

Water left behind in the engine or plumbing is what wrecks boats over the winter, and nearly all of it is preventable. **Work through every section below, check the boxes as you go, and store with confidence.** Even in warm climates, a single hard freeze overnight can crack an engine block, so don't skip the freeze-protection steps.

1 BEFORE YOU BOOK A SPACE

- ☐ Measure boat + trailer: length, beam, and height
- ☐ Pick a space about 4 to 5 ft longer than that total
- ☐ Confirm facility rules on fuel and plug-in chargers
- ☐ Update insurance to list the storage location

2 CLEAN & DRY

- ☐ Wash hull and deck with marine soap, not dish soap
- ☐ Wax the hull and gelcoat against oxidation
- ☐ Flush the cooling system, especially after saltwater
- ☐ Remove all food, drinks, and perishables
- ☐ Clean head, galley, carpets; let everything dry fully
- ☐ Take home life jackets, cushions, and bedding
- ☐ Stand remaining cushions on edge for airflow

3 ENGINE & MECHANICAL

- ☐ Change oil and filter before storage, not after
- ☐ Fog the engine to coat cylinders and internals
- ☐ Change gear oil; milky color means water intrusion
- ☐ Grease steering, fittings, and U-joints
- ☐ Store outboards tilted fully down to drain

4 FUEL

- ☐ Add a marine fuel stabilizer
- ☐ Fill tank to about 95% to leave room for expansion
- ☐ Run engine ~10 min to circulate treated fuel
- ☐ Replace the fuel filter and water separator

5 BATTERY

- ☐ Fully charge the battery
- ☐ Disconnect it, or remove it to a cool, dry place
- ☐ Clean the terminals
- ☐ Use a smart charger if the facility allows plug-ins

6 WATER SYSTEMS (FREEZE PROTECTION)

- ☐ Drain the engine block and manifolds completely
- ☐ Or run marine antifreeze until it exits the exhaust
- ☐ Drain tanks, water heater, livewells, and bilge
- ☐ Clean the sea strainer
- ☐ Run pink antifreeze through every faucet and the head

7 TRAILER

- ☐ Inflate tires to the max PSI on the sidewall
- ☐ Block or jack up to prevent flat spots
- ☐ Repack bearings; check the Bearing Buddies
- ☐ Cover tires against UV
- ☐ Grease coupler; check chains, lights, lug nuts

8 COVER & PROTECTION

- ☐ Cover the boat even under a canopy
- ☐ Use a support frame so water and snow run off
- ☐ Make sure the cover is vented for moisture
- ☐ Tie it down snugly so wind can't get under
- ☐ Confirm the boat is fully dry before covering

9 MOISTURE, MOLD & PESTS

- ☐ Place moisture absorbers in cabin, head, and lockers
- ☐ Prop open lockers and hatches for airflow
- ☐ Plug drains and gaps with copper mesh
- ☐ Remove every food source and nesting material

10 SECURITY & DOCUMENTATION

- ☐ Photograph the boat inside and out for your records
- ☐ Note the Hull ID and serial numbers; keep off-boat
- ☐ Remove electronics, GPS units, and valuables
- ☐ Lock the hatches, wheels, and hitch
- ☐ Pull the drain plug so water can't collect

11 DURING STORAGE

- ☐ Visit monthly: check cover, absorbers, tires, battery
- ☐ Watch for any sign of pests and address it early