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## Some Really Dumb Things I've Done or Seen While Boating

From [Jim Shepard](#),  
Your Guide to [Powerboating](#).  
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### Stupid Boat Tricks

Well, the [B.O.B.](#) (Big Old Boat) is in the water, sitting at her slip and looking really good, even if I do say so myself. In the process of getting the old girl recommissioned, I pulled a couple of bonehead moves that made the job more difficult that it needed to be.

This got me thinking about my many years of boating and all of the foul-ups that I have either been involved in or have observed during that time.

I firmly believe that you start out your boating life with a bag full of luck. As you start emptying the bag of luck, you start filling a bag of experience. When your bag of luck is almost empty, hopefully, you should have a large bag of experience to replace it.

When my first mate and I were young and poor, we used to hang out at the local launch ramp on a Saturday morning, because we knew that something spectacular and amusing was bound to happen.

We have watched boats with trailers still attached float down the river. We have seen a car, with a boat on a trailer, all go under water, etc., etc., etc.

One of the most fascinating things about boating is that you never totally master the art. I don't care how long you've been boating, you are still going to take your turn at being the "marina idiot." Think about it! If your driveway was moving in a different direction every time you drove into your garage, I'll bet you'd have fenders hanging from your car!

With all that said, here are some "stupid boat tricks" that I have either *watched* or *participated in* over the years. See if you can figure out the incidents in which I was involved.

- A boater, bringing his express cruiser into a slip with way too much headway, collides with the seawall and slices into an electrical conduit. There is a loud "ZAP" followed by a puff of black smoke. The Skipper grabs his two young grandchildren and jumps overboard! Now, the **last** place you want to be when there is an electrical problem involved is in the water. Fortunately the man and his grandchildren survived the incident.
- A brand new, million dollar-plus sailing yacht has 40 gallons of diesel fuel pumped into its built-in, fresh-water tank by a dock hand. Why? He was too busy looking at a very attractive young lady in a bikini.
- A young father puts his wife and children aboard their cruiser for a day on the water. He casts off all the dock lines, but forgets to cast off the shore cord. As he backs out of the slip, the cord pulls neatly out of the shore receptacle and falls into the water. The Skipper, now noticing this, throws it into forward and wraps 15 ft. of shore cord around his starboard prop. Fortunately the Skipper, who owns the marina, limps over to the hoist, hauls the boat and removes the cord before any one else could find out.
- In another case, a Skipper returning to port, thinks that navigation buoys are for sissies and pays no attention to them. As a result, he runs his boat aground with a red marker buoy not 50 ft. away from his port side. (**Remember: Red, Right, Returning!**) He then puts the boat into reverse, applies maximum power and backs off the rocks, only to discover that he has put a large hole in the bottom of the boat and subsequently sinks in less than four minutes.
- In the process of anchoring, the first mate on this boat deployed the anchor chain and line. So far, so good, *EXCEPT* that the bitter end of the anchor line was not secured to anything. She then reported to the captain that the anchor and line had been deployed in 20 ft. of water, but it was not attached to anything on the boat. Not hard to figure that their day just went down the drain!

Well, that's just a small sampling of "stupid boat tricks" I've accumulated over the years. If you have a good "Stupid Boat Trick" that you would like to share, [email it to me](#) and I'll try to use it in another article.

Happy Boating and be careful out there!

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