



## Six Tips for Summer Fun with Boating

For those of us who grew up or spent summers near a lake or other large bodies of water, being a kid meant time in the water. We fished from a dock, trapped minnows for bait, watched fireworks from a pontoon, communed with nature from canoes, and got up on water skis for the first time! Water could nourish, heal, and delight.

Now that summer has arrived, bringing with it the perfect opportunity to indulge in boating adventures on inland lakes, here are six tips to keep you and your loved ones safe and happy as a clam this summer:

**Take a boating safety course.** This guidance should apply to anyone driving a boat, young and not-so-young alike. Operator inexperience and improper lookout were among the top five primary contributing factors in boating accidents in 2020. Check out these educational resources from the Government of Canada: <https://tc.canada.ca/en/marine-transportation/getting-started-safe-boating/find-education-resources-recreational-boaters>

**Always wear a life jacket when on or in the water.** The same goes for paddleboarders. Wear it correctly and look for a proper fit. Find out which life jacket works for you: <https://tc.canada.ca/en/marine-transportation/getting-started-safe-boating/choosing-lifejackets-personal-flotation-devices-pfds>

***In Canada, you're legally required to have a floatation device for each person on your boat. To keep everyone safe, inspect your floatation devices for holes and tears each year and replace any damaged ones.***

**Alcohol and boating don't mix.** Alcohol is the leading known contributing factor in fatal boating accidents. Never use drugs or alcohol before or during boat operation. Best to leave alcohol on shore.

**Know the body of water.** Learn and follow boat traffic and navigation rules. Become well-versed in boating protocols.

**Check the forecast.** Remain vigilant; weather can change rapidly in the course of a day.

**Have emergency supplies readily available,** including a cell phone, fire extinguishers, maps, flares, first aid, and a radio in case you sense a change in the weather.

By adhering to these six invaluable tips, you can embark on your boating excursions with confidence, knowing that you have taken proactive measures to ensure the safety and well-being of yourself and your loved ones. Combining knowledge, preparedness, and responsible behaviour will make your time on the water truly memorable and enjoyable.

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