



MARINEMAX

BOAT BUYERS GUIDE

Tips and Advice for First Time Purchasers

BOAT BUYERS GUIDE

Buying a boat is your port of entry into a new lifestyle of fun and adventure. For the first-time buyer, there are many things to consider from various activities you'd like to enjoy and passengers you'd like to comfortably fit to storage options and boat upkeep. Use this guide from MarineMax to help ensure your choice of boat is the right one for you and your family. And from our family to yours, we are glad to have you join our community of boaters United By Water.



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BOAT TYPES

Let's start off with boating activities. Which types of boats are best for what you want to do on the water?

DAY CRUISING

Everyone loves a relaxing day cruise enjoying local gathering spots, dockside restaurants, or natural wonders. While any boat can be used for cruising, there are boats designed with features that are specific to maximizing space and comfort for passengers. These include:



FISHING

Fishing is an enormously popular sport around the world. From freshwater lakes to the open ocean and everywhere in-between, the location and type of fishing you are planning to do plays a large part in which type of vessel best suits your needs. While any boat can be used for fishing, there are boats designed with features that are specific to fishing particular species and environments. These include:



YACHTING

Any boat can be called a yacht if it has below deck accommodations including a place to sleep (berths), a place to prepare meals (galley) and a flushing toilet (head).



WATERSKIING, WAKEBOARDING, OTHER WATER SPORTS

Tow sport boats are designed to pull a rider during water sports such as waterskiing or wakeboarding. These boats are designed to create a specific wake size with different systems and electronic controls that can be set for specific activities.



MULTIPURPOSE BOATING

Crossover boats combine two or more boating activities. Fish and ski boats are designed to be good all-round fishing boats for those who also enjoy waterskiing, tube riding and wakeboarding.



HIGH-SPEED THRILLS

High-performance power boats are designed for boaters who crave speed on the water. These boats can range in size from less than 20-feet to more than 50-feet and have a deep-V body shape. High speed boats can range from small outboard-engine-powered sport boats to giant performance center consoles to closed-deck boats with full canopies over the cockpit. Amenities vary widely from boat to boat varying from complete cabins ideal for weekend getaways to bucket seats in the cockpit for the thrill-seeking passengers.



Learn more about boat types at [marinemax.com/boat-type-comparisons](https://www.marinemax.com/boat-type-comparisons)

Other Things to Know About Boat Types:

PROPULSION SYSTEMS

Boats of various uses and sizes are powered by differing propulsion systems aka engines.

INBOARD

Inboard power systems enclose the engine(s) below the deck of the boat. They are similar to automobile engines, but they are built for the marine environment with demonstrably greater efficiency and durability than the typical car engine. Inboards come in two types, D-Drive and V-Drive. D-Drive's have the entire system situated under the center of the hull while V-Drive's carry the engine in the back of the boat. The placement of the V-Drive engine causes increased wake, which is a plus for skiers and wakeboarders wanting to catch a little air. The lack of an exposed propeller also makes them a favorite among watersports enthusiasts and families with little ones.



OUTBOARD

Outboard motors are mounted on the transom at the boat's stern. They have the ability to tilt in and out of the water. This allows drivers to adjust the trim position for different depths and helps the boat to plane, which smooths the ride and helps fuel efficiency. The tilt function also helps to lift the propeller out of the water when not in use to aid in preventing corrosion. Formerly not considered a very efficient or environmentally friendly option, new outboards meet stringent EPA emissions requirements and have far better fuel economy. Boats of over 60-feet are powered by multiple outboards with over 600-horsepower each.



INBOARD/OUTBOARD

Inboard / Outboard propulsion systems, also called sterndrives, merge some of the best qualities of each type of engine. Like an inboard, the motor is in the hull, but under the transom. And like an outboard, the propeller is outside the back of the hull, but under the swim deck. This helps to achieve the added power of an inboard and the enhanced maneuverability of an outboard.



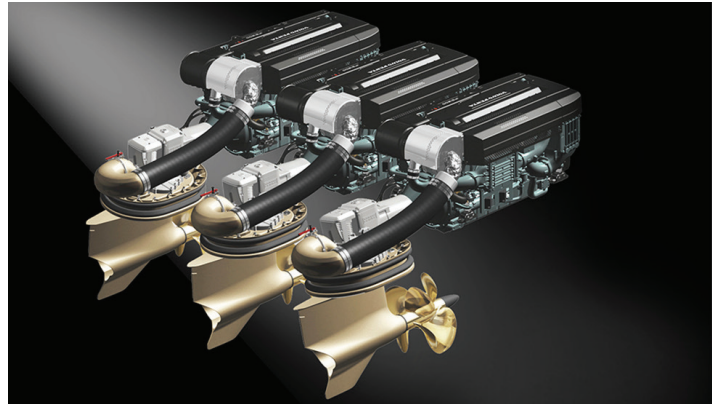
JET BOAT PROPULSION

Jet boats propel themselves by having an impeller draw up water from an intake on the bottom of the boat which is then expelled from the back of the boat in a focused, high-speed blast. This makes them light, quick, and very fun.



POD DRIVE

Pod Drives forego the traditional shaft drive system for more streamlined pods consisting of a transmission, outdrive, and propellers. The two pods are located directly under the boat with counter rotating 4-blade propellers, which provide less noise and vibration as well as enhanced fuel efficiency. What really separates pod drives are their maneuverability. With each pod having independent articulation, they can spin a boat 180 degrees in place or even counter each other to keep a boat in its position. Another unique quality of pod drives is their ability to sheer the pods off the boat if it strikes an underwater mass that would cause catastrophic damage.



No matter what type of propulsion system you prefer, the knowledgeable team at MarineMax will make sure your boat's engine has the right balance of size and power to maximize your enjoyment on the water.

CONTROL SYSTEMS

Mechanical systems have been traditionally used on most boats to turn systems on and off. Today, most manufacturers of newer boats have switched to wireless digital controls with fewer wires and eliminated hydraulic pumps, hoses and heavy rams.

A trend to digital controls now allows owners to control lighting, appliances, entertainment systems, air conditioning, cameras and other electronic systems. Owners can also access digital controls through multifunction displays on the helm or through their cell phones or tablets for more convenient operation.



BUYING NEW VS. USED

The next thing to determine is if you would like to buy a new or used boat. Each has its own great qualities and is best determined by the buyer and their personal preferences.

NEW BOAT	USED BOAT
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A new boat leaves no wonder how the boat's been used or misused, including adequate winterization and commission• Selection is at your fingertips with no limitations on what the market has available• You get the latest, greatest technology and innovations• New boats have the advantage of carrying warranties and are more easily financed• Personalization of gear selected precisely for your purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You may get more boat for less cost• Peace of mind that the boat is "broken in"• Any of the boat's initial issues have likely surfaced and been dealt with• You get time-tested technologies that you can research ahead for user reviews• You get to choose your purchase style from a trade-in, used inventory, or a private seller

See our entire inventory of new and used boats near you at [marinemax.com/find-a-boat](https://www.marinemax.com/find-a-boat)



CHOOSING A DEALER VS. A PRIVATE SELLER

Buying a boat from a certified dealer can have significant advantages. Whether you choose to buy new or used, your local dealer can offer many more benefits that a buyer deserves to have during such a huge and satisfying purchase experience.

BOAT DEALER	PRIVATE SELLER
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Will be trained on the boat's functions and systems• Can walk their customers through the boat and even perform a test drive• Have experienced retail sales professionals that focus on customer satisfaction• Is extensively trained on every brand and model in their dealership and can guide you to the best boating experience based on your goals• Prepares and delivers boats to their customers with complete systems check, fluids analysis and a thorough cleaning• Have delivery captains that do a complete walkthrough assuring that the boat is ready for its new owner and explain the systems and control functions• Offers service and support with factory trained and certified mechanics• Provides a real relationship with the dealership and ongoing continued support• Often offers financing for your purchase• Handles each component's manufacturer information at hand and will deal with the component manufacturer to cover the warranty	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A private seller may or may not know the intricacies about the boat they're selling• A private seller may be motivated to sell in a hurry and not offer a test drive• Private sellers may not leave you with the best transactional experience during such a large purchase• Private sellers tend to sell their boats as is so you're left to prep the boat for the water• A private seller transaction usually requires you to arrange pick up and transportation for your boat• Once a purchase is completed with a private seller you're left to find the best service provider in case an issue comes up with your new boat• Private sellers will likely not provide a lifetime relationship as a boater• Buying from a private seller leave you responsible for reaching out to each component manufacturer in case anything comes up

STEPS TO PURCHASING A BOAT



MAKE AN APPOINTMENT

When you've found a boat you are interested in, make an appointment for a showing to determine what you and your family are looking for from your boating experience. Make an in-person or virtual appointment with a MarineMax representative at [marinemax.com/contact-us](https://www.marinemax.com/contact-us)



DEMO THE BOAT

Boats vary in performance and comfort that's why it is crucial for you to test the boat out on the water. Most new or used boat dealers will allow for in-water demonstrations. Many dealers will even have "demo days" where potential customers can test ride several models. Make sure to test ride as many makes and models as possible to build confidence in your investment in the boating lifestyle that can last for a long time. The preeminent dealerships always allow the customer to demo the boat they are interested in. First the sales professional will ask qualifying questions to determine the buyer's serious intent. The demo may be scheduled at a later time for the dealership to ready the boat. A delivery captain will most likely be there to walk the customer through the boat's systems. In most cases the captain will operate the boat showing the correct procedures after which the captain will allow the customer to operate the vessel. MarineMax dealerships across the country offer special demo-days when they invite their potential customers to ride on the brands and models that they are considering. This allows potential owners to inspect and try out different boats. You can also request a demo on the MarineMax website. Find a demo day near you at [marinemax.com/demo-days](https://www.marinemax.com/demo-days)



FINANCE THE BOAT

Most boat dealers, new and used, have financing options either through a local lender or a financial institution. The monthly payment is important. However, be sure to understand the interest rate, the duration of the loan and the total cost of the loan. If the boat you are financing has below deck accommodations including a place to sleep (berths), a place to prepare meals (galley) and a flushing toilet (head). These three requirements allow yachts to be financed and written-off on taxes as a second home.

MarineMax partners with the industry's leading lenders and can assist with securing a boat loan and explaining your options.

Learn more about financing a boat, quick estimates, and payment calculator at [marinemax.com/finance](https://www.marinemax.com/finance)



Other Boat Buying Considerations:

TRADE-INS

When trading in your boat it is best to have the following items checked before your transaction to get the best trade evaluation and a smooth process:

- Check all systems thoroughly
- Service any unresolved issues
- Detail boat inside and out
- Be transparent about any system issues or damage

Learn more about trade-ins at marinemax.com/trade-in-faqs

WARRANTIES

With any boat, be sure to understand the warranty details, they vary tremendously from different manufacturers. Know before you buy how the warranty is supported and what your responsibilities will be to maintain that warranty. Most warranties for new boats are serviced by the new boat dealer. The manufacturer warranties the construction and material failures. Systems, such as engines, transmissions, electronics, pumps, components, stereo, televisions, etc. are warranted by the Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM). The dealer will provide the necessary forms and documents to assure these systems are supported and should be able to assist in the warranty work if these systems fail.

For whatever reason and whatever type of boat that you decide to buy, the best advice is to use it as often as you can and most of all enjoy your new life on the water.



POST-PURCHASE

STORAGE

The costs of storing your boat varies by size and type of boat. Small boats can be maintained and stored at home where large yachts need to be maintained in a marina.

Trailering – Keeping a boat on a trailer at your residence may be the easiest and least costly method of storing and maintaining a boat. Be sure to cover the boat to protect the finish and upholstery. However, check with your homeowner's association or apartment management, many do not allow trailers and large trucks. Alternatives include keeping your boat on a trailer at a "toy" storage lot. The costs vary by region and availability.

Marinas – There are two different types of marinas, in-water, where you keep your boat secured to the dock in the water and high-and-dry storage where the boat is lifted out of the water and placed in racks, often indoors protected from the elements. Some marinas offer both. The advantage of the in-water storage is your boat is ready to be used when you are. High-and-dry storage is great for keeping your boat out of the elements. Usually, if you call ahead your boat will be waiting for you in the water, but, on busy weekends you may have to wait to get your boat even if you called ahead.

Learn more about boat storage at marinemax.com/marinas

Winterizing – If not properly prepared for winter storage, a hard freeze will damage your boat. Many boat owners have their boats winterized professionally.



MAINTENANCE

Water, even freshwater is a harsh environment for maintaining engines, electronics and other systems. Follow the recommendations of your owner's manual and schedule regular maintenance either by a professional or yourself if you possess the skills and tools. Owner's manuals, even for used boats, often can be downloaded from the manufacturer's website.

Day-checks – Every type of propulsion system has a "day-checklist". Meaning things that should be checked every time the boat is used. Oil levels, fuel level, transmission fluid, bilge water, engine belts, hoses etc. are just some with visual inspections as well. It varies from boat and propulsion system type.

Finishes – Whether gelcoat, wood, metal, paint or vinyl upholstery, isinglass, and canvas, all surface finishes require upkeep and maintenance. The owner's manual will provide guidance on how to maintain the boat's finishes.

Flushing Outboards – To assure a long life, outboard motors should be flushed with fresh city water after every use, even if used in a freshwater environment. Sand and silt can be ingested into the lower unit and water-jacket that cools the powerhead.

Bottom Paint – Boats kept in saltwater should have anti-fouling paint on the hull bottom. Typically, this requires the boat to be hauled out of the water every year to every other year, according to how warm the water is and how effective the paint system is and can be repainted. Many owners have divers clean the bottom every month, especially in the summer.

Learn more about maintenance at marinemax.com/services



Other Post-Purchase Expenses:

Insurance – Many states do not require boat owners insure their boats. However, most finance companies require your boat to be insured with comprehensive boat insurance to cover their risks. Lack of legal necessity aside, if you do not finance, it only makes sense to protect yourself, your passengers, and your vessel with boat insurance if you plan to ply any waters. Many storage facilities and marinas require proof of insurance. Storms can create damage both out on the water and at the dock. MarineMax partners with the industry's leading boat insurance companies and can assist with securing a boat the right insurance plan and explaining your options.

Registration – Most states require boats over 16-feet be registered and titled. Many states require owners to pass a safety course and receive a boating safety ID card. Your local MarineMax sales professionals know the requirements and will assist with the registration and titling.

United States Coast Guard Required Safety Gear – The U.S.C.G. requires that every boat has a means of signaling another boat such as a horn, bell or whistle. They also require that for every person onboard there is a life jacket that fits and has the proper floatation for the individual. On certain boats the U.S.C.G. also requires visual distress signals as well as fire extinguishers. All MarineMax boats have all the required U.S.C.G. safety gear when purchased, and it is important to be knowledgeable and stay up to date with requirements. MarineMax also supplies lines and a full tank of fuel at the delivery.



THE MARINEMAX DIFFERENCE

When you decide to purchase your first boat, put your trust in the team at MarineMax. We are more than just the largest recreational marine dealer carrying the top brands with over 50 locations across the nation providing world-class service. We are dedicated to helping you and your family begin a lifetime on the water. MarineMax is a community of boaters with such passion for the water we can't help but share it.

Our customers not only get access to a wealth of experience that can match them with the perfect boat, but also world-class service, financing and insurance, [boating classes](#), [Getaways!® trips](#) and more.

Buy a boat from MarineMax, and we'll be part of your crew for life. Visit marinemax.com today.



UNITED *by* WATER

MARINEMAX

The logo graphic consists of a stylized blue wave or swoosh that tapers at both ends, positioned directly beneath the 'MARINEMAX' text.

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