

Common Small Boat Problems and Suggest Solutions

Engine slows, seems under-powered, or quits:

Is the gas can vented?

Do you have gas?

Overheated (check cooling water flow, clear obstructions from water intake)

Propeller damaged (check the prop and if damaged contact marine maintenance).

Try switching to another gas can in case fuel is bad (rare).

Engine will not start:

Battery switch on? (Auklet and Coot only)

Flooded (do you smell or see gas on the water?)

Give the engine several minutes to clear gas

Try disconnecting the gas line and cranking the starter

Not enough gas (no smell of fuel)

Pump rubber squeeze ball to insure that it is firm.

Kill switch lanyard accidentally removed from the throttle housing?

Insure silver toggle switch is pushed up into the cowling.

Alarms going off:

Either overheating (see above) or low oil pressure (check reservoir and fill if necessary). If you are certain that oil is full and cooling water is strong, proceed slowly back the dock and bring key to the office. Otherwise, DO NOT OPERATE the motor.

Call for help, or wave down a passing boat for a tow.)

Dead Battery:

Switch to second battery (Auklet and Coot)

Try push starting on a downhill slope

Important Safety Considerations

Make sure all safety equipment is onboard (life jackets, flares, first aid kit, lights if out after sunset). Wear the life jacket if you are operating alone or in the small aluminum boat (Gregor).

Have you been checked out for the boat you are using? (If not, contact Pema Kitaeff, David Duggins or Craig Staude.)

Is there an anchor onboard? If your engine quits and you are close to shore, deploy your anchor. All anchors should have floats attached to the end of the anchor line. If you can not retrieve your anchor, just throw the line and float overboard and we will retrieve later. Always anchor by the bow (front) of the boat.

Give way to all other boats in close passing situations. Do not assume others know, or care about, the Rules of the Road.

GO SLOW. Give the boat enough throttle to keep it “on plane” but no more. This will save gas and be a safer, more comfortable ride.

Look ahead. Avoid patches of kelp, debris, and logs. When encountering a large boat wake, warn passengers, slow down, and approach near perpendicular to the wave front.

Look astern. Occasionally look behind to check for a strong flow of cooling water from outboard motor (If cooling water is lost, STOP motor immediately). Check whether a ferry or fast boat is overtaking you. (As the overtaken boat, you should maintain course and speed but prepare to be tossed by the wake.)

Carry a cell phone and emergency phone numbers