



Roads &
Maritime

How to get a boat driving licence



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A general boat driving licence is required to operate a power-driven recreational vessel at 10 knots (approximately 18.5 km/h) or more on NSW waters. A personal watercraft (PWC) licence is required to operate a PWC at any speed in NSW. A personal watercraft (PWC) is a vessel with a fully enclosed hull that may be driven standing up, lying down, sitting astride or kneeling, and includes jet powered surfboards.

Eligibility

You must be 12 years of age or older to obtain a general boat driving licence to operate a power-driven recreational vessel at 10 knots or more. Restrictions apply if you are under 16 years of age. Visit rms.nsw.gov.au/maritime or the NSW Boating Handbook for more information.

Types of boat driving licence

There are two types of boat driving licence:

- General boat driving licence
- PWC licence.

Obtaining a general boat driving licence

To obtain a general boat driving licence, applicants must:

- Provide evidence of having completed the necessary practical boating experience
- Pass the general boat licence knowledge test.

How to comply with practical boating experience requirements

The following options are available as methods to satisfy the practical boating experience requirements:

Option 1

You can gain practical boating experience by completing a Boating Licence Practical Logbook. The logbook is available free of charge from any registry, service centre or Government Access Centre (GAC) or online from **rms.nsw.gov.au/maritime**.

Licence applicants must complete, in the company of an experienced skipper, a minimum of three trips in a powered vessel (excluding PWC) operating under power. Only trips taken within the 12 months before the issue of a boat driving licence will be recognised. The trips are to be recorded in the logbook. Registered Training Providers have experienced skippers.

To be issued a boat licence under Option 1, take the completed logbook and acceptable Proof of Identity (POI) to a registry, service centre or GAC. You will need to complete a boat licence application form which will include questions about your medical fitness to drive a vessel. You will need to pass a boat licence knowledge test. A boat licence can be issued once you complete these requirements. Fees apply for each knowledge test and there is a fee for the licence.

Applicants under 16 years of age must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian who must provide acceptable POI.

Option 2

You can satisfy the practical experience requirements by completing boating training with a Recognised Training Provider (RTP). RTPs are engaged by Roads and Maritime to conduct training and testing on its behalf. Please note RTPs can charge a fee for delivering boating training.

After completing the training, you can complete a boat licence application form. The RTP will certify on the form that you have completed boat training, the knowledge test and provided acceptable POI. You then need to take the completed form to a registry, service centre or GAC. The boat licence can be issued on payment of the licence fee.

The RTP's boating courses include both theory and on-water components. If the RTP does not conduct the on-water training component, it will indicate this on your application form. In this case, you will need to complete a logbook with an experienced skipper, and then take the completed form and logbook to a registry, service centre or GAC.

The boat licence knowledge test requirements

The general boat driving knowledge test comprises 50 multiple choice questions. The first 20 questions must all be answered correctly. Of the remaining 30 questions, at least 24 questions must be answered correctly.

Obtaining a PWC driving licence

To obtain a PWC driving licence, applicants must first obtain a general boat driving licence and then pass the PWC licence knowledge test. A fee applies for each test attempt. There is no practical boating experience element for a PWC driving licence required by Roads and Maritime. The test can be taken at a Registry, Service Centre or GAC.

The test can also be taken as part of a 'PWC Licence Upgrade Course' carried out by an RTP. The RTP should be contacted to enquire about bookings and fees.

The PWC licence knowledge test

The PWC driving knowledge test contains 15 questions of which a minimum of 12 questions must be answered correctly.

Interstate boat licences

The holder of an interstate boat licence may transfer their licence to a NSW boat driving licence on presentation of:

- The original or certified copy of the interstate licence, or
- A letter from the issuing jurisdiction, and
- Acceptable POI.

For more information, call **13 77 88** or visit **rms.nsw.gov.au/maritime**.

Licence period

A general boat driving licence or PWC driving licence is available for one, three, five or 10 years.

More information

The NSW Boating Handbook provides essential boating information for operating a vessel for recreational purposes on NSW waters. It is recommended that licence applicants study the handbook before completing the practical boating experience and boat driving knowledge test requirements.

For more information, including current fees, RTPs or POI requirements, contact Roads and Maritime on **13 77 88** or visit **rms.nsw.gov.au/maritime**.

The list of RTPs is provided for applicant convenience only. RTPs operate independently from Roads and Maritime.



Roads and Maritime Services

The information in this document is intended as a guide only and is subject to change at any time without notice. It does not replace the law.

For more information:



rms.nsw.gov.au/maritime



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