



Pontoon Boat Post-Trip Checklist

A practical after-the-trip routine to clean, inspect, dry and protect your pontoon, equipment and trailer.

TIN CAN BOAT WORKS | SMALL BOATS. SERIOUS FISHING.

AT THE RAMP

- Confirm the pontoon is centered and correctly supported on the trailer.
- Secure the bow and install appropriate stern tie-downs.
- Position the outboard appropriately for towing.
- Remove weeds or vegetation and check tubes and propeller for obvious damage.
- Check trailer lights and complete a walk-around before entering the highway.

REMOVE THE MESS

- Remove trash, leftover bait, fish residue, loose fishing line and hooks.
- Remove fish from livewells, coolers and storage areas.
- Remove wet towels, clothing and unnecessary wet gear.
- Clean food or drink spills before they become stains.
- Do not leave organic material aboard for the next trip.

CLEAN & RINSE

- Rinse dirty areas as needed and remove mud, fish slime, blood and bait residue.
- Clean flooring, seats and heavily soiled surfaces with material-appropriate products.
- Clean livewells, fish boxes and coolers; inspect drains and screens.
- After saltwater use, freshwater-rinse appropriate boat, trailer and fishing-equipment surfaces.
- Follow the outboard manufacturer's flushing and post-use procedures.

INSPECT WHILE CLEANING

- Look for new tube dents, gouges, cracked welds, corrosion or unusual staining.
- Check brackets, rails, gates, furniture and pedestal-seat mounts.
- Inspect the propeller and remove fishing line.
- Look underneath the deck where practical for loose wiring, damage or unusual conditions.

BATTERIES & ELECTRICAL

- Turn off appropriate accessories and set battery switches for storage as designed.
- Inspect battery areas for moisture, corrosion or loose connections.
- Connect a compatible charger when appropriate and verify charging operation.
- Inspect trolling-motor plug, wiring and battery bank.
- Record any electrical problem noticed during the trip while you still remember it.

LIVEWELLS, STORAGE & INTERIOR

- Drain and clean livewell/fish-storage areas; allow them to dry.
- Open wet storage compartments and remove wet life jackets, dock lines or towels.
- Wipe spills and check beneath seat cushions for trapped moisture.
- Allow carpet and other flooring to dry before extended covered storage.
- Check EVA/synthetic flooring for lifting edges or damage.

TRAILER

- Inspect tires, bunks, winch strap, tie-downs and trailer wiring.
- Check hubs for unusual heat after towing.
- Look for anything that shifted or was damaged during launch/retrieval.
- Rinse appropriate trailer components after saltwater use.
- Investigate if the pontoon suddenly loads differently than usual.

DRY, COVER & RECORD

- Allow seats, flooring, livewells and compartments to dry before covering.
- Support the cover so rainwater sheds rather than pools.
- Provide appropriate ventilation.
- Write down weak batteries, engine issues, electronics problems, trailer faults or new damage.
- Leave the boat as close to ready for the next trip as practical.

Remove the mess. Dry the boat. Charge the batteries. Look for damage. Then the next trip starts easier.