



Required Equipment for Boats in Ohio

Department of Natural Resources
Division of Watercraft

		POWERBOATS (Including electric motors)					SAILBOATS (If any type of propulsion machinery is attached see powerboats)				MANUALLY PROPELLED (No motor or sail)		
		Personal Watercraft (PWC) Less than 16 feet	Less than 16 feet in length (Class A)	16 feet but less than 26 feet in length (Class 1)	26 feet but less than 40 feet in length (Class 2)	40 feet but less than 65 feet in length (Class 3)	Less than 16 feet in length (Class A)	16 feet but less than 26 feet in length (Class 1)	26 feet but less than 40 feet in length (Class 2)	40 feet but less than 65 feet in length (Class 3)	Canoes, Kayaks, Float tubes and Paddleboards	Rowboats	Inflatable Boats
Find the column to the right that applies to the vessel you are outfitting. The dots in that column indicate which equipment items are required. The numbers refer to footnotes that explain any exceptions for vessels in that column. NOTE: This chart is intended for quick reference only and is not a substitute for knowledge of the specifics of Ohio boating laws. Refer to the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) and the Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) for complete boating laws or your Ohio Boat Operator's Guide for a summary of criteria for each equipment item to be legally acceptable. WARNING: if a vessel is exempted from carrying specific equipment, that does not mean that a wise skipper would not carry it anyway! BOAT SMART OHIO!													
TITLE (ORC 1548.03) (not required to be carried onboard)		●	● ¹	●	●	●	● ¹	●	●	●		● ¹	● ¹
REGISTRATION & NUMBERS (ORC 1547.53)		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	● ²	● ²	● ²
PERSONAL FLOTATION DEVICES (ORC 1547.25)	One Type I, II, III or V wearable device for each person on board.	● ¹²	● ³	● ³	●	●	● ³	● ³	●	●	● ³	● ³	● ³
	One Type IV throwable device as an extra.			●	●	●		●	●	●			
FIRE EXTINGUISHER(S) (ORC 1547.27)	One Type B-1	●	● ⁴	● ⁴									
	Two Type B-1 or one B-2				●								
	Three Type B-1 or one B-2 plus one B-1					●							
VISUAL DISTRESS SIGNALS (ORC 1547.251)	On Lake Erie a USCG approved signal for both day and night use	13		●	●	●			●	●			
	On Lake Erie (sunset to sunrise) a USCG approved signal for night use	13	●				●	●			●	●	●
	On waters other than Lake Erie a distress flag or USCG approved signal for day use	●	●	●	●	●	● ⁵	● ⁵	●	●			
SOUND SIGNALING DEVICES (OAC 1501:47-2-33)	On *Federal waters and inland waters a power whistle or horn and a bell				● ⁶	●			● ⁶	●			
	On *Federal waters a whistle, horn or other device	●	●	●	● ⁷		●	●	● ⁷		●	●	●
	On inland waters a whistle, horn or other device			●	●	●							
ANCHOR & LINE (ORC 1547.26 & OAC 1501:47-1-11)		● ⁸	● ⁸	●	●	●		● ⁸	●	●		● ⁸	● ⁸
LIGHTS (OAC 1501:47-2)	Running lights as prescribed by federal and state law	13	●	●	●	●		● ⁹	●	●			
	Running lights or electric torch or lighted lantern	13					●	● ¹⁰			●	●	●
	Anchor light	13	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
VENTILATION: Engine & fuel tank compartments (ORC 1547.29)		● ¹¹	●	●	●	●							
BACKFIRE FLAME ARRESTOR: Inboard engines (ORC 1547.28)		● ¹¹	●	●	●	●							
MUFFLING DEVICE or underwater exhaust (ORC 1547.31)		●	●	●	●	●							
ENGINE CUTOFF SWITCH LANYARD (ORC 1547.41)		●											
INLAND NAVIGATION RULES (OAC 1501:47-4-29)					● ⁶	●							
GARBAGE PLACARD (OAC 1501:47-4-28)					●	●			●	●			
OIL POLLUTION PLACARD (OAC 1501:47-4-27)					●	●			●	●			

1) A title is not required for any vessel less than 14 feet long without a permanently affixed mechanical means of propulsion of 10 horsepower or more.
 2) Exemption of OH numbers for those with alternate registration for handpowered vessels.
 3) On vessels less than 18 feet in length, any child less than 10 years of age must wear a properly fitted type I, II, or III flotation device at all times.
 4) Exception for vessels propelled by an electric motor and vessels less than 26 feet in length designed for use with an outboard motor, of "open construction".
 5) Exception for sailboats less than 26 feet in length with completely "open construction" and without propulsion machinery.
 6) Applies to any vessel of 12 meters (39.4 ft.) or more in length.
 7) Applies to any vessel less than 12 meters (39.4 ft.) in length.
 8) Exception for any vessel less than 14 feet in length, any canoe, and any sailboat less than 21 feet in length.
 9) Applies to sailing vessels of 7 meters (23.0 ft.) or more in length.
 10) Applies to sailing vessels less than 7 meters (23.0 ft.) in length.
 11) Some varieties of Personal Watercraft may be exempted by the U.S. Coast Guard. Consult your watercraft dealer or the manufacturer to verify requirements for these devices.
 12) Every person on board a personal watercraft must wear a properly fitted Type I, II, III or V flotation device.
 13) Prohibited from operating between sunset and sunrise.
 * Federal waters in Ohio include Lake Erie and connecting bays and harbors, the Ohio River and the Muskingum River.