



Type II pfd's like the one Jason is holding are fine for the lakes and bays; however, when he goes offshore he uses a Type I vest like the one he is wearing.

invaluable since it may correct long time boating practices that are actually incorrect or even dangerous short cuts.

To assist new as well as experienced boaters become more proficient with their skills, there are a number of instructional boating videos and dvds available from Bennett Marine. This is the same company that distributes many instructional videos/dvds for most of the popular GPS units on the market.

Bennett's comprehensive "Back To The Basics" series includes "Boating Basics for New Boat Owners & Experienced Skippers," with a companion program "Improve Your Boating Skills & Knowledge."

Subjects covered on "Boating Basics" include navigation aids, getting underway, docking, regular maintenance, basic navigation and much more. "Improve Your Boating Skills" includes boat handling with single and twin outboards, additional trailering tips, launching & loading, docking as well as sections on communication and electronics.

One additional video from this excellent lineup is "100 Boating Mistakes & How To Avoid Them!" It's one of those videos that will help bypass some of the lessons learned from "the school of hard knocks." More navigation, safety, and handling tips are included along with helpful hints on anchoring, and cruising.

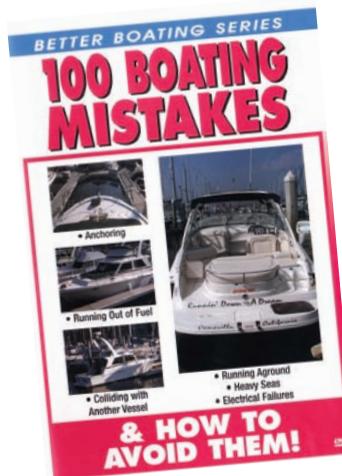
The true benefit of this dvd might seem at first glance almost laughable, but the information is very practical. These include an explanation of how not to run aground, get lost at sea, lost in the fog or caught in bad weather. Other good subject matter for even experienced boaters includes dealing with heavy seas, losing someone overboard, fires onboard, and electrical failures.

Other great places to look for boating tips as well as much needed equipment is at your local boating marine store. Just about every boater knows you should carry a tool kit, and maybe some spare spark plugs. However some things are overlooked until you need them like spare fuses, a fuel filter or propeller wrench, a good first aid kit among other items.

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One useful item every boat should have on board is a three or five gallon plastic bucket. It can be used as a cleaning aid, or if necessary to bail water. With a snap-on, compact potty seat and liner it can even double for those other necessary times...a big hit with the ladies on board.

Everyone that boats should know there must be a Personal Floatation Device on board for each person, and that it must be the right size, so don't forget some sized for the kids.



However, the Type II PFDs most used on area lakes or coastal bays are not what you want should you venture offshore. Standard nearshore PFDs can become saturated after just a few hours in the water. When you go offshore, be sure to have enough Type I life vests for everyone on board.

Boating is a great sport, however you need to be prepared for anything because many times it is only your ability from which to call upon.

For information on the Boat Texas safety course call (800) 792-1112 or log on www.tpwd.state.tx.us.

For information on the lineup of instructional boating and fishing videos from Bennett Marine log on www.bennettmarine.com or to order or request a catalog call (800) 733-8862. 

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