

FREE REPORT – Reaching Your Boating Goals



Thank you for downloading *Reaching Your Boating Goals*. While there are many reasons to own a boat, every boat owner has a list of what they love most about boating. This report is designed to help you capture more of what's important to you by exploring alternatives to help you to meet your boating goals. All of us want to spend more time enjoying what we love most, with the least possible amount of hassle.

If you want some help sorting out what is important to you in boating, here's a link to a good [article](#) that can help you to identify the questions you should be asking.

As we said, there are many reasons to spend time on the water, but most of the people we speak with tell us that the main reasons they love boating is because they are looking for:

Family Time. Boating helps couples and families grow closer together. Whether you are quietly enjoying the sunset or creating a family "adventure", being on the water together can strengthen family and romantic connections.

Enjoyment. Let's face it, it's fun to be on the water, feeling that hook set, landing the big one, or even bragging about the one that got away. Time spent cruising, exploring new areas and sightseeing creates a fresh-air enjoyment for everyone.

Relaxation. Being on the water is a great way to steal a few hours away, unplug if you want to and just relax. Whether alone or with a good group of friends, the water, the waves and the fresh air are amazing de-stressers.

Happy Memories. Time spent doing what we love with people we love is time well spent. The shared stories create mental scrapbooks that are never forgotten. And, the truth is, the older we get, the more we treasure these experiences!



The other side of the coin?

There is no substitute for being on the water in a boat you enjoy. It is relatively easy to dream of all the amazing positives associated with boating. But the questions we must face are; How does the reality of boat ownership compare with the dream of being on the water? Is there another side to the boating coin?

I think you know the answer. Two of the most widely-used sayings about boats are that they are **"holes in the water, into which you throw money"** and **"the two happiest days of a boat owner's life is the day they buy their boat; and the day they sell it."** Of course, these do not apply to everyone, but there is a reason they are universally known. They highlight an often-underappreciated reality for boat owners.

The decision to buy a boat is often an emotional one. The amount of work it takes to maintain a boat is often under appreciated at the time of sale. In addition, repair costs,

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particularly in Florida, aren't on peoples' minds when they sign on the dotted line. (In 10 years, most marine engines will have to be rebuilt as corrosion takes its toll.)

On top of that, most HOA's won't allow you to park a trailered boat in your driveway. That means you may have to pay a storage fee. Around here, that fee averages \$10-12/ft per month. which adds up. Don't forget there is insurance, registration, training, safety equipment, navigation aids and... you get the point.

Maybe you're thinking "Wait a minute, I thought this report was to help me get the most out of boating, this is sounding pretty negative right about now." We know, but we want you to take a realistic approach to your boating goals. After all, the magic happens on the water, not in the driveway! We think it is smart to explore alternatives to the traditional approach to boat ownership.

There are alternatives to what we often call **B.O.A.T.** Captivity (**B**reak **O**ut **A**nother **T**housand). In the next section, we'll consider one of the most popular...

FEATURED ALTERNATIVE: Join a Boat Club and get more of what you love and none of what you hate!

What's a Boat Club? If you are not familiar with Boat Clubs, perhaps a simple way to think about them is that they like Time Sharing for boaters with unlimited access to an entire fleet of boats.

Boat Clubs are growing in popularity. The oldest and largest of these is the [Freedom Boat Club](#) (FBC). They offer members access to boats at 143+ locations around the country and in Canada. Boat Clubs give boaters a simple and more affordable option than boat ownership (new and used). Here are 5 reasons why a boat club might be a better choice for you:

1. **More Affordable.** On average, you will save 75% on buying a new boat and 50% on a good used boat by joining a boat club. Moreover, if you buy your own boat, in 10 years, your new/used boat will be 10 years older. In a Boat Club you'll still be riding in

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a boat that is, at most, 2.5 years old (FBC). Here is a [link](#) to a cost analysis tool where you can calculate your own savings.

2. **Hassle-free.** Boat Club members enjoy a hassle-free boating experience. The Club takes care of buying the boats, insurance, registration, cleaning, maintenance, repairs and storage. When you are done with boating, you pay for gas and walk away to enjoy the rest of your day.
3. **Boat & Location Variety.** Rather than being limited to one boat in one location, boat club members choose between a variety of boats and locations. The Freedom Boat Club of Tampa Bay, for example, offers members over 220 boats (6 different kinds) at 16 different locations ([map](#)). Such variety multiplies your opportunities for adventure and enjoyment.
4. **Training.** Some boat clubs offer training as a part of their membership plan. Whether you are an experienced boater, or a newbie, boat clubs accept you where you are and put you on the path to becoming a safe and experienced navigator.
5. **Online Reservation System.** Most boat clubs offer an easy online reservation system where members can see what boats are available at what locations. Making a reservation only requires a few clicks and you'll find your boat ready for you when you arrive.

In a nutshell, Boat Clubs provide a lower cost way to get more of what you love about boating, and none of the parts you hate!

In the next section, we offer a tool to help you investigate boat clubs. Be an informed shopper and make a smart investment to reach your boating goals.

Be a Smart Shopper...

Boat Clubs come in a variety of shapes and sizes. Some offer training as a part of their package; others do not. Some keep strict member-to-boat ratios to assure availability while others do not. Some keep their fleet updated with new (or nearly new) boats while others do not. Some will show you the ease of their reservation system while others require you wait until you are a member. All require an initial entry fee and monthly membership dues. They often offer different plans to help you save. Some entry fees are

lower than others and some charge extra for training and cleaning. So, make sure to do your homework and get real value for your investment!

[Download](#) our “**Questions to Ask a Boat Club**” Survey tool to help you be a smart shopper.

In summary, as with any big-ticket item, be clear on your goals. Take time to investigate alternatives and be a smart shopper. The boating lifestyle is appealing to many but please avoid the ranks of the high and dry – those boat owners with a boat in storage that gets little use and is racking up ongoing expenses. Avoid **B.O.A.T. Captivity** and make smart decisions. For many, boat clubs have provided an excellent alternative that continues to pay significant dividends.

Finally, if you are in the Tampa Bay area, and would like more information about the Freedom Boat Club of Tampa Bay, either click [here](#) or call 1-855-FREEDOM.