

# Why is Taking a Boating Course is important?

## Boating Tips

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**America's Boating Club™.**

The top reason to take a boating course is that your life and the lives of your family and friends could depend on it. Every 2.5 minutes someone loses his or her life in a boating accident.

Next, the State of North Carolina requires an approved National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) boating course to operate a boat. Any person born on or after January 1, 1988 must complete a NASBLA approved boating education course. The State requires completing the course before operating any vessel propelled by a motor of 10 HP or greater. Visit <https://www.ncwildlife.org/Boating/Laws-Safety/Boating-Regulations> for the law and more information. Plus, states surrounding North Carolina also require completion of a boating course as well as a license to operate a boat.

An additional incentive is boat insurance. Many boat insurance companies will offer discounts on boating insurance to boaters who successfully complete a safe boating course.

Imagine a driver on the road who has never been behind the wheel before nor taken a driving course. It's scary thought. Cars have brakes to stop quickly, boats don't. Cars can turn quickly, boats can't. You can walk away from a car. You must know how to swim away from a boat and not everyone can swim.

Learning the boating rules of the road made me a better driver. Before we had roadways, waterways were everyone's transportation. Countries adopted rules of the waterway that they incorporated into highway laws. For example, a waterway rule now a highway rule, a person approaching from the right has the right of way. Another example, honk your horn before passing, alerting the person ahead of your intention to pass. Boats approaching head on should pass port to port, or left side to left side as on US highways.

Beyond the basic requirement, take a safe boating course. You will learn other basics such as required and recommended safety equipment, aids to navigation, proper use of the marine radio, trailering and much more. I strongly encourage an instructor taught course because of the student and instructor interaction. Another reason is the difference between book learning and practical knowledge gained from experienced boaters.

The Pamlico Sail & Power Squadron is offering the American's Boating Course on Saturday, October 27<sup>th</sup>. Take a boating course, even if you are an experienced boater. If your time does not allow for attending class room instruction, this course is also offered on line at a minimal additional cost. For more information, visit: <http://www.americasboatingcourse.com/index.cfm>

This article is given courtesy of the Pamlico Sail & Power Squadron, America's Boating Club™. To learn more about boating courses and boating safety, email Linda, our Education Officer at [psps@gmail.com](mailto:psps@gmail.com) or contact her at 252-964-3009.