

Boating Tool Kits

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The best way to avoid trouble is to be prepared for it. Whenever we use our boats, there is always a chance we will need to fix something. The longer the trip and the further from the dock, the more likely it is that you will need some tools. In many cases, the repair or adjustment will be minor, but without the proper tools it could spell difficulty and a trip cut short.

Let's face it, you will not need tools required for major repair and rebuilding, but a small tool kit will ensure that you can keep some minor problem from ruining your day on the water. I recommend that you gather the following tools and lay them out. I would suggest that these tools need to be stored in a watertight container, and preferably be a dedicated set, selected for your particular boat. Without a dedicated set, you will have to gather your tools before each outing and there is a good chance you will either forget to include a tool or, upon returning, forget to replace the tools in their original location so they will

be available when you need them at home.

Stores like ACE, Wal-Mart, and Harbor Freight have reasonably priced tool sets ranging from simple to quite complete. These sets typically come in their own dedicated tool box. Not only does this box shown in Figure 2

serve as a space saver, but it also points out what is missing. In choosing a set, look over your needs and select the set that best meets most of your needs. Once you have selected a set, add some additional tools listed below plus any that are particular to your boat, to round out your kit.



Figure 1

An assortment of basic tools typically needed.

- Adjustable drain wrench or large channel locks pliers to tighten the propeller and rudder stuffing boxes
- Digital voltage meter to aid in electrical testing
- A large and small pair of vise grip pliers
- Standard size slip joint channel lock pliers
- Set of jumper cables minimum 8 ft. long
- A flexible magnetic pick-up tool
- A small roll of mechanic's wire
- 1 small roll of 14 ga. wire and an assortment of terminals
- Electrical tape
- Duct tape
- Spark plug socket
- Set of allen wrenches
- 3/8 drive socket set
- Straight tip and phillips head screwdrivers
- Wire cutters
- Knife
- Set of combination wrenches from 5/16-7/8
- Ball peen hammer

- Small assortment of Ty-Raps and hose clamps
- Spark plug gapping tool
- Spare spark plugs
- Spare coil
- Spare distributor, cap and rotor
- Spare fuel filter/s
- Spare water pump impeller
- Spare quart engine oil and transmission oil
- Collapsible funnel capable of being used to fill the engine and transmission
- Spare 12 V. bilge pump with a long cord and a long hose for use in emergencies
- Small assortment of bolts, nuts, screws and cotter keys
- Prop puller
- Spare fuses

Once you have all of this, the next thing you might want to consider is a separate dedicated kit solely for your trailer which you can leave in your tow vehicle. It should have the following:



Figure 3

- A single set of wheel bearings, cotter keys, seals, and races for your particular hub & axle combination
- Some spare lug nuts
- A tube of wheel bearing grease
- Spare bulbs for brake and running lights
- Spare assorted electrical connectors
- A continuity tester with a sharp probe
- A roll of electrical tape
- 14 ga. electrical butt connectors
- A bottle jack and handle
- A lug wrench & appropriate socket to fit your trailer lug nuts
- Tire pressure gage
- Digital infrared thermometer
- Boat registration
- Marine radio & charger
- Spare set of boat keys & tow vehicle keys
- Sunscreen
- Polarized Sunglasses
- Aspirin
- Motion sickness pills
- Flares
- Maps/charts
- Phone charger
- Spare hat
- Flashlight & spare batteries
- Assortment of Zip-Lock bags to store valuables and documents which should not get wet.

While you are packing, consider a "Boat Bag" which contains the following:



Figure 2
An assortment of standard and metric sockets in a nice plastic case to keep them organized.



Figure 4

Optional:

- EPIRB Emergency Position Indicator Radio Beacon
- AED Automatic Emergency Defibrillator

An AED may be considered extreme, until you have had a heart attack. Statistics show that unless a person suffering a heart attack gets circulation restored within 4 minutes, permanent damage is likely to result. An EPIRB sends a high priority emergency message directly to the responders, but more importantly pin points your position so help can find you. It relieves you of having to figure out and describe where you are, at a time when you will probably be either incapacitated or really busy. People often cite the cost of either of these devices as the reason not to include them. Remember this, wouldn't you rather have a friend or loved one still around? The cost of these devices is typically far less than the ambulance ride from the scene of the accident to the hospital. Plan wisely, boat safely.