

Hitting the water? Essentials to pack for a boat ride.



Ready to pack for a boat ride, but not sure where to start? Whether you're heading out for a day of deep-sea fishing or family fun, knowing what to bring will make your day easier and safer.

Follow our list or print out a copy to keep handy when you're prepping. From safety equipment to everyday essentials, always remember:

Safety equipment

- Life jackets for all passengers. Make sure they are U.S. Coast Guard-approved.
- Fire extinguisher. Check to make sure it hasn't expired and brush up on how to use it.
- Signaling and sound devices, like a horn, bell, and/or whistle.
- Day and night flares (which are required if you're operating in a coastal area).
- A first-aid kit, including motion sickness medication.
- A marine radio and fully charged cell phone. If your phone is not waterproof, consider purchasing a waterproof case or sleeve.
- Oars (in case you need to paddle to shore).
- Toe lines (in the event you need to be towed).
- Water floats for guests who are less comfortable in the water.

Sun protection

- Broad-spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher.
- Lip balm with high SPF.
- A lightweight long-sleeve shirt or sun-protective rash guard for all family members when you need a break from the sun.
- Wide-brimmed hat.
- Sunglasses.
- An umbrella or pop-up covering if you drop anchor and want extra shade.

For your comfort

- Insect repellent.
- A change of clothes (in case you get sprayed, splashed, or dunked).
- Jackets or sweatshirts. Temperatures on the water can be very different than on land and can drop rapidly in the evening.
- Snacks and beverages. Keep ample water on board so everyone stays hydrated. Encourage water breaks to avoid dehydration.
- Hand sanitizer or wipes. These are helpful after handling bait, fish, an anchor, or fuel.
- Towels.
- A trash bag or container to keep garbage contained and out of the water.

For fun

- Swimsuits.
- Games, water sports, and other activities for kids and guests.
- A waterproof camera or smartphone to capture memories of your day on the water.
- A portable radio to play music. Just remember, sound carries on the water. Be respectful of the homes and boats around you.

Official business

- Up-to-date boat registration.
- Fishing license. If you're planning on fishing, make sure your license is current.
- Your wallet with a driver's license, emergency cash, and credit cards.

While packing for a boat ride is important, having the right coverage for your boat is just as necessary. Talk to a local, independent agent about a policy today.

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