay, Auckland 0753
Ph 09 476 7066
Email: skoanz@xtra.co.nz
Website: www.skoanz.org.nz

Yachting New Zealand
PO Box 91209, Auckland 1142
Ph 09 361 1471
Fax 09 360 2246
Email: mail@yachtingnz.org.nz
Website: www.yachtingnz.org.nz

DON'T BE A CLOWN.
WEAR A LIFEJACKET.

MARITIME NEW ZEALAND

maritimenz.govt.nz/lifejackets

New Zealand Government