

GHYC Cruising Customs & Guidelines

Cruise Preparation

- You are your own captain and you are responsible for your boat. You may need to get to the destination on your own. Review cruise plans, charts, routes, and waypoints prior to leaving the dock. Do not blindly follow other vessels.
- Prior to or during the cruise, advise the cruise leader if you plan to deviate from the cruise schedule.

Radio Usage

- On VHF radio, dual monitor channels 16 and 71. Normally, channel 71 is the working channel for our cruises unless otherwise indicated by the cruise leader.
- FCC bans excessive chitchat on all channels, and none is permitted on channel 16. Channel 16 is used only for initial contact with other vessels or shore stations and safety and distress messages. The Coast Guard monitors it. Note: channel 09 is an alternative initial calling channel to channel 16 used in some areas.
- Contact bridges on channel 9. Lock tenders normally monitor 16 and 13.
- Use low power wherever workable. High power is to be avoided except when antennae are down (e.g., for the ICW) or you are in open water.
- Keep your VHF radio on until all vessels have arrived in port.

Open Seas

- Rules of the road apply to all vessels at all times.
- When overtaking any vessel, use all possible courtesy measures to avoid large and potentially damaging wakes. The overtaken vessel must always be hailed on channel 16 (or 71), and arrangements agreed to as to timing and side of passage. You are legally responsible for any damage caused by your wake.
- Always keep a safe distance between you and other vessels in your immediate vicinity.
- An able vessel should accompany a disabled vessel unless excused by the disabled vessel.
- The lead vessel should contact bridge and lock tenders and should advise the other vessels in the group to switch to the hailing channel so that duplicate calls are not necessary.

Marina Docking

- The lead vessel should request slip instructions for all vessels in the group and advise the group as to the working channel that the marina is using
- Never closely follow another vessel into the marina channel or harbor. Allow sufficient room for the other vessel(s) to maneuver.
- If you require fuel, fuel up upon arrival so as to not delay departure the following day. When entering a marina have dock lines ready and secured to your vessel prior to docking.
- After docking and securing your vessel, and prior to connecting shore services, assist other vessels in securing dock lines.
- The cruise leader will tip the dock master for all boats upon arrival in the port of call.

Social

- Ascertain dress requirements prior to the cruise.
- Wear nametags to all cruise functions, unless specifically excused by the cruise leader.
- Be on time to all scheduled cruise events.
- Cruise members are expected to participate in all sanctioned cruise activities. Pitch-in and promote good fellowship at all times.