

# BOAT MAINTENANCE

It is important to ensure your vessel is in good order by inspecting the key features of the vessel each time before you leave home or the ramp, mooring or wharf. The major causes

of breakdown at sea are engine failure, fuel shortage or contamination, mechanical failure and battery failure.

The vessel checklist	
On entering the vessel, and before operating any switches or engines, check for petrol and/or LPG odours; fix any faults before you go out.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ensure the vessel is well ventilated to prevent carbon monoxide build up from exhaust systems.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inspect the bilges. If there is more bilge water than usual, find and rectify the fault. <b>Note:</b> when pumping bilges be aware of the environment. Polluting the waterways is an offence.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Check fuel, engine oil and coolant levels. Fuel should be fresh and not last year's. You should have enough fuel for the full trip plus reserve. Examine batteries, terminals etc. Do the same for the second engine if carried.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Check the fire extinguisher is in good condition.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ensure there is sufficient fresh water and food for the length of the voyage with some extra in case of emergency.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Make sure your navigation lights are in working order.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Self-draining holes should be clear.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ropes and lines should be in good condition and stored ready for use.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Steering cables and connections must be in good working order.	<input type="checkbox"/>
If your vessel is fitted with a kill switch, make sure you have the correct lanyard.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inspect the battery.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Check that appropriate anchors are on board and are properly rigged, stowed and ready for use.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have one appropriate and accessible lifejacket for each person on board.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Children should have suitably-sized lifejackets and look at means of rigging lifelines in open areas so that children have enough handholds.	<input type="checkbox"/>
If you have a radio, make sure it is on and working. The best way to do this is to report the details for your vessel and voyage to a coast radio station or local base station.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have up-to-date charts showing the area of your intended trip, especially any harbours, ports and other potential refuges from rough weather.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ensure you have a complete first aid kit.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Essential tools and spare parts should be in good condition.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Keep a sharp knife in a handy place; you may need it to cut ropes etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have a rescue quoit or lifebuoy ready for use.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have a whistle, mirror, marker dye, flares for emergency signalling.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do not overload your vessel.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't forget the bung!	<input type="checkbox"/>

