



Safety Guidelines

- Skippers must evaluate the sailing experience and physical condition of their passengers before taking them out on a boat. They must consider the safety and comfort of their passengers in light of anticipated conditions. Skippers are ultimately responsible for their crew's safety. Make sure that all approved life jackets are aboard and available for use. Insist on life jackets when appropriate. Consider buying a comfortable life jacket that you will be willing to wear, especially if you sail with inexperienced crew.
- Skippers must check weather reports before leaving the dock, and use their best judgment in deciding whether or not to sail based on the conditions and the experience of their crew. Your crew is your responsibility. Make sure that you keep an eye on the weather. Conditions can change quickly. Even the best of sailors have gotten into trouble because of changing conditions. Be aware of impending bad weather and other boats in your vicinity. Be prudent and tie up at the closest floating dock before a storm or high winds hit. Leave the boat tied up elsewhere if necessary and call the emergency cell phone (410.812.9835). DSC boats are not to leave the docks if winds are expected to be greater than 20 knots or if lightning is visible.
- No single-handing without the express permission of the Executive Director.
- Night sailing is discouraged for safety reasons. However, if you get caught out after dark due to light air, call the emergency cell phone (410.812.9835) to advise that you've brought the boat back.
- Outboard motors are not to be used on DSC boats without a special checkout. Most DSC boats do not have required registration for their use.
- Stay outside the green buoys near Fort McHenry (do not go between the green buoys and Fort McHenry). We have had damage from groundings near there. Be familiar with the shallow areas of the inner and outer harbors.
- Sail the sides of the harbor except when crossing the center. Please stay out of the way of water taxis and commercial traffic.
- Practice good seamanship. Knowing the rules of the road is important, but the other guy may not know them. Be alert and sail defensively.
- 90% of all boat damage happens around the docks. Be responsible and come in slow. If necessary, drop your sails and paddle in. In most situations, depart and return to the docks with main only. Drop your jib well before your final approach to the docks. One exception is when the wind is behind you. As you approach the dock, head upwind with momentum, drop your main and/or jib, and turn downwind to the dock with bare poles or an easy to release jib. Be honest and report any damage. You must pay for any avoidable damage. Skippers are responsible for the first \$1000 of any damage to a DSC boat or lost equipment and the first \$2000 of any damage to a non-DSC boat.
- Make sure that all of the gear listed on your equipment list on your checkout form is aboard the boat. Check everything over to see if it is functional. Look for any frayed lines or damaged rigging. Check the sails for tears. Take ripped sails off the boat and let the DSC staff know.
- Don't over-stress the rigging. It has been tuned properly. Changing the settings of the shrouds and stays will cause damage.
- Properly dock the boat in its slip. Make sure that it is securely moored with the available stern, spring and bow lines. Fold and roll the sails neatly. Coil all lines. Pump the bilge of all water. Hose the boat off and remove ALL trash and personal items. Neatly stow all sails, lines and other gear below. Make sure that the hatch is closed and locked. Leave the boat better than you found it.
- **Treat the boat like it is yours (because it is).**