

## STATION: 5

# READY, SET, BOAT



## PREPARATION

### Objectives

The Ready, Set, Boat Station explores the wide range of boating activities and reviews the basic equipment, principles and resources beginning boaters should be familiar with. The presenter should take particular care in organizing this station because its activities require participants to move around and to interact with each other and with a variety of equipment.

Upon completion of the station, participants will be able to;

1. **Envision themselves boating and participating in boat-related recreation**
2. **Define the term “boat capacity” and know where the capacity plate is located**
3. **Identify essential equipment needed for a boat outing**
4. **Understand the importance of balancing cargo and people when loading a small boat**
5. **Tie a bowline knot**

### Materials

*For Presenter:*

- Life jacket to wear throughout the program

*For Boating Charades:*

- 1 piece of 27” x 74” paper (or poster board), mounted on easel or hung so group can see
- Broad-tip marker
- Cards from the online Passport Kit  
Waterskiing, Kayaking, Canoeing, Tubing, Fishing, Whitewater Rafting, Wakeboarding, Swimming, Wildlife Watching, Sailing, Boat Building, Riding Personal Watercraft. *Use the images of activities that are popular in your area for charades. If possible, bring equipment related to these activities for participants to examine.*

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- Information Sheet

*Take-home sheet should have basic contact details for safety classes, skills classes, rentals, clubs, parks, marinas and other boating-related opportunities in your area.*

### For Boat Basics:

- Boat Mat from the online Passport Kit
- Actual boating equipment, images from the Kit or a combination of the two for the following:

Paddle / Oar, 7 Appropriately-Sized Life Jackets, Bailer / Hand Pump, First Aid Kit, Hat / Sunglasses / Sunscreen, Fire Extinguisher, Floating Flashlight, Trash Bag, Drinking Water, Anchor, 6 *Passenger* Signs, 1 *Captain* Sign, Signal Horn, Compass / GPS Unit, Dock Line, Nautical Chart, Parent Permission, Float Plan, Weather Report, Boating Safety Certificate, Throw-able Lifesaving Define (with rope attached – ring buoy or boat cushion), Day / Night Marine Flares, Mirror, 2-Way Marine Radio, Cell Phone



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- Several objects that obviously do not belong on a boat  
*Possibilities can range from the comical (rubber chicken) to the hazardous (glass bottle).*
- 7 lengths of string to hang the *Passenger* and *Captain* signs around participants' necks

### *For Boat Knots:*

- Demonstration rope for presenter's use
- One piece of rope for each participant to practice tying (approximately two feet)
- One boat cleat
  
- Where to purchase materials:
  - **Mark Stephens, of Project F.I.S.H.**  
at Michigan State University.  
Mark may be reached via phone 517-432-2700,  
email [steph143@msu.edu](mailto:steph143@msu.edu) or visit [www.projectfish.org](http://www.projectfish.org)
  - Visit your local retailer.

## PRESENTATION OUTLINE

- I. Introduce yourself and the station.
  
- II. Objective 1: Envisioning boating activities
  - A. Engage the group in brainstorming about activities that are boat-based or include a boat.
    1. Write responses on the easel paper.
    2. Prompt as needed to ignite the group's imagination.
  - B. Move into Boating Charades activity.
    1. For large groups, pair off participants.
    2. Pass out activity image cards.
    3. Remind participants how charades works – no words / gestures only.
    4. Take turns acting out the activity while the group guesses.
    5. Keep the process moving, covering as many activities as possible in about five minutes.
    6. For leftover cards, lead a discussion of these activities as cards are passed around.

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- C. Discuss the Information Sheet participants will be taking home.
  - 1. Point out some of the listings related to the charades activities.
  - 2. Remind the group they don't have to own everything; renting boats and/or equipment is a popular option.

### III. Objective 2: Understanding boat capacity

- A. Use the Boat Mat to teach the group about boat terminology and built-in equipment.

- 1. Explain the terms *bow*, *stern*, *port* and *starboard*.
- 2. Identify the seats, motor, etc. as essential equipment that is built in.
- 3. Discuss green, red and white lights, along with your state's regulations regarding usage of boat lights.

- B. Focus attention on the Capacity Plate.

- 1. Identify the Capacity Plate as a critical element of the boat.
  - a. Read the plate's text aloud.
  - b. Define abbreviations – HP / horsepower, LBS / pounds, etc.
  - c. Teach the group where to locate the Capacity Plate on a boat.
- 2. Reinforce that a boat's capacity includes both passengers and cargo.
  - a. Discuss the dangers of exceeding capacity.
  - b. Explain that Capacity Plate is the final authority for situations in which a boat will fit more people than the capacity specifies (as often occurs with bench seating).

### IV. Objectives 3 & 4: Identifying essential equipment & balancing the load

- A. Introduce the topic of loading the boat for an outing.

- 1. Remind the group they must take care to bring along essential equipment for an outing – but also must stay within capacity and avoid clutter.
- 2. Select seven volunteers, tagging six of them with *Passenger* signs and one with *Captain*.

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3. Point out the number of people eligible to board the boat complies with Capacity Plate.
  4. Have the volunteers stand alongside the pile or box of boating equipment.
- B. Guide the group through loading the boat with essential equipment.
1. Begin with an overview discussion that includes your state's basic equipment requirements and gives the group sufficient background / details to prepare them to identify what is essential.
  2. Have participants select something to load – a person or piece of equipment – and explain why they think it's essential. (Remember to include inappropriate items in the box / pile of equipment.)
  3. Reinforce the good choices; encourage participants to think again if they choose non-essential equipment.
  4. Expand discussion of equipment that may be unfamiliar – nautical chart, signal horn, etc.
  5. Teach the importance of balancing cargo and people as each item is brought aboard the Boat Mat.
  6. Continue loading a piece/person at a time until everything that's essential is on board.
- C. Review the loaded boat.
1. Draw attention to the balance of people and cargo.
  2. Emphasize key safety compliances – life jackets, fire extinguisher, etc.
  3. Reinforce your state's specific requirements.
- D. With boat properly loaded, prepare group for on-the-water considerations.
1. Discuss the importance of knowing and following nautical rules, such as signaling for port and starboard passing, determining who has right-of-way, etc.
  2. Explain basic buoys and markers.
- V. Objective 5: Tying boat knots
- A. Discuss the importance of knots when boating.
  - B. Introduce the Bowline Knot.

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1. Discuss how boaters use this knot – to fasten a mooring line, to join two ropes together, etc.
2. Demonstrate how to tie the Bowline.
3. Pass out the lengths of practice rope to the group.
4. Lead participants through the steps for tying their own Bowline Knot.

- a. Form a loop near the end of the rope and pass the end through the loop as though making a simple knot. (Common teaching narrative: *The rabbit comes out of the hole.*)

- b. Pull the end through and round the standing end. (*The rabbit goes around and under the tree.*)

- c. Pull the end back through the loop again to finish the Bowline. (*The rabbit goes back into the hole.*)

*NOTE: Simple Bowline diagram may be helpful here. See the following for examples:*

[http://www.fundraw.com/clipart/clip-](http://www.fundraw.com/clipart/clip-art/00001552/Bowline-Knot-Diagram/)

[art/00001552/Bowline-Knot-Diagram/](http://www.fundraw.com/clipart/clip-art/00001552/Bowline-Knot-Diagram/) and

<http://www.nationmaster.com/encyclopedia/Bowline>

### C. Introduce the Cleat Hitch Knot.

1. Explain its importance – keeping the boat docked securely.
2. Demonstrate how to tie the Cleat Hitch.
3. Let group examine the end result.

*NOTE: Extension section of previous Ready, Set, Boat narrative includes a straightforward diagram of the Cleat Hitch Knot. (And the Bowline, too.)*

- D. Review the components and steps for assembling the rigging.
- E. Have participants put their rigging into the bags/envelopes with their names on them.

### VI. Review of Station's Major Points

- A. There are many ways to enjoy boating – from paddling in a canoe to skiing behind a motor boat.
- B. Knowing where to find the boat's capacity limits and complying with those limits are a must for every kind of outing.

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- C. Essential equipment must be on board, accessible and in good shape for each boat outing.
- D. Balancing the cargo and the passengers correctly is an important part of loading a boat – especially a small one.
- E. Lines and knots play a big role in boating; the Bowline and the Cleat Hitch are two key knots.

### TIPS and OPTIONS

- Presenter should be up-to-date on the state's boating laws, regulations and requirements.
- For the brainstorming session that precedes the charades activity, write down everything the group names (unless blatantly inappropriate, of course). This list is an exercise in expanding participants' awareness of all that "boating" can include. Simply listing is sufficient; discussion of the most relevant activities will occur during charades.
- Actual equipment is preferable for the identifying essentials and loading exercises. Using a large box or displaying the equipment on a tarp can help you organize. Use the Kit's images to substitute for unavailable equipment, making sure that all essentials are represented.
- Make sure you have all materials and equipment. Organize them by their use in the three sections for this station: Boating Charades, Boat Basics and Boat Knots.
- Face the group while teaching the Bowline Knot. It may be helpful to turn your back occasionally so the group has the same orientation while they're tying their own knots, but the initial instruction should occur with presenter facing forward.
- This station's activities involve group interaction and taking turns. Asking them questions is a good way to refocus participants if they become distracted.

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## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For further background information applicable to the Ready, Set, Boat Station:

- Take Me Fishing®: <http://www.takemefishing.org/boating/prepare> and <http://www.takemefishing.org/boating/select-a-state>
- National Association of State Boating Law Administrators: <http://www.nasbla.org>
- Boat Owners Association of the United States: <http://www.boatus.com/>
- Discover Boating: <http://www.discoverboating.com/>
- Grog's Animated Knots: <http://www.animatedknots.com/indexboating.php>

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