

Spring Start-up Checklist

So the sun is shining, the temperature is rising and it's time to get back out on the water. But make sure your boat is prepared before you get out to the middle of the lake, down the river or off the coast. Here's a list of what you can do to make sure your boat is ready for a long, fun boating season.

General

- Do a general cleaning of hull, deck and topsides using a mild detergent
- Make sure drains and scuppers are clear
- Put on a good coat of wax
- Clean and polish metal with a good metal polish and clean and oil teak
- Clean windows and hatches
- Clean canvas, bimini and dodger
- Clean interior including bilges
- Check spare parts and tools and replace as necessary
- Make sure registration and insurance is current and onboard
- Check transmission fluid
- Check and clean backfire flame arrestor
- Check impeller
- Check and clean water strainer
- Check bilge blower

Outboard Engine(s)

- Replace spark plugs
- Check plug wires for wear
- Check prop for nicks and bends
- Change/fill gear lube
- Inspect fuel lines, primer bulb and tank for leaks
- Lubricate and spray moveable parts

Hull

- Check for hull abrasions, scratches, gouges, etc. and repair
- Check and replace zincs
- Check for blisters and refinish as necessary
- Check rub rails
- Check swim platform and/or ladder
- Inspect and test trim tabs
- Check shaft, cutlass bearing, strut and prop
- Check rudder and fittings
- Touch up or replace antifouling paint

Deck, Fittings & Safety Equipment

- Check stanchion, pulpits and lifelines for integrity
- Check ground tackle, lines, fenders, etc.
- Check chainplates and cleats
- Check hull/deck joint
- Check deck, windows, and port lights for leaks
- Inspect anchor windlass and lubricate
- Clean and grease winches
- Check and lubricate blocks, pad eyes, etc.
- Check dinghy, and life raft

Inboard Engine(s)

- Change oil & filters - have spare onboard
- Check and change fuel filters - have spares onboard
- Check and change engine zincs
- Check cooling system change coolant as necessary - have extra onboard
- Record engine maintenance log, especially date & hours of last oil changes
- Check belts for tension

Below Deck

- Check, test and lubricate seacocks
- Check condition of hoses and clamps
- Make sure below waterline hoses are double clamped
- Check bilges pumps for automatic and manual operation
- Check for oil in bilges
- Check limber holes and make sure they are clear of debris

Electrical System and Components

- Check battery water level
- Check/recharge batteries
- Check terminals for corrosion, clean and lubricate
- Check bonding system
- Inspect all wiring for wear and chafe
- Test all gauges for operability
- Check shore power and charger
- Check for spare fuses
- Check all lighting fixtures (including navigation lights) and make sure you have spare bulbs
- Check all electronics for proper operation
- Inspect antennas

Water System

- Flush water tank
- Check water system and pump for leaks and proper operation
- Check hot water tank working on both AC and engines
- Check for tank cap keys on board
- Check and clean shower sump pump screens

Head System

- Checked for smooth operation - lubricate and clean as necessary
- If equipped with treatment system, have chemicals on hand
- Y-valve operation checked, valve labeled & secured

Trailer

- Check for current registration
- Check rollers and pads
- Check and lubricate wheel bearings
- Clean and lubricate winch
- Lubricate tongue jack and wheel
- Test lights and electrical connections
- Check tire pressure and condition
- Check brakes (if equipped)
- Check safety chains
- Check tongue lock

Required and Recommended Equipment

- Sound signaling device
- Check distress signals and expiration date
- Check Pfd's
- Inspect life rings and cushions
- Check fire extinguishers and recharge if necessary
- Check and adjust compass
- Check navigation lights
- Check charts and replace as necessary
- Check radar reflector
- Check and replace first aid supplies
- Check bailer and hand pump

Mast and Rigging

- Check mast and spreaders for corrosion or damage
- Inspect spreader boots and shrouds
- Inspect rivets and screw connections for corrosion
- Check reefing points and reefing gear
- Clean sail track
- Check rigging, turnbuckles and clevis pins for wear and corrosion
- Inspect stays for fraying and "fish hooks"
- Check forestay and backstay connections
- Check masthead fitting and pulleys
- Check and lubricate roller furling
- Check halyards and consider replacing or swapping end for end
- Tape turnbuckles, cotter pins, and spreaders

Sails

- Check general condition
- Look for wear and chafing
- Check battens and batten pockets
- Check all sail attachments
- Inspect bolt rope