

Boat buying checklist

Please Note: This list is not intended to replace the role of the surveyor however, it should inform you about the things to look for, so that you can rule out particular boats. After all you only want to pay for a surveyor once.

External

If you can view your boat out of the water then you can see issues such as osmosis and pinking on skin fittings. If your boat is in the water however then ask questions about when was the last time any antifouling was applied. Any seals on the boat however are water tight.

- **Below Waterline**

If your boat is of fibreglass construction then look for blistering of the antifouling which indicates osmosis. If you do detect bubbles, then give an indication on bubble density. What type of antifouling was applied and when was the last time it was applied. Copper coat is the best antifouling solution, but there are others. For wooden boats add caulking and the frame, while for metal boats you are looking for rust.

- **Below the water skin fittings**

How many do you have below the waterline. If any of the fittings have a pinkish colour then that indicates replacement time. You also have other fittings like the speed logger and on these, look at the seals around these fittings and any indication of damage.

- **Rudder/Keel**

Around the keel there is a seal, so look at that. If you have a copper coat antifouling solution then issues can occur on the keel, so look for cracks in the paint. The keel is also the most likely part of the boat to sustain damage, so look for any repairs and if there are any, how good is the repair.

- **Propeller**

As well as damage to the propeller, you are looking at any play as this can indicate issues in the shaft. For different systems of propulsion then each have their own issues. For sail drives, it is the sail drive seal, while for another it is the p bracket cutlass bearing that needs close attention.

- **Anodes**

Look at the condition of the anodes. If you have wear greater than 66% - 50% then these will need replacing immediately.

Deck from forward

Walk along your deck from forward, to the stern really looking at your boat for faults or issues.

- **Bow Roller Assembly/Anchor**

Do you have a windlass and what is its position, on the deck or in the anchor locker. Look at the anchor chain and in particular the shackles that attach the anchor to the chain. Is there any cracks in and around the bow roller. What type of anchor do you have and what is its weight. How much chain and how much rode do you have?

- **Deck Construction**

For teak decks, then the caulking can have problems as well as more potential leaks. For fibre glass boats, look at the gel coat in particular in and around areas where strain occurs such as at the base of stanchions. If your boat has any anti-slip matting take a look at its condition.

- **Topsides**

On a fibre glass boat then the main thing you are looking for is de-lamination, which is where the fibre glass separates from the core. You can find these areas by tapping the hull and listening, if the sound has a hollow quality then this can indicate de-lamination. While areas of a spongy deck indicate rot or damp of some kind.

- **Chain plates**

On these you are looking at their general condition, are there any cracks especially near or in the welds.

- **Mast**

What type of mast do you have? If you have a keel stepped mast then look at the seal around the mast as this is a common place for water ingress.

- **Cleats**

Look at their condition and how they are secured to the hull.

- **Stanchions, guard wires and handrails**

Look at the fitting at the bottom of the stanchions, look at the condition of guard wires and look at the condition of any handrails.

- **Hatches and Windows**

Look at the seals around the hatches, as well as the acrylic.

- **Cockpit including Steering**

What instruments do you have at the helm. What type of steering do you have. Do you have an auto helm? Are there other issues around the cockpit, like the teak on the seating. Will the winches suit your needs?

- **Lockers**

How many and what size of lockers do you have?

- **Above the water skin fittings**

How many do you have above the waterline. You also have different types of fittings like the exhaust outlet etc. What you are looking for are the seals around these fittings and any indication of damage.

Sails, spars and rigging

For a yacht then your sails and rigging are your primary propulsion engine, so it is important that these are in good order.

- **Sails**
What type of sails do you have, what is the condition of the sails and if applicable how many reefing points do you have. Do you have a sail bag and what is the condition of this.
- **Spars**
The end caps of your spars can get damaged, so look at these.
- **Standing rigging**
This has a life expectancy that is dictated by insurance, so make sure you find out when the standing rigging was replaced.
- **Running rigging**
This is all your lines, reefing points, lazy jacks and other mooring lines. The cost of ropes can soon mount up, so knowing the condition of the lines is important.

Internal

When looking at the internal fitting, also think about how you would fit in that space. Will the space suit you and your requirements.

- **Storage**
How much storage comes with the boat? What are the catches like? Do you have enough storage to suit your needs
- **Lighting**
Does it work? Is it sufficient? Is it halogen or LED bulbs.
- **Soft furnishings**
This is the seating as well as the mattress for you bunks.
- **Head liners**
Are they in good condition.
- **Chart Table**
What equipment is at your chart table. What is your switch panels like? Are there any issues from the equipment or the wiring.
- **Galley**
Look at the equipment in the galley such as the cooker, the sink and the fridge. Also look at the configuration of the galley and think about how the space will work for you.
- **Heads**
As well as the toilet, sink and shower, have a look at the hoses and exercise any stop cocks. Always ask permission to exercise the sewage sea cock. Do you have a black water tank?

- **Heating**
Do you have any and if you do have heating, where is it.
- **Bulkheads and Tabbing**
Are your bulk heads in good order and are they will secured in place
- **Varnish**
Is any varnish in good condition
- **Bilges**
How wet are they and what condition are your keel bolts. Do you have bilge pumps and do they work.

Machinery and Equipment

Test as much as you can. For example, if your boat is in the water, then ask if you can hear the engine running. If you can turn on the instruments then do so and check that they are working as they should.

- **Engine**
Look at how clean the engine space is, this gives a good indication of how well maintained the engine is. If they have a service record then take a look at that. If you can get them to start the engine then see, how easily it starts. Access is really important, so make sure you have good access to the oil and diesel filters and the impeller. Look for any signs of rust stains, areas that are particularly prone to rust stains are near the water lock and around the mixing elbow.
- **Fuel tank**
Where are they placed, what size and what condition are they? Does this yacht come with a day tank?
- **Water tanks**
Where are they placed, what size and what condition are they?
- **Gas**
Does this yacht come with a gas safety certificate. If it doesn't look at the hoses if you can.
- **Batteries**
What size batteries do you have for both the house and the starter battery. How old are they? How many connections have been added to the terminals.
- **Instruments**
The list of these should be in the boats particulars, but some boats are better kitted out to your needs than others. What equipment you do have then try them out if you can.
- **Plumbing**
Do not forget to look at your plumbing. For example. do you have a macerator or a black water tank?
- **Other items**
These can include life rafts, dan buoys and maybe even solar panels

Boat Name _____ **Date** _____

External

Below Waterline; Below the water skin fittings; Rudder/Keel; Propeller; Anodes

Deck from forward

Bow Roller Assembly/Anchor; Deck Construction; Topsides; Chain plates; Mast; Cleats; Stanchions, guard wires and handrails; Hatches and Windows; Cockpit and Steering; Lockers; Above the water skin fittings

Sails, spars and rigging

Sails; Spars; Standing rigging; Running rigging

Internal

Storage; Lighting; Soft furnishings; Head liners; Chart Table; Galley; Heads; Heating; Bulkheads and Tabbings; Varnish; Bilges

Machinery and Equipment

Engine; Fuel tank; Water tanks; Gas; Batteries; Instruments; Plumbing; Other items

Big ticket items

Projects