How to pack for a boat ride.



Ready to pack for a boat ride? Check out our Boating Checklist to help guide you. Whether you're heading out for a day of deep sea fishing or family fun, knowing what to bring can make your day easier and safer.

Here's what you should have for a day on the water:

Sun protection:

- Sunscreen
- Lip balm with high SPF
- Lightweight long-sleeve shirt (if you're especially sensitive)
- Wide-brimmed hat
- Sunglasses

Safety equipment:

- Personal flotation devices for all passengers – Make sure they are U.S. Coast Guard-approved.
- Fire extinguisher – Check to make sure it hasn't expired.
- Signaling and sound devices (horn, bell or whistle)
- Day and nighttime flares – Required if operating in a coastal area.
- First-aid kit – Include motion sickness medication.
- Marine radio and fully-charged cell phone – If your phone is not waterproof, get a waterproof case.

For your comfort:

- Insect repellent

- Change of clothes – In case you get sprayed, splashed, or dunked.
- Jacket – Temperatures on the water can be very different than on land.
- Snacks and beverages – Bring some water to stay hydrated.
- Hand sanitizer or wipes – Important after handling bait and fish (or just a sandwich).
- Towels

For fun:

- Swimsuits
- Games/activities for kids – On land or sea, kids get bored.
- Waterproof camera or smartphone – Capture memories of your day on the water.

Official business:

- Up-to-date boat registration
- Fishing license – If you're planning to fish, make sure your license is current.

And of course, make sure you have ample insurance coverage on your boat, whether it's a modest motorboat or a colossal catamaran. Just a little planning can make for a day to remember – for all the right reasons.