



Protecting Your Boat in a Hurricane

Make preparations for your boat early!

■ Adapted by UF/IFAS from: **Personal Hurricane Survival Guide** (Martin County Public Safety and Chris Procise, Martin County Cooperative Extension Service)

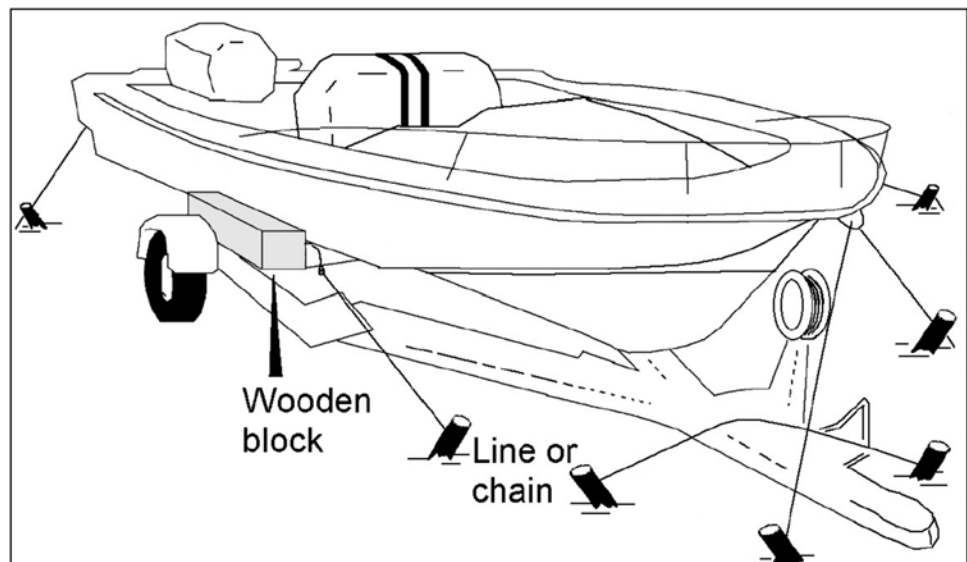
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Tying Down Your Boat at Home

- If you can, put the boat in a garage.
- If you must leave the boat outside, remove outboard motors.
- Lash down the boat.
- Fill the boat one-third to half-way with water (filling all the way could break the trailer springs or axle.).
- Support the axle with blocks inside each wheel. Remove any item that could blow off the boat.
- Place the boat away from trees or objects that could fall on it.

Tying Down Your Boat at a Marina or Dock

- Double all ties. All lines used for the storm should be at least one size larger than the normal lines.
- Make ties high on pilings to allow for rising water.
- Cover all tie lines at contact points with rubber or other material to prevent chafing.
- Install fenders to protect the boat from rubbing against the dock.
- Be sure batteries are sufficient to run bilge pumps throughout the storm.
- Put duct tape on windows and hatches.
- Insert plugs in engine ports.
- Strip Bimini tops, sails, life rings—anything that could blow away.
- Disconnect shore power.
- Close fuel valves and cockpit seacocks.

Finding Safe Harbor

- If the boat cannot be removed from the water, it should be sailed to a safe refuge and secured there to ride out the storm.
- Many marinas must be evacuated during a hurricane alert. Check your dockage lease and consult the dockmaster.
- Canals leading inland offer varying degrees of protection for boats. Some east-west waterways are blocked at some point by floodgates, limiting their usefulness.
- Consult the dockmaster and fellow boaters for suggestions.
- Drawbridges limit movement of large vessels, and ground traffic will get priority in an evacuation. Boat owners should act ahead of an evacuation order.
- If you decide to move your boat inland make a test run to ensure that the water is deep enough and overhead clearances are high enough.