

Steps to use National On-Water Standards (NOWS) American National Standards for On-Water Skill-based Instruction for Safer Boating

Step 1: Review the standards

Documents on this page are the American National Standards for *what* recreational boating skills to teach, and *how* best to instruct them on the water.

- a) **Download the Boating skills standard for the domain you want to review.** The document identifies *WHAT* skills students should be able to demonstrate as a result of participating in on-water instruction in entry-level recreational boat operation.
- b) **Download the Instructional delivery standard for the domain you want to review.** The document describes *HOW* to prepare and deliver high-quality on-water instruction that provides the skills identified in the recreational boating skills national standards.

Step 2: Assess and update your entry-level course

The page identifies the steps to take for self-assessing the extent to which an entry-level course complies with the relevant American National Standards. It also identifies tools developed and made available by the NOWS Program available to support your work to self-assess and improve (if needed) an entry-level course to ensure it complies with national standards. NOWS tools available for purchase include:

- a) **NOWS Self-assessment Checklists.** These will help you self-assess the extent to which a course complies with the recreational boating skills American National Standards; identifying where it meets (or exceeds) them and where something needs to be added, modified, or changed to meet the standards. Document and retain the results of the self-assessment and resulting course improvements. They will provide records for how a course complies with the national standards and enables continuous improvement of courses in the future.
- a) **Technical Support Documents (TSDs).** One for each standard, these *How-to Guides* provide helpful information, tips, and tools to assist with responding to the results of a self-assessment and adjusting or making changes to a course (if needed) to ensure it complies with the relevant standards.

Step 3: Declare and promote your course

Documents on this page are freely available and will help you make a self-declaration that an entry-level recreational boating skills course delivered on the water complies with the relevant American National Standards as well as to promote it to current and potential customers.

- a) **Download and complete the Self-declaration Action Plan.** This document identifies action steps and resources to help declare a course follows the American National Standards.
- b) **Download and display the NOWS Logo.** This document provides instructions for downloading and using the NOWS Logo to support marketing of a course that complies with the American National Standards.

Disclaimer: This NOWS Self-assessment and Declaration action plan is advisory only and its use entirely voluntary. The National On-Water Standards (NOWS) Program, United States Coast Guard, United States Sailing Association, Think First Serve, METCOR LTD, and their subject matter experts and organizations involved in the development of this approach assume no responsibility whatsoever for the use of, or failure to use, its content or any instructional courses or programs on which it is applied, adaptations made for conformity purposes, or any consequences flowing therefrom. Users of this information are responsible for protecting themselves against liability associated with application of its content. This information is a guide to conducting a conformity assessment and is not intended to preclude attainment of desired results by other means.