Safety equipment
Vessels are required to carry certain items of safety equipment. The quantity and type of equipment varies depending on how far offshore you travel, and it is important to understand that these are minimum requirements.

Keep it maintained
All safety equipment must be maintained in very good condition and be accessible at all times.

To maximise your chances of survival on the water, you and your passengers need to know:
- where it is stowed;
- how to use it; and
- when to use it.

It’s recommended lifejackets are worn at all times when boating. For more information about safety equipment visit www.transport.wa.gov.au/main or call 13 11 56.

Aids to navigation
It is illegal to interfere with, remove or damage any beacon, buoy or other aids to navigation or to secure any vessel to any beacon, buoy, seamark or other aid to navigation, without permission in writing from Department of Transport (DoT).

Obstruction of navigation channels
Cray pots, lines and floats, drop nets, fishing nets, marker buoys or other buoyed objects cannot be placed or anchored in any channel, fairway or passage in any port or harbour, or in any channel, fairway or passage in any navigable waters without the permission of DoT. Also, you can’t anchor or moor a vessel in any channel or fairway, unless the vessel is in distress.

Vessels to keep clear
When approaching a place or another vessel displaying the flag or the appropriate signal.
(a) keep your vessel at least 50 metres clear of that place or vessel; or
(b) where it is not possible to keep 50 metres clear of that place or vessel —
(i) proceed at the slowest speed at which the vessel can be safely navigated; and
(ii) maintain a proper lookout for people in the water, whilst passing within 50 metres of the place or vessel displaying the flag or the appropriate signal.

Vessels less than 3.75 metres
Vessels less than 3.75 metres in length can’t be taken greater than 5 nautical miles from the mainland shore. However, you can operate the vessel within one nautical mile of an island located more than 5 nautical miles from the mainland shore.

Diving
Any boat with divers (not snorkellers) operating from it must always display signals by day or night to alert other vessels of its presence.

When within 500 metres of the shore — either level 100 or 100/50S.
Within 500 metres of an island located more than 5 nautical miles from the mainland shore.

Vessels less than 3.75 metres in length cannot be taken through an arch of a bridge; within any speed restricted area; within 30 metres of another PWC; within 50 metres of another vessel or person in the water.

Freestyle and wake jumping is prohibited:
within any speed restricted area; within 30 metres of another PWC; within 50 metres of another vessel or person in the water.

General speed limit restrictions
It is illegal, in any navigable waters to drive a motor boat at a speed exceeding 8 knots, water ski or para-sail:
- through an arch of a bridge;
- in or through a mooring area;
- in any waterway having a depth of less than 3 metres;
- within 15 metres of a vessel underway;
- between 2 and 5 nautical miles — level 100 or 150 only.

Kiteboarding and windsurfing
In certain conditions these small, fast moving sailing vessels may be difficult to see and skippers need to maintain a proper lookout at all times and take appropriate action to avoid collisions. All windsurfers and kiteboarders have a duty of care to ensure their activities are conducted with regard to the prevailing conditions and circumstances and take appropriate action to avoid collisions.

Paddle craft
Recreational canoes, kayaks, surf skis, wave skis, inflatables or similar paddle craft that are propelled by a person using a paddle must comply with WA marine laws. To get a sticker about the rules visit, www.transport.wa.gov.au/kite/ or call 13 11 56.

Beacons and flares must be in-date
Vessel registration
Most boats or yachts must be registered with DoT and an annual registration fee is payable.

Vessels that must be registered
If your boat has a motor, or is fitted for one, it must be registered. Yachts, canoes, surf skis and other craft not fitted for a motor are not required to be registered.

Transfer of ownership
You must advise DoT on the sale (within seven days) or the transfer of ownership (within 15 days) of any power driven vessel.

Tender vessels
A tender to a larger vessel is exempt from registration provided it meets the following requirements:

• It is no more than 3.1 metres long and has a motor no bigger than 5 horsepower;
• Is only used as a tender and for shore transport, and for no other purpose;
• Must carry the correct safety equipment for the area of operation.

Placement of registration numbers
Contrasting block numbers must be displayed as follows:

Power boats:
midships on the side of a vessel where they are clearly visible and not under the flare of the bow − size: 150 millimetres high.

Vessels on each side of the vessel where they can be clearly seen − size: 100 millimetres high.

Tenders:
must have the parent vessel’s number displayed as follows:

• Both sides of the vessel where they can be clearly seen − size: 100 millimetres high.
• Midships on the side of a vessel where they are clearly visible and not under the flare of the bow − size: 50 millimetres high.

Interstate ticket and boat registration
Any skipper operating a recreational vessel, powered by a motor greater than 6 horsepower must hold a WA RST or interstate or overseas equivalent.

If you hold a valid/current interstate ticket, recognised by DoT and you enter as a visitor or with the intention of permanently residing in WA, you have three months to have the qualification recognised.

If your boat is registered in another State, you have three months after bringing it into WA to register it in this State (recreational boats brought in from Northern Territory have only 30 days).

Collision regulations
You must keep out of the way of the power boat until it is past.

If a sailing vessel is overtaking a power boat the sailing boat must give way, the vessel with right of way must take action to avoid a collision. This rule does not relieve the give way vessel of its obligation to keep clear.

Overtaking

The overtaking vessel is required to keep out of the way of the vessel being overtaken. This applies to both sail and power boats. If a sailing vessel is overtaking a power boat the sailing boat must keep out of the way of the power boat until it is past and clear.

Navigation aids
Navigation aids are equivalent of road signs on highways. It is important to be aware of what is meant by the various marks. Take time to study the system of buoys to familiarise yourself with their meaning.

Recreational Skipper’s Ticket
The person in charge of a recreational vessel with a motor of 6 horsepower or less is required to hold a Recreational Skipper’s Ticket (RST).

The skipper in charge of a recreational vessel with a motor greater than 6 horsepower is required to hold a RST and carry it with them while boating.

Age restrictions
A person under 10 years may not drive a motor boat. RST holders over 14 but under 16 years of age are restricted to operating during daylight hours at a speed no more than 8 knots.

How to get an RST
To obtain an RST you will need to pass an assessment delivered by an RST provider. The RST provider may also conduct training, but this is not compulsory. You can choose to study on your own, using the RST Workbook, which is only available online at www.transport.wa.gov.au/rst and take the assessment.

Once you pass, the RST provider will issue you an RST Interim Certificate. Your RST card will be sent to you through the mail, once your details have been received and processed by the Department of Transport (DoT).

RST skills recognition and equivalents
If you hold a qualification from another state or country that is equivalent to the RST, or have a commercial certificate of competency, you may be eligible for exemption from the RST assessment and can receive an RST through skills recognition.

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