



Safety & Education

Fall Boating Tips

Wooly Bully

The adage “Dress for the water, not the weather” applies. Odd balmy days will spur boaters to cruise. But cold water behooves us to wear fabrics such as wool that retain heat, even when wet. Also consider an insulated float coat, which will keep you warm and serve as a life jacket should you end up in the water.

Killer Tradition

The survival technique of floating in place while lowering one’s head into the water will cause you to lose body heat and die faster. If you end up in the water without a life jacket on, experts such as the Minnesota Sea Grant advise to tread water.

“Hypothermia is real, and it can kill you,” said Cmdr. Harry Ko, senior medical officer for the Coast Guard’s Ninth District. “Hypothermia occurs when the core temperature drops below 95 degrees Fahrenheit and can occur in as little as 15 minutes – every organ system is affected. Cold water can cause muscle cramping, increase in heart rate, elevated blood pressure and death. It is important to note that small children and people with preexisting heart conditions are more at risk.”

Captain Fantastic

Good skippers are ever mindful of crew comfort, and this is especially so in colder weather. A rejuvenating blast of spray that has everybody gleefully shrieking in July may cause a different reaction in October. Be wary of your speed and course, especially when running across the wind or in quartering seas.

Get Some Trim

During freezing temperatures, water below the surface stays warmer. For that reason, it’s a good idea for owners of outboards to leave the engine trimmed down at the dock if air temps are expected to get frigid. A trimmed-up engine holds water, which, if it freezes, can cause all kinds of damage.

Morning Don’t

Frost is often invisible, especially when it forms on white boats. Frost also renders even the most aggressive nonskid surface useless. Be careful when boarding your boat — and do likewise while disembarking — since spray can sometimes freeze on the decks as well.

Portable Heaters

- **Turn if off:**
Never leave a portable electric heater on while you are away from the boat or when you go to bed.
- **'Tip Over' switch is a must:**
Many portable heaters are not intended to be used for unstable locations and don't have wide bases needed to keep them upright when another boat's wake strikes your boat. Use only an electric heater with a tip-over switch that will shut off the heater automatically if it gets knocked over.

- **Keep the heater separate:**
Never use another high-amperage appliance on the same receptacle with a portable electric heater.
- **Don't take the 'Extension:'**
Never use an extension cord with an electric heater.

Sources:

Sail-World.com

Boat US

Boating mag.com