

Outboard Motor Winterization

Difficulty: **Beginner–Intermediate** · Time: **1–2 hrs**

Date: _____ Vehicle / unit: _____ Mileage / hours: _____

SAFETY DISCLAIMER: General educational information only, not professional advice. Vehicle, marine, propane, fuel and electrical work can cause serious injury, death, fire or property damage. Follow your manufacturer's service manual, use rated jack stands, work ventilated and away from ignition sources, and call a qualified professional when in doubt.

Key safety warnings

- Gasoline vapor is explosive. Work outdoors, away from ignition sources, with a fire extinguisher handy.
- Never run an outboard without cooling water — it can destroy the impeller in seconds.
- Keep people and pets clear of the propeller; remove the prop or kill-switch lanyard when not running.
- Run engines only where exhaust can't collect — CO is deadly.

Tools & supplies

- ☐ Flush muffs
- ☐ Marine fuel stabilizer
- ☐ Fogging oil
- ☐ Marine gear lube + pump
- ☐ Spark plugs (per manual)
- ☐ Drain pan
- ☐ Nitrile gloves

Checklist

- ☐ Stabilizer added & run through
- ☐ Fresh-water flush
- ☐ Fogged
- ☐ Gear oil drained & refilled (note condition)
- ☐ Oil & filter (4-stroke)
- ☐ Plugs
- ☐ Grease points

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- ☐ Prop inspected
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- ☐ Stored trimmed down
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- ☐ Battery on maintainer
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Step reference

1. Add marine fuel stabilizer to the tank at the label rate, then run the engine on muffs/flush port for 10–15 min so treated fuel reaches the carb or injectors.
2. Flush with fresh water (especially after salt water) per the manual.
3. Fog the engine: spray fogging oil into the intake while running until it stalls, or remove plugs and fog cylinders directly — follow your manufacturer's method (some EFI engines differ).
4. Drain the gearcase from the bottom screw. Milky oil means water intrusion — have seals checked. Refill from the bottom until it flows from the top vent.
5. Change engine oil and filter on 4-strokes; replace spark plugs or note to do so in spring.
6. Grease fittings, inspect the prop for damage, and check the water-pump impeller age.
7. Store the motor in its normal vertical (trim down) position so water drains, and keep the battery on a maintainer.

Stop and call a pro if...

- Gear oil is milky or metallic.
- Engine is under warranty and the manufacturer requires dealer service.
- Freezing temps are imminent and you're unsure the block is drained.

Notes
