

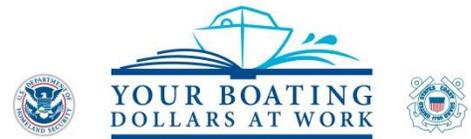


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ESP will review this standard at least every five years, at which time it may be reaffirmed, revised, or withdrawn. ESP welcomes written comments on the Standard during open public comment periods via <http://esp.nasbla.org/esp/>. Requests for interpretation may be submitted at any time via esp@nasbla.org.

American National Standard

ANSI/NASBLA 103-2016: Basic Boating Knowledge – Power



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This standard was developed under procedures of essential requirements for the American National Standards Institute. The Panel that approved the standard was balanced based on interest categories to ensure that individuals representing those with material interests in the standard had an opportunity to participate.

This standard, which is the result of extended and careful consideration of available knowledge and experience on the subject, is intended to provide minimum performance requirements.

National Boating Education Standards Panel meetings are open to the public. All contact regarding standards activity, interpretations, or meeting attendance should be directed to NASBLA ESP Staff at esp@nasbla.org.

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The Panel reserves the right to reconsider any interpretation when or if additional information which might affect it becomes available to the ESP. Persons aggrieved by an interpretation may appeal to the Panel for reinterpretation.

REQUEST FOR APPEALS

Any directly and materially affected interest who believe they have been or will be adversely affected by a Standard, or by the lack thereof, shall have the right to appeal substantive or procedural actions or inactions of the National Boating Education Standards Panel per Part XII of the [Panel Rules](#) (latest version) posted at www.nasbla.org under *Education>Education Standards Panel*. As stated in the Rules, prior to the filing of a formal appeal, communication of the alleged actions or inactions, with mutual effort to informally resolve the dissatisfaction, shall be attempted and documented.

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American National Standard

Basic Boating Knowledge - Power

Scope

This is the minimum required standard that applies to all basic boating courses in the U.S. states and territories and District of Columbia.

Purpose

To establish the national standard for use by course providers to meet the needs of recreational boaters for basic boating knowledge in order to identify and reduce primary risk factors and mitigate their effects on recreational boating.

1.0 The Boat

1.1 Boat Capacities

1.1.1 The course shall describe how to determine acceptable loading based on:

- locating and determining a boat's gross load capacity (total weight and number of persons) from the boat capacity plate; and
- horsepower recommendations.

1.2 Personal Watercraft (PWC)

Personal Watercraft (PWC) or other boats without capacity plates should reference the owner's manual and state laws.

2.0 Boating Equipment

2.1 Personal Flotation Devices (Wearable Life Jackets and Throwable Devices) Types and Carriage

2.1.1 The course shall explain the:

- different classifications and types of U.S. Coast Guard approved personal flotation devices (PFDs), including wearable and throwable devices;
- different sizes of U.S. Coast Guard approved PFDs; and
- respective uses, advantages, and disadvantages of life jackets based upon the activity for which they are intended.

2.1.2 The course shall also:

- describe the number and types of PFDs/life jackets that must be carried aboard the boat according to applicable regulations;
- discuss and clarify label restrictions; and
- emphasize that the best life jacket is the one that will be worn all the time.

2.2 Personal Flotation Device Availability and Sizing

The course shall communicate that PFDs/life jackets must be:

- readily accessible, and
- correctly sized for the persons using them.

2.3 Wearing Life Jackets

The course shall inform boat operators of the importance of:

- selecting the proper life jacket for the activity and everyone wearing life jackets at all times while aboard, skiing, or otherwise being towed;
- showing passengers how to correctly select the right size of life jacket and put on their life jackets;
- emphasizing the need to be aware that conditions can change quickly while boating (i.e., weather and water conditions, boat traffic, etc.); and
- stressing the need to always wear a life jacket while aboard due to the difficulty of putting a life jacket on in the water while under distress.

2.4 Personal Flotation Device Serviceability

2.4.1 The course shall describe:

- the characteristics of serviceable PFDs/life jackets, and
- when to replace PFDs/life jackets due to excessive wear or damage.

2.4.2 Special attention shall be given to the maintenance of inflatable life jackets as per manufacturer recommendations.

2.5 Fire Extinguisher Equipment

The course shall describe:

- the legal carriage requirements for fire extinguishers on recreational boats;
- the type and size of fire extinguishers needed for different types of fires;
- the importance of placing fire extinguishers in readily accessible locations; and
- the need for following manufacturer's recommendations for inspection and maintenance of fire extinguishers.

2.6 Back-Fire Flame Control Device

2.6.1 The course shall describe:

- the purpose, and
- maintenance of a back-fire flame control device.

2.7 Ventilation Systems

The course shall discuss the ventilation system requirements for different types of boats.

2.8 Navigation Light Equipment

The course shall cover the navigation light requirements for recreational boats as set forth in the most recent version of the NAVIGATION RULES AND REGULATIONS HANDBOOK by the United States Coast Guard.

2.9 Sound Signaling Equipment

The course shall cover sound signal requirements for recreational boats as set forth in the most recent version of the NAVIGATION RULES AND REGULATIONS HANDBOOK by the United States Coast Guard describing:

- the types of sound-producing devices required on recreational boats, and
- the use of such devices on recreational boats.

2.10 Visual Distress Signal Equipment

The course shall describe:

- the types of visual distress signals required on recreational boats, and
- the use of visual distress signals required on recreational boats operating on coastal waters, and adjoining rivers two (2) or more miles wide at the mouth and up to the first point the river narrows to less than two (2) miles as summarized in the most recent version of the NAVIGATION RULES AND REGULATIONS HANDBOOK by the United States Coast Guard

3.0 Trip Planning and Preparation

3.1 Checking Local Weather and Water Conditions

3.1.1 The course shall describe how to make informed boating decisions based on:

- forecasted local weather,
- water conditions,
- boater skill level,

- boat range, and
- capability of the operator and the boat pertinent to those conditions.

3.1.2 It shall describe:

- dangerous weather (i.e., strong winds, storms, lightning, hurricanes, fog);
- water conditions (i.e., high water, sand bars, currents, large waves); and
- their importance in trip planning.

3.2 Checking Local Information

3.2.1 The course shall describe how to obtain information about local hazards that may impede the safe operation of a recreational boat.

3.2.2. The course shall describe how to obtain information and inform the boater regarding local and state laws and regulations.

3.3 Filing a Float Plan

The course shall describe:

- the importance of notifying someone of your boating plans, and
- the basic information that should be included.

3.4 Boat Preventative Maintenance

The course shall communicate the need for:

- regular inspection, and
- maintenance of the boat and its key components (e.g., through-hull fittings, motor, electrical system, fuel system, operation of engine cutoff device [if installed]).

3.5 Launching and Retrieving from a Trailer

The course shall cover safe trailering procedures including:

- safe towing preparation,
- road handling factors when pulling a trailer,
- launching a boat, and
- retrieving a boat from the water.

3.6 Fueling Procedures

The course shall provide information on proper procedures for:

- fueling, and
- ventilation during fueling.

3.7 Pre-Departure Checklist and Passenger Communication

3.7.1 The course shall describe:

- the importance of using a pre-departure checklist, and
- conducting an onboard safety discussion with passengers.

3.7.2 Passengers should be informed about the location and use of:

- PFDs/life jackets (and shown how to put them on),
- fire extinguishers, and
- visual distress signals and first-aid kit.

3.7.3 Passengers should be informed about:

- anchoring procedures,
- emergency radio operation (if applicable),
- storm/rough weather procedures,
- line handling;
- emergency boat operation and falls overboard procedure.

4.0 Safe Boat Operation

4.1 Operator Responsibilities

4.1.1 The course shall describe boat operator's ultimate responsibility for:

- operator proficiency,
- situational awareness,
- safety of boaters aboard and anyone coming into contact with the boat, and
- all activity aboard the boat.

4.1.2 The course shall describe a boat operator's responsibility regarding the impact of the boat's operation on other water users, including, but not limited to, the need for:

- controlling boat speed,
- obeying no wake/limited wake restrictions;
- refraining from careless, reckless, or negligent operations on the water; and
- observing and operating in accordance with homeland security measures.

4.1.3 The course shall describe homeland security measures, including:

- keeping a safe prescribed distance from military and commercial ships;
- avoiding commercial port operations areas;
- observing all security zones; and
- observing and reporting suspicious activities to proper authorities.

4.1.4 The course shall indicate that it is the beginning of the boater's education and that other courses are available.

4.2 Influence of Drugs and Alcohol on Boat Operation

The course shall describe:

- the effects of drinking alcohol or using drugs while boating, and
- the boating laws pertinent to operating a boat while under the influence.

4.3 Navigation Rules

4.3.1 This course shall describe basic safe boating operation and good seamanship for recreational boaters.

4.3.2 The course shall be designed to assist the recreational boater when encountering typical navigation rules of the road situations.

4.3.3 Although boat operators are responsible to be knowledgeable of the NAVIGATION RULES AND REGULATIONS HANDBOOK by the United States Coast Guard in their entirety, this course will focus on only the following Inland Rules*:

*In those states that Inland Rules do not apply, the equivalent International, Western Rivers or Great Lakes rule(s) may be substituted by the Course Provider.

- Rule of responsibility – Rules 2(a) and 2(b)
- Proper lookout – Rule 5
- Safe speed – Rule 6(a)
- Collision avoidance rules
 - Rules 7(a),
 - 7(d),
 - 7(d)(i),
 - 7(d)(ii),
 - Rule 8,
 - Rules 13(a),
 - 13(b),
 - Rule 16,
 - Rule 17,
 - Rule 18 (a-d)
- Inland Rules
 - 14(a),
 - 14(b),
 - 14(c),
 - Rule 15(a)
- Restricted visibility – Rules 19(a) through (e)
- Disclaimer (Include verbatim in course materials.)

“The navigation rules contained in this course summarize basic navigation rules for which a boat operator is responsible on inland waterways. Additional and more in-depth rules apply regarding various types of waterways, such as International Waters and Western Rivers, and operation in relation to commercial vessels and other watercraft.

For a complete listing of the navigation rules, refer to the document NAVIGATION RULES AND REGULATIONS HANDBOOK by the United States Coast Guard.

For State specific navigation requirements, refer to the state laws where you intend to boat.”

4.4 Aids to Navigation

4.4.1 The course shall describe the Federal U.S. Aids to Navigation System (USATONS).

4.4.2 The course will provide information about regulatory/informational markers (identified by orange bands on the top and bottom of each buoy) used to advise of:

- situations,
- dangers, or
- directions indicating:
 - shoals,
 - swim areas, and
 - speed zones, etc.

4.5 Docking and Mooring

The course shall describe common practices for docking and mooring a boat relative to:

- boat size,
- type of boat,
- location,
- weather, and
- current.

4.6 Anchoring

4.6.1 The course shall describe the importance of:

- carrying an anchor, and
- the selection of: anchors, related ground tackle, and their use for different types of boats in various boating conditions.

4.6.2 The course shall describe:

- procedures for anchoring,
- use of anchors as safety devices in emergency situations, and
- the hazards of stern anchoring.

4.7 Carbon Monoxide

The course shall describe the dangers, symptoms, and avoidance practices associated with carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning in recreational boating.

4.8 Propeller Intervention & Awareness

The course shall describe the dangers, unsafe activities, safety equipment (e.g., engine cutoff device), and avoidance practices to mitigate or prevent propeller strikes in recreational boating.

5.0 Emergency Preparedness

5.1 Rendering Assistance

5.1.1 The course shall explain that, according to the Navigation Rules, boat operators are required to render assistance to a boat in distress to the extent they are able.

5.2 Capsizing/Falls Overboard

5.2.1 The course shall describe how to prevent and respond to these emergencies.

5.2.2 The prevention responses shall include:

- stay centered and low,
- avoid standing and sudden moves,
- maintain three points of contact,
- never overload,
- balance your load, and
- avoid rough water.

5.2.3 The responding procedures shall include:

- wearing life jackets,
- taking a head count,
- staying with the craft when appropriate,
- signaling for assistance,
- using improvised floating aids, and
- initiation of procedures to recover people in the water.

5.3 Cold Water Immersion

5.3.1 The course shall describe the effects of cold water immersion and how to prepare for, prevent, and respond to a cold water immersion event, including:

- Stages and the physiological effects of cold water immersion:
 - Initial reaction (cold shock response; gasping and hyperventilation),

- Short-term response (cold incapacitation; swim failure, functional loss), and
- Long-term response (immersion hypothermia).
- Preparation and Prevention:
 - Wearing a life jacket enhances chances of survival during each stage;
 - Carrying communication and signaling devices on person; and
 - Preventing capsizing, swamping, and falls overboard.
- Response:
 - Initial reaction (first 1-5 minutes) – airway protection and breath control;
 - Short-term (first 30 minutes) – performing the most important functions first (emergency communication, situational assessment, decision making, and self-rescue activities); and
 - Long-term (after 30 minutes or more) – slow body core heat loss and be prepared at all times to signal rescuers.

5.4 Fire Emergency Preparedness

The course shall describe procedures to prevent and respond to boating fires such as:

- proper use of fire extinguishers, and
- basic knowledge of fire suppression principles.

5.5 Running Aground Prevention and Response

The course shall describe how to prevent, and respond to running aground for recreational boats.

6.0 Other Water Activities

6.1 Water-Jet Propelled Watercraft

The course shall inform all operators of jet-propelled and personal watercraft about:

- safe boating practices, and
- special accident risks unique to personal watercraft (PWC), such as:
 - off throttle loss of steering,
 - stopping (including braking and reverse systems),
 - re-boarding a PWC, and
 - the use of a lanyard cutoff switch.

6.2 Water Skiing, Towed Devices and Wake Sports

The course shall describe safety practices specific to:

- pulling water skiers,

- towing anyone behind a vessel, and
- allowing anyone to participate in an activity using the wake of the vessel (wake boards, tubes, etc.).

6.3 Diving and Snorkeling

The course shall describe:

- how to recognize a diver down flag, and the International Code Flag A, and
- the legal requirements for operating a boat in the vicinity of snorkeling or scuba diving activities.

6.4 Hunting and Fishing

6.4.1 The course shall inform people who fish and hunt from boats that they are boaters, and need to follow safe boating practices.

6.4.2 Information will be provided about accident risks unique to this group of recreational boaters.

6.5 Small Boats

6.5.1 The course shall describe that all boat operators should be aware of their interactions around small boats including the effect of boat wakes.

6.5.2 Additionally, the course shall provide information about the safety considerations inherent to all small watercraft, as to:

- the importance of donning a life jacket prior to entering the watercraft,
- stabilizing a small boat for entering,
- boarding a small boat safely,
- proper loading for stability,
- moving around in the boat (e.g., keeping the weight centered from side-to-side and bow-to-stern),
- maintaining stability while underway, and
- being prepared for unintended water entry.