
5 Ways to Get Your Boat's VHF Radio Ready for the Season

1 message

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Tue, Mar 23, 2021 at 9:43 AM

NEWS From BoatUS



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Read this press release online at: <https://bit.ly/3f2jMZM>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Photo Available at: <https://www.boat.us/news-room/Images/Releases/Found VHF Radio Tips for springtime photo 3 23 21.jpg>



Photo Caption: While it may take a little time and some help from your owner's manual, ensure your DSC-VHF radio is connected to your GPS.

5 Ways to Get Your Boat's VHF Radio Ready for the Season

ANNAPOLIS, Md., March 23, 2021 – In recreational boating, cellphones are just fine for routine communications. So why do you need a VHF radio – either a handheld or fixed mount – on your boat? Because in an emergency it's the only thing that can directly connect you to the U.S. Coast Guard's Rescue 21 system, giving you access to high-tech emergency response and Digital Selective Calling (DSC) capabilities that can hasten your rescue.

All you have to do now is to ensure VHF radio ready to go for the season. Here are five tips from the BoatUS Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water to get you and your radio ready.

1. Check the antennae, power and ground to the VHF radio, and batteries/charger if a handheld. Rusty or ill-fitting connections rob your radio of range. Hand held VHF batteries need to be fully charged.
2. Read your radio's manual so you know features like squelch, scan, and hi/lo power settings. [Familiarize yourself with the most important VHF radio channels.](#)
3. For those with non-DSC VHF radios, [automated VHF radio check systems are no longer available.](#) However, you can make a short radio check voice call on VHF channel 9. Using channel 9 will not tie up the distress channel 16 and potentially delay emergency communications by another boat to the U.S. Coast Guard.
4. For those with DSC VHF radios, enter the U.S. Coast Guard coast station group identity "003669999" into the radio's DSC memory. Once stored, 1. select "Test Call" from the radio's DSC menu; 2. select the U.S. Coast Guard number you just entered; and 3. transmit the call. Your DSC VHF radio's display should indicate when that test call is acknowledged and display the acknowledging station's nine-digit identity. Note that the identity may be different than the group identity you previously entered.

5. Get your DSC-VHF radio's Maritime Mobile Service Identity (MMSI) number by going to [BoatUS.com/MMSI](https://www.boat-us.com/mmsi). MMSI numbers are free for BoatUS members or \$25 for nonmembers. Don't forget to enter the new MMSI number into your DSC VHF radio and ensure GPS connection is made (if DSC-VHF radio doesn't have internally).

More information on VHF radios can be found [here](#).

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Suggested social media post:

Follow these 5 tips from @BoatUSFoundation to help get your boat's VHF radio ready for the season
<https://bit.ly/3f2jMzM>

About the BoatUS Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water:

The BoatUS Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water is a national leader promoting safe, clean and responsible boating. Funded primarily by donations from the more than 700,000 members of Boat Owners Association of The United States (BoatUS), the nonprofit provides innovative educational outreach directly to boaters and anglers with the aim of reducing accidents and fatalities, increasing stewardship of America's waterways and keeping boating safe for all. A range of boating safety courses – including 36 free state courses – can be found at [BoatUS.org/Courses](https://www.boat-us.org/courses).

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