



# BOATING SAFETY

SafeTips from the Naval Safety Command

**Boating can pose serious risks when you're on the water. To reduce potential risks associated with a day on the water, it is important to be prepared when boating.**

- Follow a pre-departure checklist. Using a pre-departure checklist is a helpful way to check the boat and ensure the proper gear is aboard.
- Be weather-wise. Always check local, route and destination weather and water conditions before departure and ensure it is safe to go out.
- Use common sense. Operate at a safe speed at all times, especially in crowded areas; stay alert and steer clear of large vessels and watercraft that can be restricted in their ability to stop or turn.
- Know the nautical rules of the seas. Maintain a proper lookout and respect buoys and other navigational aids, all of which are in place to ensure your safety and the safety of the boats around you.
- Remain sober if you are the skipper. Operating a boat while intoxicated is illegal. Nearly half of all boating accidents involve alcohol.
- A boat operator is likely to become intoxicated and impaired more quickly than if they were driving on land. Sun, wind, and waves as well as the boat's motion, vibration, and noise intensify the effects of alcohol and contribute to fatigue and a faster decline in judgment, coordination, and reaction time.
- Designate an assistant skipper. Make sure more than one person aboard is familiar with boat handling, operations and general boating safety in case the primary operator is incapacitated.



**Naval Safety Command**  
**[www.NavalSafetyCommand.Navy.mil](http://www.NavalSafetyCommand.Navy.mil)**