

Boat winterizing checklist

Regular maintenance and proper storage can extend the life of your boat. This checklist outlines some of the general procedures to consider as you get your boat ready for the winter storage season.

Engine

- Change the oil when the boat is warmed up
- Flush with fresh water
- Circulate antifreeze through the manifold
- Change the fluid in the transmission
- Remove the spark plugs and spray fogging oil into each cylinder
- Wipe down the engine with a shop towel, sprayed with a little fogging oil or WD-40

Stern drive

- Inspect the stern drive and remove any barnacles or plant life
- Drain the gear case and check for excess moisture in the oil
 - If there's too much moisture, you could have a leaking seal. Make sure to repair this.
- Clean the lower unit with soap and water
- Grease all fittings
- Check the fluid levels in the hydraulics or lift pumps

Outboard engine

- Flush the engine with fresh water
- Wash the engine down with soap and water
- Disconnect the fuel hose and run the engine until it stops
- Use fogging oil in the cylinders to lubricate
- Apply water resistance antifreeze to the propeller shaft and threads
- Change the gear oil
- Lubricate the exterior of engine

Fuel

- Fill your fuel tank to avoid build up of condensation
- Add fuel stabilizer
- Change the fuel filters
- Change the water separators

Bilge

- Make sure the bilges are clean and dry
- Use soap and water to clean up any oil spills
- Spray them with a moisture displacing lubricant
- Add a little antifreeze to prevent water from freezing

Interior

- Remove any valuables and accessories, such as:
 - life jackets
 - electronics
 - fire extinguishers
- Wipe down interior and sides with a soft cloth

Outside

- Pressure wash hull, props, shafts, rudders, etc.
- Cover (optional) and store boat

By following some of the above suggestions, your boat should be better prepared for winter storage. Always consult your owner's manual for the maintenance and winterization procedures specific to your make and model of boat.

*Discover Boating