

## **POWERBOAT TYPES AND USES**

A powerboat, also referred to as a motorboat or speedboat, is a boat which is powered by an engine. Some motorboats are fitted with inboard engines, others have an outboard motor installed on the rear, containing the internal combustion engine, the gearbox and the propeller in one portable unit.

Some powerboats even have a hybrid inboard-outboard engine, where the internal combustion engine is installed inside the boat and the gearbox and propeller are outside.

Powerboats vary greatly in size. As with any type of watercraft, a boater should take a boating safety course before they go out on the water. These are common types of powerboats and their uses.

### **Bass Boat**

Bass boats are generally 14' to 23', and typically used for freshwater fishing. They have low freeboard and a V hull. They are specialized for bass fishing on inland lakes and rivers. Due to the special gear, high horsepower outboards and trolling motors they are a relatively high price point.

### **Bay Boat**

Bay boats have a low profile. They are designed for use in shallow waters of large shallow bays, estuaries or near shore. Bay boats are 18'–24' in length and are fiberglass because they are used in salt or brackish waters. They have more freeboard than a flats boat.

### **Bowrider**

A bowrider has an open bow area designed for extra seats forward of the helm. Bowriders are usually 17'–30'. They are powered by either stern drive or outboard engines. They are considered a family boat and can be used for fishing and water sports. A good choice for those new to boating.

### **Center Console**

Center console boats are from 13'–45'. They are so-named because their helm is on a console in the center of the boat. Like walkarounds, the open hull helps anglers walk from bow to stern, and walk around the console without climbing on the gunwales. Most use outboard motors for propulsion and the larger size boats are suited for offshore fishing.

### **Convertible Fishing Boat**

Convertibles are 35 foot and greater boats. They are suited for offshore fishing and cruising. They have large cabins, galleys and berths. They are perfect for pleasure cruises and offshore fishing. The flybridge with elevated helm helps to spot flotsam, other small boats, people or fish. They have a large fishing deck aft.

**Cruiser**

Cruisers are from 21'–45' in length and have a cabin in the bow of the boat. Cruiser cabins are designed for an overnight stay and are typically large enough for a small galley, several berths and an enclosed head.

**Cuddy Cabin**

Cuddy cabin boats have a small cabin for storage or a small seating area. They may accommodate a berth and or head. They are usually about 22–30 feet in length.

**Deck Boat**

Deck boats have a wide beam and feature a V-shaped hull which offers more performance than a pontoon boat. They feature an open deck with plenty of seating. These are generally party or family boats. They are used for swimming and water sports. They are outboard or stern drive powered and can be aluminum or fiberglass. Generally these boat are about 25–35 feet long.

**Dinghy**

A dinghy is a small boat, usually 7–12 feet in length. They are usually powered by oars, small outboards, or sails. Often carried or towed by a larger boat for going ashore. Low cost and an excellent choice for those new to boating.

**Downeast Cruiser**

These boats are native to coastal New England. Also called lobster boats, they are built for offshore cruising and fishing. It is typically a 26' to 40' boat that has a cabin with berths and a head and dining area.

**“Dual Console” Walk-Through**

"Dual console" walk-through boats have two dashboards and windshields with space to walk between them for allowing access to the bow area for seating and/or fishing. Lengths run 16–30 feet.

**Express Fisherman**

The Express Fisherman is designed for high speeds to get to offshore fishing spots in a hurry. They are rigged for offshore fishing. They have large open cockpits and fish fighting areas aft. They usually have limited cruising accommodations but can provide overnight shelter.

**Fish 'n Ski Boat**

Fish 'n Ski boats are used for fishing or skiing. These are family boats. They have accessories for each application. They feature comfortable seating and offer livewells and tie downs for rods and have removable, elevated tow bars and ski lockers. They are usually 16–24 feet in length.

**Flats Boat**

Flats boats range from 14 feet to 18 feet and are specifically designed to navigate shallow waters needing extremely shallow drafts. A push pole is used to navigate the shallow water.

### **High Performance Boat**

Performance powerboats are built for speed, featuring narrow beam, steep deadrise, and high power to weight ratios. They are also known as muscle boats or go-fast boats. They have Spartan cabins. Cockpits seat 2–6 passengers. Powered by high horsepower outboards, stern drives or surface drives, these boats are carefully designed to be fast, light and strong, ideal for racing or fast cruising. They range from 25–60 feet in length.

### **Houseboat**

As the name implies houseboats are floating houses. They are either outboard or inboard propelled and range from 25 to 150 feet in length. Just like a house they have full kitchens, bedrooms and living and dining areas. They are the ultimate family boat. They are generally found on quieter bodies of water since they have low freeboards and are built on a barge-like hull.

### **Inflatable Boat**

Usually 6'–14' in length and have inflatable tubes for their sides. The floor is flexible or made rigid using plywood or aluminum floorboards depending on the size. Outboard motors can be used on the rigid transom. These boat deflate and are easy to transport or store. Often used as dinghies on larger boats. A good choice for those new to boating.

### **Jet Boat**

Jet boats have single or multiple jet drives instead of a propeller for propulsion. They are very maneuverable. These smaller boats (14–24 feet) are generally used for water sports and getting into shallow waters.

### **Jon Boat**

Jon boats are small utility craft primarily used for boating in shallow water. They range from 10 to 18 feet in length. They can be made of aluminum or fiberglass. They are inexpensive and a good choice for the novice boater, duck hunters or as a work boat.

### **Multi-species Boat**

Multi-species boats are 17–23 feet in length. They are made of fiberglass or aluminum. They are designed to travel in rougher water than bass boats. As the name implies, these boats are made for fishing a variety of different fish in all types of water.

### **Pilothouse Boat**

Featuring a fully enclosed pilot house, these boats are built to ride rougher seas while keeping helmsman high and dry. They are powered by outboards, stern drives or inboards. They are popular for cruising and many types of fishing. They usually have a berth and a head. They are usually 20–35 feet in length.

**Pontoon Boat**

Pontoon boats have 2 or 3 aluminum tubes that support a broad platform. They have shallow drafts and are very stable. They are usually found on inland lakes and rivers and other small bodies of water. They are used for cruising, fishing and water sports. They are usually powered by an outboard or stern-drive. They come in lengths from 15–30 feet.

**Power Catamaran**

These dual-hull boats are generally used for offshore fishing. They are more rugged, provide a more stable ride, faster speeds and better fuel economy than mono-hulls. They are 25–40 feet in length.

**PWC (Personal Watercraft)**

These boats are fun to drive and fairly economical to buy. They come in lengths from 9–14 feet. They are usually built for 1 or 2 people but larger, more powerful model can seat up to 4. They are powered by a jet drive. Newer models have off throttle steering control and reverse braking to reduce collisions. Since a boater sits on rather than in, they have no gunwale protection during a collision.

**Rigid Inflatable Boats**

RIBs (rigid inflatable boats) have a fiberglass or aluminum hull attached to inflatable outer tubes. Outboard motors are used on the transom for power. RIBs are usually faster, larger, and can carry more weight than flexible floored inflatables. They also come in larger sizes.

**Runabout**

Many boats are called runabouts. Generally, a runabout is defined as a small powerboat somewhere in the 14–24 foot range. They are usually powered by an outboard or stern-drive engine. They are a multipurpose boat suitable for water sports, cruising and fishing.

**Sedan Bridge Boat**

Sedan bridge boats are intended for extended cruising with accommodations down below to suit long stays on the water. They range from about 35–65 feet. The bridge positions the helmsman high above the water allowing for great visibility.

**Ski and Wakeboard Boat**

These boats are designed specifically for water sports. They can be ballasted for producing higher wakes for trick skiing and wakeboarding. They are also great for pulling inflatable tubes.

**Skiff**

The skiff is similar to a Jon boat. They are another entry level boat. They are especially good for boating in shallow water. They can have flat or cathedral shaped hulls. Many have a console to steer from.

**Utility Boat**

Utility boats are usually made for tough use. They are generally aluminum with outboard power. They range from 12–20 feet. Used for fishing or as workboats. Relatively low cost to maintain and a good choice for the novice boater.

**Walkarounds**

Walkarounds allow an angler to walk around the cabin. They are generally 20–30 feet in length. They are usually found on larger bodies of water and can be powered by an outboard, Inboard/outboard or inboard engine.

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