

Pre-Departure Boating Checklist & Fuel Log

This checklist will help you ensure your vessel is safe, seaworthy, and ready for your next trip. Run through these items before every departure to prevent problems and keep everyone onboard safe.

Category	Items
Engine & Mechanical Checks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check engine oil level• Check coolant level / raw water intake• Inspect raw water strainer• Verify engine seacocks open• Verify shaft/transmission seacocks open• Close all other seacocks while underway• Inspect belts for wear or fraying• Look for leaks under engine• Check fuel levels (log hours, fuel added, and estimate burn rate)
Safety Gear	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Life jackets for all passengers• Check self-inflating PFD cartridges• Fire extinguishers charged and accessible• Throwable flotation device• Visual distress signals (check expiration)• Sound-producing device• First aid kit stocked
Navigation & Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Test VHF radio (and DSC)• GPS/chartplotter with updated charts• Paper charts onboard• Compass operational• Navigation lights working
Weather & Trip Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check weather and marine forecasts• Review tides and currents• File a float plan• Apply 1/3 fuel rule: out, back, reserve
Deck & Cabin Readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Secure loose items• Verify anchor and rode ready• Check dock lines and fenders• Test bilge pumps• Test steering and throttle controls
Provisions & Comfort	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drinking water and snacks• Sun protection• Extra clothing / foul-weather gear• Trash bags

Fuel Log

Use this log to track fuel fills, engine hours, and estimated burn rates to verify against gauge readings.

Date	Gallons Added	Engine Hours (Before)	Engine Hours (After)	Estimated Fuel Burn