

Launching a boat in a river

If you have never launched a boat in a river before, here are some tips for how to do so safely.

1. Use the buddy system. Two people are recommended for boat launching, especially in river situations where there is a current—one in the boat and one in the vehicle.
2. Ready the boat at the make-ready area, before you back down the ramp.
 - Remove all tie-downs except the bow winch strap.
 - Tilt up your motor or stern drive.
 - Be sure your drain plug is in place.
 - Disconnect the wiring plug between vehicle and trailer.
3. If your role is to operate the boat, get in the boat.
4. If your role is to operate the vehicle, slowly back your trailer down the ramp and into the water until your boat just floats (varies by boat and trailer).
5. If you're in the boat:
 - Lower and start the motor.
 - Release and unhook the winch (this should float the boat).
 - Slowly operate the boat away from the trailer, then be ready to use more engine power to keep the boat under control (maintain steerage) in the current and wind.
 - Find a safe place to pull up to shore to pick up the operator of the vehicle as river sites often do not have docks.
6. Park the vehicle and trailer.
7. Enjoy your day on the water!