



## Fact Sheet (12)

# Tips For Boat Owners.

### General

- If purchasing a second-hand boat, ensure that the hull is in good condition. Wood - look for rotting. Fibreglass - look for osmosis. Aluminium - look for rivet damage or corrosion around electrical components.
- Oars are a failure free way to ensure you get in if all other mechanical or electrical means fail. Make certain that rowlocks are greased and in sound condition. Carry at least one spare rowlock.
- Fit pike friendly floor covering that also has non-slip properties.
- Ensure the engine is securely fitted to the transom before setting off. If it is not bolted in place fit a safety chain that is strong enough to support the weight of the engine. Use the "kill switch".
- If your boat is too large to row, always fit an auxiliary motor in case of main motor failure. An electric motor is NOT an auxiliary.
- If you intend to fish very large waters fit a small cuddy, with or without a roof, to the boat as it will act as a deflector plate in rough weather. A roofless cuddy will allow easier access to the bow of the boat for anchor retrieval purposes.
- Make sure you have adequate insurance cover - both for towing and third party cover in case of an accident while afloat.

### Fuel and Engines

- Do not use an outboard that exceeds the power rating for your boat, this is extremely dangerous and can cause fatal accidents.
- Ensure that petrol tanks and connections don't leak as spilled petrol can cause fire and also cause damage to the captured pike.
- Always carry plenty of petrol and two stroke oil (if required) and always use standard petrol containers with properly fitting caps. A funnel is also handy to prevent spillage when refilling is needed.
- It is essential that the mixture ratios of oil to petrol are maintained as too much oil can be as harmful as too little. If your motor plugs oil up when you are out in rough weather you can have a serious problem.
- Spare spark plugs, sheer pins, fuses and tool kit must be carried in the boat - they are no use when left in the car. Keep all essential tools and spares in a water proof box to prevent moisture damage.

### Electrical

- Carry a fire extinguisher in your boat.
- All electrical equipment (electric motors, sump pumps, through hull pumps etc.) must be adequately fused or fitted with a suitable trip switch system to avoid the risk of fire if unknowingly left in operation.
- Keep batteries and electrical switches or contacts away from the petrol tank as sparks can cause fire.
- Ensure that all electrical cables are secured using electrical ties or insulation tape as they are easy to trip over if left unattended.

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### Anchor Ropes

- Use good quality anchor ropes of a suitable diameter to enable you to grip the rope with good purchase.
- Breakaway clips are recommended to permit anchor retrieval when stuck. Try not to tie the rope at the front of the boat but fit a quick release clip. Attach a small buoy to the anchor rope to enable its later recovery if released in an emergency.
- Fit a "rope tidy" so loose or surplus rope can be stored in safety and not strewn on the bottom of the boat.

### Mechanics (mainly concerning boats with steering consoles)

- Always bolt your engine to the transom and don't rely solely on the G-clamps to make the engine secure. If your motor dislodges at speed you have big problems.
- Ensure that the remote and steering cables are well greased and free from rust. Check that the connections to the motor are well secured as they can cause major problems if they come adrift during operation at speed.
- Always fit a control system which has the normal safety features fitted so the engine will not start when it is in gear, or the throttle is engaged.

### Launching and Recovering

- Make sure the drain plug is in place before launching!
- When pushing a boat off a trailer with the winch strap connected, keep away from the winch handle which revolves very fast.
- Check that all winch straps or ropes are in good condition and that there is no fraying.
- Ensure that the winch on your trailer is rated as suitable for the weight of your boat, and that the winch is securely fixed to the trailer.
- Make sure the anti-reverse is engaged on the winch before starting to recover the boat.
- It is important that the winching fixture on the bow of the boat is firmly secured. If this bracket pulls out during retrieval it can cause all kinds of damage to the wincher and leave you in the predicament of not being able to get the boat on the trailer.
- Grease all rollers and check that they rotate easily.

### Trailer

- Carry two spare hubs with bearings and two spare tyres for the trailer.
- Grease your bearings regularly, or after two trips, and always check bearing slackness with the weight of the trailer off the ground using a hydraulic jack, NOT a car jack. If you lose a tyre or bearing on the outside of the motorway you may end up with no boat at all and put yourself at great risk.
- An anti-bounce tie on the bow in addition to the winch rope on the front of the boat is recommended to reduce movement during transit on rough roads.
- Ensure all tie-downs are in good condition.
- Check trailer board lights before setting off on a journey.

**Make certain that your anchor is stowed correctly in transit, either in the vehicle or securely in the boat. Many an angler has arrived at the water to find a hole in the boat and no anchor present.**

