











USCG Minimum Equipment Requirements for Recreational Vessels – [Edition dated Mar 25, 1999](#)

Boat Length in Feet	Less than 16', canoes, kayaks	16' to 26' (8m)	26' to 39.4' (12m)	40' to 65'	65' to 165' (50m)
	Personal Flotation Devices	One Type I, II, III, or V per person. PFD's must be CG Approved, wearable by the intended user and readily accessible	One Type I, II, III, or V per person plus one Type IV throw able device. PFD's must be CG Approved, wearable by the intended user and readily accessible. The Type IV throw able device must be located such that it is immediately available.		
	Fire Extinguishers No fixed system	One B-I any type. Fire extinguishers required on any boat with enclosed fuel or engine spaces, enclosed living spaces, or permanent (not movable by one person) fuel tanks.	One B-II or two B-I	One B-II and one B-I or three B-I	One to eight B-II (Depends on weight) Plus additional requirements in machinery space - for detail specifics see 46CFR25-30.20
	With fixed system	No portables required	One B-I	Two B-I or one B-II	
	Visual Distress Signals on Coastal Waters	Night signals required when operating between sunset and sunrise.	Minimum of three day-use and three night-use or three day/night combination pyrotechnic devices. Non-pyrotechnic substitutes: 1 orange flag (day-use) and 1 electric S-O-S signal light (night-use)		
	Sound Producing Devices	Horn or whistle recommended to signal intentions or position. Under Rule 33 of the Navigation Rules, boats under 12m MUST have aboard a means of making an efficient sound.	One bell not less than 200mm diameter for boats 12m to 20m or 300mm for boats larger than 20m and one whistle or horn required to signal intentions or position.		
	Backfire Flame Arrestors	One CG-Approved device on each carburetor of all gasoline-powered engines built after April 1940, except outboards. Arrestor should be kept clean to prevent contamination from propagating a flame.			
	Ventilation	CG-standard powered system required on gasoline-powered vessels with enclosed engine spaces built after 1 August 1980. Boats built earlier must have either natural or powered ventilation in the fuel tank compartment.			
	Navigation Lights Under power	Sidelights, stern light, masthead light. Boats 16' or longer must also have an 360° all-around white anchor light capable of being lit independently from the red/green/white running lights. Sailboats under power are considered powerboats and must follow "under power" rules.			
	Under sail	Sidelights and stern light. Boats under sail under 20m (65.6 feet) can substitute a tri-color light for separate sidelights and stern lights. Sailboats under power are considered powerboats and must follow "under power" rules.			
	Rowing	Sailboats and powerboats under 7m and under 7 knots can substitute a white lantern in place of the required lights.			
	At Anchor	All around white light visible for 2nm at night unless in a chart-designated anchorage.			
	Visibility range	1 nm side lights, 2 nm all others	3nm masthead, 2 nm all others		5nm masthead, 2nm all others
	Pollution Regulations	"Honor system", no plaques required.	5" X 8" Oil Discharge placard and 4" X 9" MARPOL Trash placards. Vessels over 39.4' with a galley must have a Waste Management Plan.		
	Marine Sanitation Devices	Vessels with installed head facilities must have an operable CG-Certified Type I, II, or III Marine Sanitation Device (MSD). Any "Y" value for discharge overboard must be located in such a manner or affixed to prevent accidental discharge of untreated waste into water.			Type II or III MSD only.
	Navigation Rules	Familiarity with the rules is recommended but not required. Boaters should be familiar with the "Rules of the Road" for crossing and overtaking situations, as well as meeting other vessels head on.		Vessels 12m (39.4') or over are required to have a current copy of the USDOT USCG International - Inland Navigation Rules aboard.	