Pre-Departure Checklist

Be Prepared for the Unexpected – Check This List Before Every Trip

☐ Lifejackets – Wear Them!
  • Carry a Canadian-approved lifejacket for everyone on board.
  • Make sure they are in good condition (check the zippers, buckles, fabric, seams, etc.).
  • Check that they are properly sized to fit each person on board.

☐ Operator Competency – Are You Ready to Head Out on the Water?
  • Take a boating safety course.
  • Keep your Pleasure Craft Operator Card or other proof of competency on board.

☐ Weather – Check and Monitor the Marine Weather Forecast

☐ Sail Plan – File Your Plan Before Heading Out
  • Tell a person you trust where you are going and when you will be back.

☐ Safety Equipment – Required by Law and Essential for Safety
  • Make sure all equipment is on board, in good working order and easy to reach.
  • Carry a first aid kit, basic tools and spare parts.

☐ Charts, Compass and Local Hazards – Know Where You Are at All Times
  • Make sure you are aware of all local hazards, water levels and tides.

☐ Fuel – Check Your Tank and Remember: 1/3 to go, 1/3 to return, 1/3 reserve

☐ Boat Condition – Should Your Boat Leave the Dock?
  • Check the hull for cracks or other damage.
  • Check the electrical, fuel, propulsion and cooling systems.
  • Make sure the throttle and steering work well.
  • Check the oil.
  • Check all hoses and lines for leaks or cracks and replace if necessary.
  • Make sure all clamps and belts are secure and in good shape.
  • Inspect, clean and replace spark plugs if necessary.
  • Check and change oil and water filters if needed.
  • Check the battery's charge.
  • Make sure the drainage plug is in place.
  • Carry spare plugs for all through hull fittings.
  • Make sure the load on your boat (gear and occupants) is well distributed.
  • Run the blowers for four minutes before starting the engine(s) – check for airflow.

☐ Safety Briefing – You Are Legally Responsible for Your Guests
  • Show everyone where the safety equipment is located and how to use it.
  • Make sure the communication equipment works and everyone can use it.