



WELCOME TO THE BOATING LIFESTYLE

**Your Guide to Being on the Water
with your New Boat**

Boating is one of the best ways to enjoy the white sandy beaches and hidden island treasures in Southwest Florida and we can't wait to have you join the boating lifestyle!

Inside this guide, you will find information to get you started on your boating adventures. We have answers to the common questions that you may be asking yourself before your first day out on the water, including:

- Boating Safety
- Why Won't my Boat Start?
- Tips for Navigating SWFL Waterways
- Be a Good Boating Citizen: Water Etiquette
- Important How-To Information

Boating Safety

The best way to ensure endless days of boating bliss is preparation. Below, we have outlined some safety tips and items you will want to make sure to have on board before you boat. You can also find more information in our Boating Safety Guide.

Your boat comes with a few U.S. Coast Guard required items. Make sure you know where they are and how to use them:

- Visual distress signals (such as flares)
- A fire extinguisher approved for marine use
- A whistle or air horn
- Navigation lights (turn them on between sunset and sunrise and when there is low visibility due to fog, rain, haze, etc. If you are anchored, also turn on your anchor lights under these conditions)
- If your boat is over 16 feet, a USCG-approved throwable Type IV PFD that is immediately available in case of a fall overboard
- Your boat's registration
- Lifejackets or personal flotation devices (PFDs) for everyone on board

While you are not legally obligated to carry the following items, we also recommend bringing:

- A first aid kit
- Tool kit and spare parts
- Anchor and anchor line appropriate to area, depth, conditions
- Bucket
- Compass



- Boat hook or pole
- Binoculars
- Watersports flags (if you plan to enjoy some watersports activities)
- Extra lines and fenders
- VHF Radio with DSC (Digital Selective Calling)
- GPS/Chart plotter
- Depth Finder
- Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB) and/or Personal Location Beacons (PLB)

Weather Safety

Check the weather forecast before you go.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)/ National Weather Service (NWS) offer Marine Point Forecasts at <https://www.weather.gov/marine/point>. Most local news stations also include a boater's forecast on their newscast and on their website.

Get off the water if you see darkening clouds, rough, changing winds, or sudden temperature drops.

Why Won't My Boat Start?

Don't worry! Oftentimes, it's a quick fix to get you back out on the water. Below are some common causes and solutions to your boat not starting.

If you check all the issues below and you're still having problems, give us a call. We operate a fleet of vans loaded with parts that lets technicians fix most marine problems dockside.

No matter where your boat is in Southwest Florida — whether it's in the water or in a dry dock — our fully mobile technicians can handle any marine-repair job.



Is Your Kill Lanyard Attached?

What is a kill lanyard?

Kill lanyards (also known as kill switches) are designed to stop the boat if the captain goes overboard. The kill lanyard is attached to both the captain and the boat. If the captain goes overboard, the kill lanyard releases from the boat and the engine is killed.

How it works:

If your kill lanyard isn't attached to the boat, the boat won't start. Make sure the kill lanyard is attached both to the boat and to the captain (we recommend attaching it to your leg, so your upper body is free to control the boat).

Additional Important Information

As of April 1, 2021, a new federal law went into effect that requires the operator of a boat with an installed Engine Cut-Off Switch (or kill lanyard) to use it. The law applies to "Covered Recreational vessels" which means any motorized boat with 3 or more horsepower that is less than 26 feet in length.

We also recommend that you store an extra kill lanyard in the control box. Then if the captain goes overboard, someone else on board can use the extra kill lanyard to start the boat and get the captain out of the water.

Is the boat in neutral?

If the lights and gauges are working but your boat won't start, double check you are in neutral. The shifter should be between forward (F) and reverse (R). You can try bumping the shifter between F and R to ensure it is in neutral.

Are you fueled up?

Double check your fuel levels and carry extra fuel in case of emergency.

Are your motor covers off?

Are your battery switches on?

- Your battery switch has 4 positions. You want to be switched to "1" to start the boat.
- Off
- 1 (to start the engine)
- 2 (to run/charge on-board items)
- ALL/1+2 (to draw power from or charge all your batteries)
 - Using 1+2 is called "emergency parallel" and will drain your battery. You should only turn the switch into this position in the emergency situation where your starting battery is dead, and you need to start your boat.



Tips for Navigating SWFL Waterways

Southwest Florida is a boater's paradise, with many of the area's best sites only accessible by boat! We have included some tips to get you wherever you're going.

SWFL Waterways offers a waterways map, which includes resources to help you navigate the area. Here, you can find speed zones, public boat loaches, ramps, and docks. Visit this website to access it: <http://swflwaterways.com/>.

In areas labelled "idle speed" you should operate your boat as slowly as possible while still maintaining steering control. Not all "idle speed" areas will be marked so remember all waters within 500 feet of the shoreline from beaches and all waters within 100 feet of the Sanibel Causeway are "idle speed" zones.

"Slow speed" means your boat is off plane, settled into the water, and not producing a wake.

If an area isn't in a speed zone, judge a safe speed for yourself. Keep in mind visibility, vessel traffic, your boat's ability to maneuver, and the weather conditions.

Be a Good Boating Citizen: Water Etiquette

Boating is a great way to enjoy Southwest Florida and good boating etiquette keeps the waters an enjoyable place for everyone. Here are a few simple rules of the water.

Dock and Boat Launch

- Be as efficient and quick as possible at a boat launch.
- Don't load passengers at the dock if others are waiting to launch behind you.
- Wait to drain, clean, and unload once you are off the ramp.

In the water

- Keep a lookout for other boats, people, and objects in the water.
- Steer clear of large vessels.
- Manatees are protected by state and federal law. It is illegal to do anything that disrupts a manatee's normal behavior, and it is illegal to harass, hunt, capture or kill any marine mammal. If you accidentally hit a manatee, make sure to contact the FWC to report it.



Important How-To Information

We'd love to see you at Fish Tale Boats again soon but not because your boat is damaged.

Keep your boat in the best condition possible by beaching, anchoring, and maintaining your boat correctly.

How to Beach Your Boat

Timing: Be aware of the tide.

Beaching your boat is generally only a good idea if you are staying in a spot for a short period of time and plan to stay close to your boat. If you leave your boat for too long in a rising tide, it may have drifted off without you by the time you come back. If the tide is coming out and you leave your boat for too long, you may be stuck on land until the next high tide.

Location: Beach your boat where it is sandy. Your boat can become stuck in muddy areas or damaged in rocky areas.

Ready, Set, Slow: As you approach the beach turn off the engine, trim the motor all the way up and have someone get in the water and pull the boat to the beach with a bowline.

How to Use Your Boat's Electronics

Now that you have your shiny new boat and all its bells and whistles, it's important to know how to use them. How to use your electronics will depend on make/model of your boat and the types of electronics you selected during your purchase.

Here are helpful links for resources on how to use some of our most popular brands of electronic marine equipment.

Garmin

Garmin makes marine electronics that include:

- Chartplotters
- Autopilots
- Radar
- Panoptix
- Sonar Black Boxes
- Transducers
- Instruments & Instrument Packs
- VHF & AIS
- Cameras



- Antennas & Sensors
- Fishfinders
- Ice Fishing Bundles & Kits
- Fusion Audio Entertainment
- EmpirBus Digital Switching
- Trolling Motors
- Connectivity

Refer to Garmin's support center and YouTube channel for more information.

Garmin Support: <https://support.garmin.com/en-US/ql/?focus=videos>

Garmin YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/garminblog/videos>

Simrad

Simrad makes marine electronics that include:

- Fishfinders/Chartplotters
- Autopilots
- Dedicated Displays
- Radar
- Sonar and Transducers
- VHF Radios & AIS
- Mapping
- Compasses
- Entertainment
- Information Display

Refer to Simrad's extensive support section on their website for more information.

Simrad Help & Support: <https://www.simrad-yachting.com/help--support/>

How to Anchor Your Boat Near Shore

If your boat comes outfitted with a Power-Pole (and if it doesn't, we would be happy to install one for you) all you need to do is push the button and your boat will silently anchor within seconds.

- Face shore.
- Take the bow anchor from the front of the boat to the back (stern).
- Drop the anchor from the stern into the water or if you have a power pole, slowly move the boat toward shore and trim up the engines.
- Passengers can get off the boat. Ask one of the passengers to place the stern anchor on shore, above the high tide line.
- Use the bow anchor line to turn the boat away from the stern anchor line and into waist deep water.



How to Anchor Your Boat in Open Water

- Pick a spot upwind.
- Have 7-10 times the amount of rode as the maximum water depth.
- Attach the anchor line to a bow cleat and slowly lower the anchor from the bow.
- When the anchor hits the bottom, tug on it to set the anchor.
- Secure and adjust the line.

Boat Care

Make sure to take these maintenance measures so your vessel spends less time in the shop and more time on the water.

Before you go:

- Check fluid levels, oil levels, the condition of your battery and battery voltage.
- Do a visual inspection for any corrosion.
- Fuel up.

When you return:

- Store your boat in a dry place and out of direct sunlight, if possible. If you are storing your boat outside, feel free to contact us about custom protective canvas covers.
- Clean and wax the decks and the hull of your boat.
- Wipe down your boat seats.
- Flush your engine after boating in saltwater.
 - If you have flush mufflers with hose fittings (check your boating manual) all you need to do is connect to a garden hose and turn the water on for ten minutes.
 - If you don't have flush mufflers with hose fittings then hook up a hose up to the motor flusher, place the flusher over the water intake hole, turn on the engine and allow it to idle for 15 minutes.

Boat Repair & Maintenance

Although beautiful and calming, our SWFL saltwater is one of the harshest environments to operate your boat! Fortunately, with proper care and maintenance, your boat will provide years of safe and dependable fun on the water.



Shortly into your ownership, there is an initial service that you should have performed around 20-50 hours to remove the starting oils and prep the motor for regular operation. Contact Fish Tale right away to inquire about rates and to schedule this maintenance. If you have any concerns about the boat, this is an excellent time to have them addressed.

After your initial service, it is recommended that you perform regular service interval maintenance on your boat every 100 hours or at least annually. In short, maintenance builds value both in dependability and potential resale value. Fish Tale is here to help with all your maintenance needs!

Refer to your owner's manual for a full list of all scheduled maintenance and safety procedures. Remember, you should always have your maintenance performed by certified mechanics that use genuine parts.

Our 7-Acre Fort Myers location is our main hub for our service operations. We're capable of handling all your boat service needs, some of which include:

- Factory authorized service for all Grady-White, Robalo, Chaparral, and Premier Pontoon boats
- Factory authorized service for Yamaha Outboards, including Genuine Yamaha Parts
- Annual service
- 100/500/1,000-hour service
- Oil changes
- Marine battery service
- Marine generator service
- Marine air conditioning service
- Cosmetic & fiberglass repairs
- Boat detailing & Ceramic Coating
- Electronics installation & repair
- Accessory installation & repair including Power-Pole, Trolling Motors, Audio Systems and more
- Genuine parts & accessories for Yamaha Outboards, Grady-White, Robalo, Chaparral, and Premier Pontoons



Mobile Service

At your dock, at your service! Our service center includes mobile boat service that can come to your home, your dock, or your marina. Our mobile service vans are loaded with genuine parts and tools, so our technicians can tackle almost any task on the water or at your dock.

Some things cannot be performed over the water, but don't worry. For those jobs, Fish Tale has a fleet of trucks and qualified drivers on the road everyday transporting even the larger vessels. The closest boat ramp for haul-out would be Punta Rassa, however we can meet you at just about any boat ramp in the tri-county area. Or, if you're unable to meet us at the ramp, ask us about captaining. We can handle transport and service from start to finish so you won't even need to be present!

Give us a call at (239) 463-4448

**for more information about our Service & Parts Center
or to schedule an appointment.**

Let the Adventure Begin!

Thank you for your business and we look forward to seeing you out on the water!
If you still have questions, **give us a call at (239) 463-4448.**

