

Table Rock Lake Boating Safety Checklist

Before You Leave the Dock:

1. Weather & Lake Conditions:

- Check the local weather forecast for Table Rock Lake (wind, storms, temperature).
- Review Table Rock Lake water levels and any warnings or advisories.
- Inform someone of your boating plans, including your destination and estimated return time.

2. Boat & Equipment:

- **Registration & Documentation:** Ensure your boat registration is current and onboard.
- **Fuel:** Check fuel levels and ensure you have enough for your planned trip, plus a reserve.
- **Engine & Systems:**
 - Inspect engine oil, coolant, and belts.
 - Test running lights, navigation lights, and horn.
 - Check bilge pump operation.
 - Verify steering and throttle function.
- **Safety Equipment:**
 - **Life Jackets (PFDs):** Ensure enough properly fitting USCG-approved life jackets for everyone onboard. Children 12 and under are required to wear a PFD while on a vessel.
 - **Throwable Flotation Device:** Have at least one throwable flotation device (Type IV).
 - **Fire Extinguisher:** Check that your fire extinguisher is charged and accessible.
 - **Visual Distress Signals:** Carry flares, signal flags, or an electronic distress signal.
 - **First-Aid Kit:** Ensure a well-stocked first-aid kit is onboard.
 - **Anchor & Line:** Check your anchor and line for proper function and length.
 - **Tool Kit & Spare Parts:** Have a basic tool kit and spare parts for minor repairs.
- **Navigation & Communication:**
 - **Navigation Charts/GPS:** Have up-to-date navigation charts or a GPS for Table Rock Lake.
 - **Communication Device:** Carry a VHF radio or cell phone in a waterproof bag. (Cell service can be spotty in some areas).
 - **Bailing Device/Bucket:** have a method to remove water from the boat.

3. Passengers & Crew:

- Conduct a safety briefing for all passengers, including:
 - Location of life jackets and other safety equipment.
 - Proper use of life jackets.
 - Boat safety rules and procedures.
 - Emergency procedures.
 - Ensure everyone knows how to signal for help.
- Check that all passengers are aware of the dangers of carbon monoxide poisoning.

On the Water:

- **Maintain a Safe Speed:** Observe posted speed limits and maintain a safe speed for conditions. No wake zones are strictly enforced.
- **Be Aware of Other Boats & Watercraft:** Keep a sharp lookout for other boats, personal watercraft, swimmers, and obstacles.
- **Observe Navigation Rules:** Follow all navigation rules and regulations.
- **Avoid Alcohol & Drugs:** Do not operate a boat under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- **Stay Alert & Aware:** Pay attention to your surroundings and be prepared for changing conditions.
- **Monitor Weather Conditions:** Keep an eye on the weather and be prepared to return to shore if conditions deteriorate.
- **Know your location at all times.**
- **Be aware of submerged trees and other hazards.** Table Rock lake has many.

Returning to the Dock:

- Reduce speed and approach the dock slowly.
- Secure the boat properly to the dock.
- Turn off all electrical systems and fuel valves.
- Remove all trash and debris from the boat.

Important Table Rock Lake Specifics:

- Be aware of sudden changes in weather.
- Be aware of the heavy boat traffic during peak season.
- Be aware of the submerged timber throughout the lake.
- Be aware of the dam operations and any changing water levels.
- Contact the local marina or the Army Corps of Engineers for up to date information.

Disclaimer: This checklist is for informational purposes only and should not be considered a substitute for professional boating safety training. Always follow all applicable laws and regulations and use your best judgment when operating a boat.