When you get out on the water, do you feel the need for speed or do you just want to relax and take it easy as the waves roll under your water craft?

No matter what your goals are while spending time on the water, abiding by a few safety rules is a crucial part of getting you back to solid ground in one piece!

When it comes to leisure time a checklist is still valuable especially when heading out onto the water. Create a pre-underway checklist like the Coast Guard Auxiliary has for their boat crews. Each time before an Auxiliary boat leaves the dock the entire crew reviews a standardized checklist together. Once all the items on the list are checked off it is time to get underway.

It does not have to be complicated; this is just an example of a pre-underway checklist you could use:

- Driver's license
- Current registration papers and boating safety course completion card
- Check fuel supply and oil level
- Working proper navigation lights for night operations
- Enough lifejackets, the right size for all
- Marine radio
- GPS
- Float plan left in your vehicle or with a friend
- Other emergency equipment such as flares, first aid kit, signaling devices and tools

If something does not add up it is OK not to get underway. It is always better to choose safety than take a risk with your life or the lives of your passengers.

Designated Drivers apply to boats as well as cars. If you are the Skipper, then you don't drink. Having another person who is sober on the boat is good planning if something goes wrong.

It is also a good idea to make sure you know how to use your water craft safely, from start to finish! Fuel consumption is a critical piece of information you must understand before heading out. Do you know how many gallons your fuel tank holds? Is the fuel gauge accurate? How many gallons per hour (gph) does your engine burn? Did you use the rule of thirds (one third of your fuel to get to your destination, one third to get you back home, and one third in reserve for emergencies)?

Unfortunately, running out of gas is one of the leading categories requiring a commercial towing service (and sometimes ultimately, Coast Guard or Coast Guard Auxiliary assets to be dispatched).

Boating is a popular activity during the holidays. The week of July Fourth typically experiences a high number of boaters taking to the water. The Coast Guard advises the public to take responsibility for their safety on the lakes, inland rivers and along the Gulf Coast.

Human error remains the leading cause of boating accidents. Boaters should be aware of, and obey, all federal and state regulations for recreational boating and navigation.

Boating safety courses are available through many organizations. Visit www.uscgboating.org for more information or con-
At an average length of around 10 feet, personal watercraft (PWC) may seem small, but they come with some pretty big responsibility.

With the horsepower of a large outboard engine and the acceleration of a motorcycle, PWC are not toys. In fact, the U.S. Coast Guard considers personal watercraft Class A vessels, which means all safety equipment and operation laws that apply to a boat under 16 feet also apply to a PWC.

In California only those individuals 16 years of age or older can operate a PWC with a motor of 15 horsepower or more. It is legal for a child 12 - 15 years of age to operate a PWC if they are being supervised by a person on board with them who is 18 or over.

According to U.S. government reports, most accidents are associated with rental operators, underage operators, under-trained and undereducated boaters and a variety of factors associated with recreational-boating accidents.

So before you launch, here are a few things you’ll need to know to have a safe and hassle-free day on the water.

**Required Equipment:**
- A life jacket for each operating passenger, and person being towed
- A Coast Guard-approved B-1 fire extinguisher
- An approved sound-signaling device such as a whistle or horn
- An emergency engine cutoff lanyard attached to the operator
- Proper display of registration numbers, letters, and validation decals
- Vessel registration, to be displayed when requested
- A functioning backfire flame arrestor and passive ventilation system

**Recommended Safety Equipment**
- Hand-held VHF radio, and a cell phone as a backup
- A basic first-aid kit, sunscreen, and burn cream
- A dewatering device such as a hand operated bilge pump
- An anchor and enough anchor line for your area
- If pulling a skier or other tow-sport participant, a skier-down flag, and rear-view mirrors
- Distress signaling devices such as flares, an orange flag, or signal mirror

**Heavy Weather**

Heavy weather can generally be defined as seas, swell, and wind conditions combining to exceed 8 feet and/or winds exceeding 30 knots.

The weather is the primary deciding factor that makes operating in heavy weather dangerous or impossible. Knowing what conditions your boat and crew will be challenged is extremely important to identify.

Some sources of information are:
- National Weather Service Messages.
- Observations from shore prior to leaving.
- The Internet – Information ranging from weather buoy and ship observations to satellite photos is available.
- Other mariners that can be trusted to give accurate weather conditions.

In heavy weather, the safety of the boat depends on the Skipper as much as the boat’s design. It is important to remember that operating in these conditions increases the level of risk, the possibility of causing injury to personnel, and damage to property. Prior to leaving the dock ensure all precautions have been taken to be aware of any Heavy weather conditions that may be in your area.
Almost anyone that owns a boat of any kind has to trailer their boat at one time or another. Trailer boating has a number of advantages over leaving your boat in the water at a marina or pier: you can take your boat to new and far-flung cruising grounds, launch at ramps close to different fishing spots, and often save money by keeping a boat on a trailer.

Here are some tips that might help you out:

**Preparing the Boat.**
- Be sure the boat is loaded so there is adequate tongue weight. If the tongue weight is too light the trailer may tend to fishtail. Too much tongue weight will be unduly hard on the towing vehicle.
- Tie the boat down securely—you don’t want to drop your precious boat on the highway. We recommend the ratchet-type tie downs that can be purchased at most stores.
- Be sure there is nothing that can drag. Sailboats have halyards, sheets and stays that can somehow untie themselves and drag on the highway. After such an event, they will have to be replaced at great expense.
- Tops, covers and sails should be lowered and tied securely. If not, the wind will destroy them.

**Tires and Wheels**
- Tire pressure is a biggie in trailing boats. Most trailer tires are small and require higher pressure than most tires. Tires should be inflated to the maximum psi recommended on the tire. The more inflated the tire, the cooler it will run. Tires that are under-inflated bulge at the sides and this area will be constantly flexing...thus, heating up the tire.
- Wheel lugs should be check periodically to ascertain they are tight
- Axles should be lubed regularly. Buddy Bearings are handy as they give you a visual look at how well greased the axle is.
- Be sure you always have a fully inflated spare tire...along with tools and jack.

And most of all...Drive Safely!

**Life Jackets**

Life jackets come in many shapes, colors and materials. Some are made rugged to last longer while others are made to maintain body heat in cold water. No matter which life jacket you choose, get one that is right for you, your planned activities and the water conditions you anticipate. Spending a little time now can save your life later.

Always look for the United States Coast Guard approval number before you purchase any lifejacket and make sure you understand the regulations and requirements in the state you are in. Also ensure you properly maintain whatever lifejacket you choose.

Test each lifejacket at the start of each season. The law says your lifejackets must be in good shape before you use your boat. Lifejackets in poor shape should be cut up and thrown away.

Our Mission

The Marine Corps Base, Camp Pendleton Safety Center's mission is to promote the combat readiness of operating forces by providing safety support services. Our goals are to train all Marine Corps Base commands and organizations in occupational safety and health; mishap reduction and Federal Employees’ Compensation Act costs through an aggressive safety program, and to exceed the reduction goals set by the Secretary of Defense, and Headquarters Marine Corps Safety Division. Our customers are Base personnel, the operating forces, extended Marine Families, tenant commands, and occasional Reserve components.

SAFETY = FORCE PRESERVATION

California Boater Education

Mandatory Boater Education: On January 1, 2018, California began implementing its new seven-year phase-in of the mandatory boater safety education law for boaters who operate a motorized vessel on California waterways. Phase-in schedule for those who are required to possess a valid card:
- January 1, 2019 – Persons 25 years of age or younger
- January 1, 2020 – Persons 35 years of age or younger
- January 1, 2021 – Persons 40 years of age or younger
- January 1, 2022 – Persons 45 years of age or younger
- January 1, 2023 – Persons 50 years of age or younger
- January 1, 2024 – Persons 60 years of age or younger
- January 1, 2025 – All persons regardless of age

Age & Horsepower Restrictions: A person under the age of 16 may not operate a motorboat of more than 15 horsepower unless the boat is a sailboat and does not exceed 30 feet in length - OR - the boat is a dinghy used between a moored boat and shore or between 2 moored boats. The law does allow persons aged 12-15 to operate motorboats of more than 15 horsepower or sailboats over 30 feet if supervised by a person on board who is at least 18 years of age.

PWC Operation: A person under that age of 16 may not operate a personal watercraft (PWC) of more than 15 horsepower unless they are between the ages of 12-15 and are supervised by a person on board who is at least 18 years of age. Any person, who allows an unsupervised person under the age of 16 to operate, is guilty of an infraction.

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www.facebook.com/Cpenbasesafety

Or on the web
www.pendleton.marines.mil/Staff-Agencies/Safety-Center/

⇒ Naval Safety Center
http://www.public.navy.mil/NAVSAFECEN

⇒ Boat U.S. Foundation
www.boatus.org

⇒ California Division of Boating and Waterways
www.dbw.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=28731