

TOP TIPS

FOR BOATING WITH A

Baby or Toddler



1 SAFETY FIRST, ALWAYS:
Prioritize safety above all else. Ensure that your boat is equipped with life jackets suitable for infants and toddlers. The U.S. Coast Guard recommends that an infant should weigh at least 18lbs for their lifejacket to fit properly. You may notice that their lifejackets have an additional head cushion designed to provide extra protection and keep the baby's head above water. Additionally, regularly inspect the boat for any hazards and childproof as much as possible.



2 CHOOSE THE RIGHT TIME:
Pick the timing of your boating excursion wisely. Opt for calm weather and smooth waters to minimize motion sickness and discomfort for your little ones. Early mornings or late afternoons when the sun isn't too harsh are ideal times for boating with babies or toddlers.



6 STAY HYDRATED:
Keep your little one hydrated, especially on hot days when the risk of dehydration is high. Pack plenty of water and healthy snacks to replenish their energy levels. Avoid sugary drinks or snacks that can lead to sugar crashes and crankiness.



7 BABY SEATING:
Remember, the safest seat for your little one is in your arms. Boats don't have car seats, so do not bring your car seat on board. Also, make sure to keep your little one in their lifejacket at all times. When you arrive at your destination, you can put them in a pack and play or a similar area for them to enjoy.



3 PACK ESSENTIALS:
Prepare a checklist of essentials to ensure a comfortable outing for your child. Pack plenty of diapers, wipes, extra clothing, hats, sunscreen, and snacks. Don't forget to bring along their favorite toys or books to keep them entertained during the journey. Additionally, don't be afraid to invite some extra help along in the form of grandparents or friends; they will jump at the opportunity to create memories with your little one.



8 PLAN FOR EMERGENCIES:
Hope for the best but prepare for the worst by having an emergency plan in place. Familiarize yourself with basic first aid procedures and keep a well-stocked first aid kit onboard. Ensure that you have a reliable means of communication in case of emergencies, such as a marine radio or a cell phone with a waterproof case.



4 CREATE A SAFE SPACE:
Designate a secure area on the boat where your baby or toddler can play and relax safely. Use portable playpens or create barriers with cushions to prevent them from wandering into hazardous areas. Provide ample shade to shield them from the sun's rays and always keep a close eye on them.



9 MAKE SURE YOUR BABY IS A PART OF THE EXPERIENCE:
Make boating an interactive and educational experience for the little ones. Point out interesting sights along the way, such as wildlife or landmarks, and involve them in simple tasks like helping to steer the boat (under close supervision, of course). Encourage their curiosity and appreciation for nature.



5 ESTABLISH ROUTINE:
Maintain a consistent routine to help your child feel secure and at ease on the boat. Stick to their regular feeding and nap times as much as possible. Familiarity breeds comfort, so try to replicate their home environment onboard with familiar blankets or stuffed animals.



10 KNOW WHEN TO CALL IT QUITS:
Lastly, trust your instincts and know when it's time to call it quits. If your child is becoming increasingly fussy or uncomfortable, don't hesitate to cut the trip short and head back to shore. Prioritizing their well-being and safety over pushing through a challenging situation is crucial.



Your boating days may look a little different now, but that doesn't mean we can't still enjoy our time on the water. Boating with babies or toddlers can be an amazing experience with the right preparation and mindset. By prioritizing safety, comfort, and their entertainment, you can create lasting memories on the water for your little ones.

≡ *With these 10 tips in mind, boat with confidence and enjoy the adventure ahead!* ≡