# QUICK REFERENCE CHECKLISTS

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| **Pre-Departure Checklist** |

Below is a checklist that can be posted and used prior to each departure. An explanation of each item on the checklist is useful for those less familiar with the requirements.

***Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs)***

* By law, pleasure craft must have enough Canadian-approved flotation devices of the appropriate size for everyone on board.  You can choose between lifejackets and PFDs.  Remember, lifesaving cushions are not approved as personal flotation equipment on any vessel.
* Look for a lifejacket or PFD with a label that states it has been approved by Transport Canada, the Canadian Coast Guard, Fisheries & Oceans Canada or any combination thereof.

***Sound Producing Devices***

* Pleasure craft less than 12 metres in length need a sound-signalling device if they are not fitted with a sound-signalling appliance.  The sound-signalling device can be a pealess whistle, compressed gas horn or an electric horn.
* Pleasure craft 12 metres or greater in length must have a fitted whistle.

***Lights and Shapes***

* Have all navigation lights as required for your boat.
* Make sure all instrument lights are working.
* Have aboard a flashlight and spare batteries.

***Distress Signals***

* Make flares accessible and ensure they are stored in a cool, dry location such as a watertight container.
* Carry signals at all times even if not required by Transport Canada.
* Inform the crew and passengers of their location and safety rules for proper usage.

***Tools and Spares***

* Carry a basic toolbox with tools appropriate for your boat.
* Carry a box of spares including fuel filter, light bulbs, head parts, through-hull plugs, etc.

***Fuel and Oil***

* Top off your fuel tanks.
* If you can't, have enough fuel to provide a reasonable margin of safety for your return.
* Check the engine oil and coolant levels.

***Fire Extinguishers***

* Carry at least one fire extinguisher and make sure it is accessible.
* Check to be sure mounts are secure and functional before departure.
* Take the time to point out locations to passengers and crew.

***Ventilation***

* On any powered vessel or auxiliary powered sailboat, or vessels using LPG for cooking or heat, check that all interior spaces are well ventilated before departure.
* If fuel smells are detected before ventilating, check after running the blowers for several minutes before starting.
* If odour persists, shut down the engine and look for the source of the leak.

***Bilges***

* Check to be sure bilges are reasonably dry and that pumps are not running excessively.
* Clean up any spilled oil or waste in bilges to prevent overboard discharge.

***Weather Forecast***

* Always check the weather forecast before boating.
* Have a radio on board to receive weather updates.

***Battery Care***

* If you have a dual charging system, make sure the selector switch in the proper position.
* Make sure the power is on to the entire vessel.
* Have aboard spare batteries for accessories such as your handheld radio, flashlight, portable navigational aid, etc.
* If the batteries are rechargeable, make sure they're charged.

***Docking and Anchoring Tips***

* Have at least one anchor set up and bent-on to your anchor line.
* Carry two or three extra dock lines in case you encounter unusual conditions dockside.
* Visually inspect the lines you use for chafe or wear.
* Carry at least two fenders on-board for docking or towing if required.

***Rules & Documentation***

* Have the proof of ownership, your SVOP Card, etc. on board.
* Have the charts for the area you intend to travel in, regardless of your level of local knowledge.

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| **Fuelling Checklist** |

Leaking or spilled fuel not only harms the marine environment but is also a fire hazard. Follow these steps when fuelling — it’s the safe thing to do and it’s the law.



* **Moor the pleasure craft securely**
* **Shut down all engines**
* **Ensure all persons not involved in fuelling the craft are ashore**
* **Extinguish all open flames, including pilot lights**
* **Do not smoke in the refuelling area**
* **Close all doors, windows, ports and hatches**
* **Fill portable gasoline cans on shore**
* **Ground the nozzle against the filler pipe**
* **Do not overfill the tank to avoid overflow**
* **Clean up spillage**
* **Operate the ventilation system for four minutes before the ignition is switched on**
* **Check for fuel vapours**

Heads up! New environmental laws are affecting diesel properties. The type of diesel available at the pump will be constantly changing. Follow the safety instructions provided by fuel suppliers, and operate according to your vessel’s engine and system requirements

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| **Heavy Weather Checklist** |

Prevent getting caught in heavy weather by developing a "weather eye," listening to your radio, and heading for shore before it becomes an emergency. If you do encounter heavy weather, use the below checklist to prepare:

* Brief the crew to explain the situation and reassure them.
* Determine position of storm, wind direction, speed and estimate time to your location.
* Secure all hatches; close all ports and windows. (Keep the water on the outside.)
* Pump bilges dry and repeat as required.
* Secure all loose gear above decks and below.
* Break out PFD's and foul weather gear, requiring them to be worn by everyone on board. Do this before the weather gets bad, don't wait too long.
* Ready emergency equipment that you may need such as hand pumps, bailers, first aid kit, sound signaling device, etc.
* Get a good fix of your position and plot it on your chart, make note of the time, your heading and speed.
* Make plans to alter course to sheltered waters if possible.
* Continue to monitor channel 16 on your VHF radio for updates to severe forecasts.
* For extremely severe weather, break out your abandon ship procedures and review them.
* Make sure the life raft is ready to be deployed.
* Make sure emergency food and water are in the life raft.
* Rig jack lines and/or life lines and require anyone who must go on deck to wear a safety harness.
* Make ready your sea anchor or drogue if needed.
* Turn on navigation lights.
* Keep away from metal objects.
* Change to a full fuel tank if possible.
* Keep a sharp lookout for floating debris and other boats.

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| **Safety Gear Checklist** |

* **Fire Extinguishers**
* **EPIRBs**
* **Handheld VHFs (in waterproof container)**
* **Life Raft, High-Quality**
* **SOLAS-approved Distress Signals (not less than six of each)**
* **Set of International Code Flags**
* **Set of Wooden, Tapered Plugs**

"Ditch Kit" or "Grab-and-Go Bag." Have this bag fully equipped and ready to go in the event of having to abandon ship. It should contain the following:

* Sea anchor and line
* Stainless-steel knife
* Bailer
* Paddles
* Raft repair kit and pump
* Flashlight, batteries, and bulbs
* Flare and smoke-signal kit
* Seasickness pills and suppositories (critical for life in a raft)
* First aid kit
* One plastic bag per person (to keep a few things dry)
* Fishing kit
* Sponges
* Signaling mirror
* Survival information booklet

Getting into a life raft:

**"is when your right foot is already wet, and you have to step up into the raft with your left**."