

# Boating Safety Checklist

- ✓ Always insist that your child wears a life jacket approved by the U.S. Coast Guard and that it fits snugly so it can't slip off over the child's head. Never use "water wings" or other inflatable swimming aids as a substitute for a life jacket.
- Always wear a life jacket to set a good example for your kids.
- Never drink alcoholic beverages while boating.



Set a good example and wear a life jacket.

- Complete a boating safety course.
- Get your boat inspected for safety once a year, for free, by the Coast Guard Auxiliary or U.S. Power Squadrons ([www.uscgboating.org](http://www.uscgboating.org)).
- Make sure there's a working carbon monoxide detector on any motorboat to alert your family to any buildup of toxic fumes from the engine.
- When a vessel is underway with children under 13 years old, they must be wearing a life jacket unless they are below deck or in an enclosed cabin. On some state waters this age requirement may vary. Boaters are encouraged to check with their respective state boating authority regarding these requirements.

# Oceans, Lakes and Rivers Safety Checklist

- ✓ Make sure your kids swim only in areas designated for swimming.
- Don't let your kids dive into natural bodies of water — only swimming pools where the water is at least nine feet deep.
- Teach your kids the differences between open water and a swimming pool. Open water can have currents, undertow and hidden hazards under the surface.
- Don't let your kids operate personal watercraft such as jet skis. These are intended for adults and require special training.
- Make sure kids wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved life jacket any time when in or near open bodies of water or participating in water sports.



Obey posted warnings.

# Water Safety Checklist

- ✓ Always keep your eyes on and stay close to your kids when they're in or near a body of water. If you can't give them your undivided attention, make sure there is another designated adult "water watcher," taking turns with other responsible adults.
- Keep a phone handy in case of emergency when your kids are near water.



Sign your kids up for swimming lessons.

- Sign your kids up for swimming lessons when they were old enough (at least 4) and make sure a certified instructor teaches them how to tread water, float and swim out of a cross-current (rip tide). But remember, swimming lessons do not make a child "drownproof."
- Learn infant and child CPR.

# Remember:

There are things you can do to keep your child safe. Please use this booklet to help you remember what to do.

- Everyone on a boat needs to wear a properly fitted life jacket at all times. Inflatable swimming aids do not prevent drowning — wear a life jacket approved by the U.S. Coast Guard.
- Kids should only swim under the supervision of an adult paying undivided attention. Keep a phone and rescue equipment handy.
- Parents and caregivers should learn CPR, but should not enter the water to rescue swimmers unless specifically trained in water rescue.



For more information, contact  
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