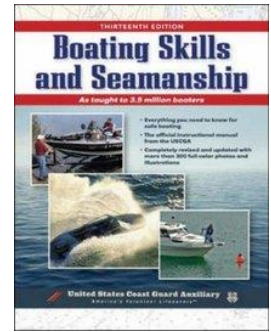


Boating Skills and Seamanship

The U. S. Coast Guard Auxiliary's Boating Skills and Seamanship (BS&S) course is a comprehensive course designed for both the experienced and the novice boater.

The course, now in its 13th edition published in 2007, consists of 8 core required two hour lessons plus five elective lessons, providing up-to-date knowledge for handling boats in all conditions.

Topics include:



- **WHICH BOAT IS FOR YOU?** -- boater's language; types of boats; outboard motors and sterndrives; hull design; uses of boats; other power plants; materials for constructing boats; your intended use; the Coast Guard Customer Infoline; marine surveyors; buying a boat.
- **EQUIPMENT FOR YOUR BOAT** -- requirements for your boat; your boat's equipment; legal considerations; substance abuse; boating accident reports; Courtesy Marine Examinations.
- **TRAILERING YOUR BOAT** -- legal considerations; practical considerations; the towing vehicle; balancing the load; handling your trailer; pre-departure checks; preparing to launch; launching; retrieving; storing your boat and trailer; theft prevention; Zebra mussels; float plan.
- **HANDLING YOUR BOAT** -- leave with a full tank; fueling your boat; your boat's propeller; cars and boats; twin screws; jet drives; loading your boat; getting started; leaving a pier; "man" overboard; docking; mooring to a permanent anchor; anchoring; towing a skier; heavy weather; small boat safety.
- **YOUR "HIGHWAY" SIGNS** -- protection of ATONs; buoyage systems; waterway marks; how waterways are marked; light characteristics; chart symbols; light structures; lights on bridges; electronic aids to navigation; a word to the wise; navigation publications.
- **THE RULES YOU MUST FOLLOW** -- two sets of rules; to whom do the rules apply; what is a vessel; the general responsibility rule; general considerations; conduct in narrow channels; traffic separation schemes; vessel traffic services; stand-on or give-way; rules for special vessels; risk of collision; bend signals; restricted visibility; vessel lights and shapes; vessels at anchor; diving operations; distress signals; drawbridge signals; penalties.
- **PILOTING YOUR BOAT** -- piloting tools; maps and charts; chart features; your chart's general information block; other charted information; your magnetic compass; position on the earth's surface; locating a point on a chart; distance on the earth's surface; measuring distance; course plotting; sources of compass error; correcting a compass reading; positioning; speed-time-distance; dead reckoning; practice your art.
- **POWERING YOUR BOAT** -- types of marine engines; marine engines; selecting a propeller; induction systems; ignition systems; flame arresters; cooling systems; gasoline considerations; batteries; maintenance; winterizing your boat; spring fitting-out; troubleshooting.
- **LINES AND KNOTS FOR YOUR BOAT** -- line or rope; rope materials; kinds of rope; measuring rope; selecting your ropes; care of rope; making up line; knots, bends, and hitches; splices; securing lines; dipping the eye.
- **WEATHER AND BOATING** -- sources of weather information; wind and boating; wind and waves; understanding weather; weather and heat; fog; non-frontal weather.
- **YOUR BOAT'S RADIO** -- radios used on boats; functions of radios; licenses; selecting your VHF-FM radio; installation; operating your VHF-FM; maintain a radio watch; channels have special purposes; some "no nos"; copies of the rules; calling another station; procedure words; phonetic alphabet; routine radio check; distress, urgency, and safety calls; crew training.
- **INLAND BOATING** -- types of inland waters; inland navigation; inland seamanship; river currents; maintaining inland waterways; dams; locks; river charts; commercial traffic; before you go.
- **THE REST OF OUR STORY** -- small boat safety; personal watercraft; hypothermia; motorboats and sailboats; carbon monoxide poisoning; float plan; U.S. Coast Guard District Offices; instructions for using a course plotter; metric conversion system.

Many insurance companies will offer discounts on boat insurance to individuals who successfully complete this course.

Individuals who successfully complete the course and exam are awarded certificates and cards.