

The boaty 12 days of Christmas

Day one – RCR membership. 24/7 breakdown and emergency cover starts at £55 a year - a small price to pay for peace of mind when cruising.

Day two – a place on a RCR boat and engine weekend maintenance course. Ideal for those keen to know more about the specification and maintenance of marine diesel engines and boat systems.

Day three – a place on a RYA course. Royal Yachting Association-approved courses run across the UK at all levels for helmsman and crew covering personal safety, on-board communication, boat handling basics, throwing a mooring line, locks and tunnels, lock operations, collision avoidance, how to be a look-out, what to do in an emergency, looking after the environment and introductory engine maintenance.

Day four - waterways maps and apps. Containing everything you need for route planning, including sat nav, when boating in GB. It details over a thousand points of interest and 100+ service providers, from doctors, dentists and vets to pump-outs, diesel, gas and shops – and everything in-between (internet connection isn't necessary for use).

Day five – an automatic bilge pump. Far more reliable than a manual, it immediately responds to water ingress with the float switch dictating when it should pump. Should a leak develop from the cooling system, hull or other source (or there's a build up of rain water), this will keep your vessel safe.

Day six – a water detek alarm. Internal water leaks, caused by loose or sheered domestic water pipes, a hull breach, or failed shower pump, can be devastating. And water in the engine compartment, due to a loose weed hatch, leaking stern gland or ineffective bilge pump, can result in potential sinking or engine damage. This compact alarm has a two metre sensor at its tip and is fitted with a watch battery, lasting for a year and sounding for many hours.

Day seven – carbon monoxide detector. Known as the silent killer, it's vital you're able to detect these noxious and often fatal, gases.

Day eight - a fuel locking cap. Prevent the theft of fuel from your boat with this ingenious device.

Day nine – an engine service kit. Contains oil and fuel filters, the correct oil, fuel treatment and essential mop-up mats. Additional items can be added at extra cost.

Day ten – mini-tool kit. Ideal for minor emergencies and easy to store/access.

Day eleven – a lock windlass. This L-shaped tool makes the job of winding the canal lock paddle mechanism up and down so much easier. Even if you already have one, a back-up is always useful.

Day twelve – a year's subscription to a waterways magazine or newspaper. Who doesn't like a good inspirational read?

Now, the real challenge is to sing it all to the same tune as the original!