

EDUCATION STANDARDS CHECKLIST FOR APPLICATION TO MEET MINIMUM COURSE CONTENT

The Boat

Standard 1.1 - Boat Capacities

The course will describe how to determine acceptable loading based on locating and determining a boat's gross load capacity (total weight and # persons) from the boat capacity plate and horsepower recommendations. PWCs or other boats without capacity plates should reference the owners' manual and state laws.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Standard 1.2 - Boat Registration Requirements

The course will describe:

1. that all motorized boats and many other boats are required to be registered (check state requirements),
2. requirements for hull identification number,
3. the required certificate of number (registration documentation), and external display of numbers,
4. the requirements for federally documented vessels,
5. reciprocity regulations, and
6. registration requirements in the boat's state of principal use.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Boating Equipment

Standard 2.1 - Personal Flotation Device Types and Carriage

The course will explain that there are different classifications, types and sizes of U.S. Coast Guard approved personal flotation devices (PFDs), including inflatable life jackets and throwable Type IV devices, and will feature examples of their respective uses, advantages, and disadvantages based upon the activity for which they are intended. The course will also describe the number and types of PFDs/life jackets that must be carried aboard the boat according to applicable regulations, discuss and clarify label restrictions, and emphasize that the best life jacket is the one that will be worn all the time.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Standard 2.2 – Personal Flotation Device Sizing and Availability

The course will communicate that PFDs/life jackets must be readily accessible and correctly sized for the persons using them.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Standard 2.3 - Wearing Personal Flotation Devices

The course must: inform boat operators of the importance of wearing PFDs/life jackets at all times; show passengers how to correctly put on their PFDs/life jackets and tell them to wear them; emphasize the need to be aware that conditions can change quickly while boating (i.e. weather and water conditions, boat traffic, etc.); address the difficulty of putting on a PFD/life jacket in the water while under distress; and include state or federal regulations pertaining to children wearing PFDs/life jackets aboard recreational watercraft.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Standard 2.4 - Personal Flotation Device Serviceability

The course will describe the characteristics of serviceable (good) PFDs/life jackets and when to replace PFDs/life jackets due to excessive wear or damage. Special attention must be given to the maintenance of inflatable PFDs/life jackets as per manufacturer recommendations.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Standard 2.5 - Fire Extinguisher Equipment

The course will describe the legal requirements for fire extinguishers on recreational boats, the kind of fire extinguishers needed for different types of fires, the importance of placing fire extinguishers in a readily accessible location, and the need for regular inspection of fire extinguishers.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Standard 2.6 - Back-Fire Flame Control Device

The course will describe the purpose and maintenance of a back-fire flame control device (a required device on all enclosed engines with a carburetor).

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Standard 2.7 – Ventilation Systems

The course will discuss the ventilation system requirements for different types of boats.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Standard 2.8 – Navigation Light Equipment

The course will cover the navigation light requirements for recreational boats from applicable sections of Navigation Rules (Part C) as summarized in Federal Requirements and Safety Tips for Recreational Boats.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Standard 2.9 - Sound Signaling Equipment

The course will describe the types and use of sound producing devices required on recreational boats.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Standard 2.10 – Visual Distress Signal Equipment

The course will describe the types and use of visual distress signals required on recreational boats operating on coastal waters and adjoining rivers two (2) miles or more wide at the mouth and up to the first point the river narrows to less than two (2) miles as summarized in Federal Requirements and Safety Tips for Recreational Boats.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Trip Planning and Preparation

Standard 3.1 - Checking Local Weather and Water Conditions

The course will describe how to make informed boating decisions based on forecasted local weather, water conditions, boater skill level, vessel range and capability pertinent to those conditions. It will describe dangerous weather (i.e., strong wind, storms, lightning, hurricanes, fog) and water conditions (i.e., high water, sand bars, currents, large waves) and their importance in trip planning.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Standard 3.2 - Checking Local Hazards

The course will describe how to obtain information about local hazards that may impede the safe operation of a recreational boat.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Standard 3.3 - Filing a Float Plan

The course will describe the importance of notifying someone of your boating plans and the basic information that should be included.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Standard 3.4 - Boat Preventative Maintenance

The course will communicate the need for regular inspection and maintenance of the boat and its key components (e.g., through-hull fittings, motor, electrical system, fuel system).

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Standard 3.5 – Transporting and Trailering

The course will describe procedures to prevent trailering accidents and resulting injury and property damage. The course will cover safe trailering procedures including: 1) safe towing preparation, 2) road handling factors when pulling a trailer, 3) launching a boat, and 4) retrieving a boat from the water.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Standard 3.6 - Fueling Procedures

The course will provide information on proper procedures for fueling, ventilation during fueling, and protection of the marine environment during fueling.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Standard 3.7 - Pre-Departure Checklist & Passenger Communication

The course must describe the importance of using a pre-departure checklist and conducting an onboard safety discussion with passengers. Passengers should be informed about the location and use of PFDs/life jackets (and shown how to put them on), fire extinguishers, flares and first-aid kit; the discharge and management of waste procedures; anchoring procedures; emergency radio operation (if applicable); storm/rough weather procedures; line handling; emergency boat operation; and falls overboard procedure.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Marine Environment

Standard 4.1 – Environmental Laws and Regulations

The course will describe the environmental laws and regulations concerning littering (e.g., garbage and plastic), waste management plans, and display of information placards (where applicable) and aquatic nuisance species.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Standard 4.2 - Human Waste Disposal

The course will describe the proper procedure for disposal of human waste from recreational boats and how to identify no discharge zones and pumpout station locations.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Standard 4.3 – Disposal of Toxic Substances

The course will describe procedures for the prevention of spills and improper disposal of toxic substances such as fuels, oils, and cleaning products into the marine environment and the associated fines for non-compliance.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Safe Boat Operation

Standard 5.1 - Operator Responsibilities

The course will describe a boat operator's ultimate responsibility for operator proficiency, situational awareness, safety of boaters aboard and anyone coming into contact with the boat, and all activity aboard the boat. This responsibility extends to other water users and includes but is not limited to: controlling boat speed; obeying no wake/limited wake restrictions; refraining from careless, reckless, or negligent operations on the water; controlling boat noise; abiding by other general boater courtesy; and observing and operating in accordance with homeland security measures. Homeland security measures include: keeping a safe prescribed distance from military and commercial ships; avoiding commercial port operations areas; observing all security zones; and observing and reporting suspicious activities to proper authorities. The course should indicate that it is but the beginning of the boater's education and that other courses are available.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Standard 5.2 - Influence of Drugs and Alcohol on Boat Operation

The course will describe the effects of drinking alcohol or using drugs while boating, and the boating laws pertinent to operating a boat while under the influence.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Standard 5.3 - Navigation Rules

This course will describe basic safe boating operation and good seamanship for recreational boaters. It is designed to assist the recreational boater when encountering typical navigation rules of the road situations. Although you are responsible to be knowledgeable of the Navigation Rules in their entirety, this course will focus on only the following Inland Rules*:

*In those states that Inland Rules do not apply, the equivalent International, Western Rivers or Great Lakes rule(s) may be substituted by the Course Provider.

Standard 5.3.1 - Rule of responsibility – Rules 2(a) and 2(b)

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Standard 5.3.2 - Proper lookout – Rule 5

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Standard 5.3.3 - Safe speed – Rule 6(a)

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Standard 5.3.4 - Collision avoidance rules

Rules 7(a), 7(d), 7(d)(i), 7(d)(ii); Rule 8; Rules 13(a), 13(b); Rule 16; Rule 17; Rule 18
Inland Rules 14(a), 14(b), 14(c), Rule 15(a)

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Standard 5.3.5 - Restricted visibility - Rules 19(a) through (e)

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Standard 5.3.6 - Disclaimer

“The navigation rules contained in this course summarize basic navigation rules for which a boat operator is responsible on inland waterways. Additional and more in-depth rules apply regarding various types of waterways, such as International Waters and Western Rivers, and operation in relation to commercial vessels and other watercraft. It is the responsibility of a boat operator to know and follow all the navigation rules. In those states that Inland Rules do not apply, the equivalent International, Western Rivers or Great Lakes rule(s) may be substituted by the Course Provider.

“For a complete listing of the navigation rules, refer to the document “Navigation Rules” published by the U.S. Coast Guard (COMDTINST 16672.2 Series) and available through the U.S. Government printing office or on the web at <http://www.uscg.mil/vtm/navrules/navrules.pdf>. For State specific navigation requirements, refer to the state laws where you intend to boat.”

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Standard 5.4 - Aids to Navigation

The course will describe the Federal U.S. Aids to Navigation (USATONS) and the Uniform State Waterway Marking System (USWMS). The course must provide information about regulatory/informational markers (identified by orange bands on the top and bottom of each buoy) used to advise of situations, dangers, or directions indicating shoals, swim areas, speed zones, etc.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Standard 5.5 - Docking and Mooring

The course will describe common practices for docking and mooring a boat relative to boat size, type of boat, location, weather, and current.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Standard 5.6 - Anchoring

The course will describe the importance of carrying an anchor, the selection of anchors, related ground tackle, and their use for different types of boats in various boating conditions. The course must describe procedures for anchoring, use of anchors as safety devices in emergency situations, and the hazards of stern anchoring.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Standard 5.7 – Carbon Monoxide

The course will describe the dangers, symptoms, and avoidance practices associated with carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning in recreational boating.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Standard 5.8 – Propeller Intervention & Awareness

The course will describe the dangers, unsafe activities, safety equipment, and avoidance practices to mitigate or prevent propeller strikes in recreational boating.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Emergency Preparedness

Standard 6.1 - Rendering Assistance

The course will explain that, according to the Navigation Rules, boat operators are required to render assistance to a boat in distress to the extent they are able.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Standard 6.2 – Capsizing/Falls Overboard

The course will describe how to prevent and respond to these emergencies. The prevention responses will include at least the following: stay centered and low, avoid standing and sudden moves, maintain three points of contact, never overload, balance your load, and avoid rough water. The responding procedures will include at least the following: wearing PFDs/life jackets, taking a head count, staying with the craft when appropriate, signaling for assistance, using improvised floating aids, and initiation of procedures to recover people in the water.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Standard 6.3 – Cold Water Immersion and Hypothermia Prevention

The course will describe the dangers of cold water immersion and hypothermia, including prevention and the physiological impact of cold water immersion, including information on the various stages which include initial reaction (involuntary gasp reflex), short-term immersion/swimming failure, long-term immersion/immersion hypothermia, and post-rescue collapse.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Standard 6.4- Fire Emergency Preparedness

The course will describe procedures to prevent and respond to boating fires such as proper use of fire extinguishers and basic knowledge of fire suppression principles.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Standard 6.5 - Running Aground Prevention and Response

The course will describe how to prevent and respond to running aground for recreational boats.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Other Water Activities

Standard 7.1 – Personal Watercraft and other Jet Propelled Watercraft

The course will inform all boat operators about safe boating practices, operational characteristics and special accident risks unique to personal watercraft (PWC) such as: PWC handling characteristics/stability; off throttle steering; stopping (including braking and reverse systems); re-boarding a PWC; and the use of a lanyard cut-off switch.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Standard 7.2 - Water Skiing, Towed Devices and Wake Sports

The course will describe procedures to follow when pulling water skiers, towing anyone behind a vessel, or allowing anyone to participate in an activity using the wake of the vessel (wake boards, tubes, etc.).

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Standard 7.3 - Diving and Snorkeling

The course will describe how to recognize a diver down flag and the legal requirements for operating a boat in the vicinity of snorkeling or scuba diving activities.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Standard 7.4 - Hunting & Fishing

The course will inform people who fish and hunt from boats that they are boaters and need to follow safe boating practices. Information must be provided about accident risks unique to this group of recreational boaters.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Standard 7.5 – Paddlesports and Small Boats

The course will describe that all boat operators, including paddlers and small boat operators, should be aware of their interactions around paddle boats, including the effect of motor boat wakes on paddle boats, other smaller boats and swimmers.

Additionally, the course should provide information about the unique considerations for paddle sport boats and safety procedures including: being prepared to enter the water, knowing how to swim and how to effect self rescues in rivers/currents and other moving water conditions (strainers, low head dams, unusual high water conditions); how to load the boat properly and move around in the boat (e.g. keep the weight centered both from side to side and bow to stern).

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

State Specific Requirements and Continuing Education

Standard 8.1 - Continuing Education

The course will outline the need for additional boating safety education and staying informed of changes in boating safety requirements.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Standard 8.2 - State Specific Boating Information

The course will contain (as part of the text or a separate handout) state specific information in regard to boating laws/regulations and local boating conditions. The course will include the following topics as applicable:

8.2.1 - registration and titling requirements such as number of years registration decals are valid, expiration date of registration, decal placement.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

State reviewer: Y or N

8.2.2 - laws for required wearing of PFDs/life jackets for children, certain types of boats, and for special boating activities such as personal watercraft, skiers and others being towed.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

State reviewer: Y or N

8.2.3 - additional equipment requirements such as anchor, lanyard, bailing devices, visual distress signals.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

State reviewer: Y or N

8.2.4 - mufflers and noise levels.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

State reviewer: Y or N

8.2.5 - requirements for waste discharge, no discharge zones, and litter laws.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

State reviewer: Y or N

8.2.6 - special requirements for mandatory education, licensing, rental operation, and proficiency test certifications.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

State reviewer: Y or N

8.2.7 - age/horsepower restrictions and adult supervision requirements for children.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

State reviewer: Y or N

8.2.8 - laws further defining careless, reckless, unsafe, and negligent operations such as becoming airborne and operating less than specified distances behind a water skier.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

State reviewer: Y or N

8.2.9 - boat speed limits and operation in zoned and restricted areas.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

State reviewer: Y or N

8.2.10 - laws on operating under the influence of drugs and alcohol such as implied consent and BAC levels.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

State reviewer: Y or N

8.2.11 - law enforcement officer authority and boater responsibility to comply.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

State reviewer: Y or N

8.2.12 - boat accident reporting requirements including how, when, and where to file the report. Accident reports are legally required when the accident involves: 1) disappearance or loss of life; or 2) personal injury requiring medical treatment beyond first aid; or 3) property damage in excess of current state or federal thresholds; or 4) complete loss of the boat

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

State reviewer: Y or N

8.2.13 - a state approved boating accident report form or U.S. Coast Guard form.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

State reviewer: Y or N

8.2.14 - other laws or regulations as required by the state approving authority.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

State reviewer: Y or N

Course Format and Testing Requirements

Standard 9.1 – Boat Operator Knowledge Course Formats

The course submitted for NASBLA review may be in any format that meets the standards as long as it can be reviewed easily by NASBLA. These may include but are not limited to classroom instruction, distance learning, or self-study programs.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Standard 9.2 – Boat Operator Knowledge Exams

In order to receive NASBLA approval, all exams, whether administered as part of a course of study or as independent exams, must be submitted for review.

9.2.1 – The exam must be well designed and comprehensive in covering NASBLA’s standards for boat operator knowledge. Well designed comprehensive exams assess boat operator knowledge equally well as an independent exam or as an exam at the end of a course.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

9.2.2 – Each exam submitted for review must be accompanied with a plan that explains how the test administrator will seek to maintain exam integrity. The plan must address security issues commensurate with the purpose of the test and perceived opportunity to commit exam fraud.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

9.2.3 – The final step in the NASBLA accreditation program is the standards for writing a well-designed and comprehensive examination. The NASBLA testing standards for item writers are as follows:

TESTING STANDARD 1

Each examination should be compiled using professional testing procedures. (see Appendix D)

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

TESTING STANDARD 2

Each test item must be documented in at least one reference from the NASBLA Recognized Reference. References may be submitted for approval to the Education Committee. (see Appendices E and G)

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

TESTING STANDARD 3

The examination must consist of at least 50 questions based on Standards 1-7 (or as described in Testing Standard 4) in accordance with the examination plan. (see Appendix F)

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

TESTING STANDARD 4

The state specific portion of the examination must contain A MINIMUM OF 10 state specific examination questions written to the NASBLA item writing standards covering NASBLA standard 8.2. It is recommended that the state-specific questions be in addition to the 50 questions covering Standards 1 through 7. (see Appendix G)

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

RECOMMENDED STANDARD 5

Developing a passing score for each examination should not be arbitrarily determined. Using court approved testing techniques (e.g., Angoff method, Ebel method) for establishing a passing score is recommended, but not required.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

Recommended Boating Safety Information

The following items contain recommended course content but are not considered part of the minimum standards for boater education courses.

R1 – Boat Types and Uses

The course should describe the common types of recreational boats, common hull designs, and their performance in various types of boating situations.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

R2 - Boating Terms

The course should describe commonly used boating terms in addition to those terms required to follow the Navigation Rules. (see also standard 5.3.1).

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

R3 - Boat Theft Prevention

The course should contain information that addresses actions the boat owner can take to deter or prevent boat theft.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N

R4 - Communication Procedures

The course should describe the protocol and use of VHF marine radios and other equipment for contacting the U.S. Coast Guard or other rescue personnel in the event of a boating emergency.

Where standard is addressed:

Reviewer comments:

Meets standard?

NASBLA reviewer: Y or N