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If you are looking to sell your boat, there are some steps you can take to increase your chances of a sale. Below is a guide that will help ease the process of selling your watercraft. Step 1 – Preparing your Vessel for Sale Before you present your boat to the public, you will want to ensure that the vessel is in tip-top shape. Start by emptying out any unnecessary clutter within the boat. If your boat contains a cabin, clean the inside top to bottom using household cleaning products and vacuum the floors. Next, you are going to want to clean the outside. Begin by washing the deck and going down to the hull to scrub off any grime caused by the water (a power washer could be used for the more stubborn build-up). Examine the boat for defects such as scratches, rust, damaged parts, malfunctioning equipment, etc. Assess whether it is worth taking the time and money to repair the flaws to increase your chances of getting a higher price. Some defects may be easily repaired for a low price, while others may cut into your profit. Step 2 – Collect the Vessel’s Paperwork There are various documents that a seller should have on hand when getting ready to sell their boat. These documents would include: Bill of Sale – Be prepared with 2 blank copies that can be filled out and signed on the date of the sale (it is recommended that both parties receive a copy for their records). Title of the Vessel – This is the certificate of ownership one receives at the time of sale. Registration – Unless your boat is exempt from registration, you should be prepared to present the new owner with a copy of the vessel’s most current registration card. Proof of a Paid Loan – If the boat was financed, you are going to want to provide paperwork confirming that you have reimbursed the lender, e.g. lien release. Trailer Documentation – If you plan on including the trailer you use to tow the vessel in the sale, you will want to gather the title and registration. Receipts for Maintenance and Repairs – Compile any documentation regarding the improvements made to your boat. Warranty – If the boat has a warranty attached to it, be sure to provide the supporting documents. Step 3 – Figuring the Price Now that you have thoroughly cleaned up your boat and have all the necessary paperwork, it is time to determine the selling price. There are several considerations you will have to make when adjusting the value of the vessel. First, you are going to have to give an honest evaluation of its condition. Is the watercraft in poor, fair, good, very good, or excellent condition? The better the condition, the better the price you could potentially receive. Next, scan the classified ad websites to get a feel for the market. Viewing ads of similar boats can help you assess your watercraft’s value. There are also websites online that provide pricing tools, the most popular being: NADAguides.com – Here you can enter specific information pertaining to your vessel and their system will generate an estimated price. Step 4 – Advertising In today’s technological climate, the internet is considered the superior route for advertising an item for sale, and a used boat is no exception. Certain websites are specifically dedicated to the sale and purchase of watercrafts. A few of the more popular websites would include: BoatTrader.com – One of the top websites to advertise your vessel. They do charge a fee to post an ad on their website, packages include: Basic – For \$59, you can post an ad containing 2 photos for a maximum of 2 weeks. Enhanced – \$149 to post an ad with 12 photos for 6 weeks. Premium – \$199 to post an ad with unlimited photos for 12 weeks. Boats.com – Owned by the same company as the previously mentioned website, this site ranks high on Google and is a cheaper option to advertise your vessel. Plans include: Basic – \$30 to post an ad containing 2 photos for 2 weeks. Enhanced – \$85 to post an ad with 12 photos for 6 weeks. Premium – \$120 to post an ad with unlimited photos for 12 weeks. You may also advertise your boat on more generic websites that aren’t strictly dedicated to selling boats. These would include: Ebay.com – Allows you to create a listing under “Boats”. You have the option of setting a fixed price or initiating an auction style approach. Visitors will then bid on the vessel for the duration of the listing. Fees will vary depending upon several factors. Craigslist.org – Is the most well-known classified ad website. It is a free option to advertise your boat to a local audience. Just visit the website and post under “for sale>boats>by owner”. Facebook.com – Create a post on your Facebook account announcing that you have a boat for sale (especially if you are friends with fellow boating enthusiasts). It is free and a good way to get the word out. Step 5 – What to Include in your Ad You will want to include as much vital information as possible concerning your boat. Most advertising websites will have fields where you can input the necessary information. The main areas you are going to want to cover are: Title – This will be the post’s heading and what entices visitors to click on your ad. Be sure to provide the essential information pertaining to the vessel. You may incorporate: Year Make Model Brief Selling Point Price – Enter the sales price you have decided upon when calculating the vessel’s value. Location – Where is the boat currently located? Description/Posting Details – This is a crucial portion of the ad that should be carefully considered. List as many details as possible regarding the vessel, such as: Year of the Vessel Color Make/Manufacturer Model Name/Number Condition (poor, fair, good, very good, excellent) Propulsion Type Length & Width Inboard or Outboard Engine Hours Clocked on the Engine Additional Features/Improvements Amenities Defects (it is better to be upfront about any mechanical or cosmetic issues with the vessel) Any extra items included with the sale of the boat. Seller Contact Information – To allow potential buyers to get in touch with you, you must provide the following information: Name (you may refrain from using your last name if you wish) Email Address Phone Number (you may specify whether you prefer to call or text) Photos – Maybe the most important aspect of your post will be the pictures. People want to see accurate photos of the vessel inside and out from different angles. Be sure to use a quality camera with good lighting to take crystal-clear photos of the watercraft. Step 6 – Showing the Vessel It is only a matter of time before you are contacted by an interested party wanting to view the boat. Agree on a time to meet the potential buyer for a showing. Make sure the boat is in pristine order and be prepared to sell that day. Once the interested party has arrived, give them a full tour of the vessel, highlighting all the qualities of the boat. The buyer may want to test drive the boat to ensure it is in working order. How this is handled is up to your discretion, and you may insist on accompanying them for the ride (they may also want a mechanic to look over the vessel for approval). Step 7 – Negotiating the Sale Once an individual has expressed interest in buying your boat, it will be time to sit down and discuss the terms and conditions of the sale. The first hurdle will be the sales price. A lot of times, a buyer will try to get a reduction on the original asking price to save money. This puts the ball in the seller’s court on whether or not they would like to accept, decline, or offer a counterproposal. Once both parties have agreed, you will want to determine what type of payment will be used for the sale. For the seller, cash and certified check are always the best options. If certified check, you may take it further and meet the buyer at their bank to guarantee that it will clear. After the buyer pays, the seller may hand over all the necessary documentation and present them with the keys to their new vessel. Boat (Vessel) Bill of Sale Form Boat Vessel Bill Of Sale Form A Boat Bill of Sale Form is a legal document used to record the sale and transfer of ownership of a boat or watercraft from one party to another. This form captures important details of the transaction, including information about the buyer, seller, and the vessel itself. Boat Bill of Sale Form Template PDF Typically, it includes the names and addresses of both the buyer and seller, as well as their contact information. Additionally, the form specifies details about the boat, such as its make, model, year, hull identification number (HIN), and any additional features or accessories included in the sale. The purchase price of the boat and the agreed-upon payment terms are also documented in the form. Furthermore, the Boat Bill of Sale Form may contain clauses related to warranties, disclosures, and any conditions of the sale. Once both parties have reviewed and agreed to the terms outlined in the form, they sign and date the document to finalize the transfer of ownership. This document serves as official proof of the sale and helps protect both the buyer and seller in the event of any future disputes or discrepancies regarding the transaction. Printable Bill of Sale for Boat PDF Used Boat Bill of Sale Form PDF How to write Bill of Sale for Boat A boat bill of sale is a legal document that facilitates the transfer of ownership from a seller to a buyer. Here’s how you can create one: Parties’ Information: Include the full names and contact details of both the buyer and the seller. Watercraft Description: Provide detailed information about the boat, including: Current condition Hull identification number (HIN) Make, model, and year Registration Information and Title Number: If applicable, include any boat registration information and title numbers. Payment Method: Clarify how the buyer will pay (e.g., cash, certified check, credit card). Purchase Price: Clearly state the agreed-upon purchase price. Sale Location and Date: Specify when and where the sale occurred. Signatures: Both parties (buyer and seller) must sign the bill of sale. Notarization (if required): Some states mandate notarization to validate the document. Even if not required, having a notary witness both parties’ signatures can enhance its legitimacy. Sample Bill of Sale for Boat PDF Boat Bill of Sale no warranty Here are the key points for a Boat Bill of Sale with “No Warranty”: Essential Information: Identification of Parties: Includes full legal names and addresses of both the buyer and seller. Boat Description: Details the boat’s make, model, year, hull identification number (HIN), and any other relevant physical description. Sale Price and Terms: Clearly states the agreed-upon purchase price and the method of payment (cash, check, etc.). Date of Sale: Establishes the exact date the ownership is transferred. No Warranty Clause: “As-Is” Disclaimer: This clause explicitly states that the boat is being sold “as-is,” with all its faults and defects. The seller makes no guarantees or warranties about the condition, functionality, or performance of the boat. Additional Considerations: Signatures: Both the buyer and seller need to sign and date the document to finalize the agreement. Some states may require witnesses to sign as well. State Requirements: Check with your state’s Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) for any specific requirements or forms needed for boat title transfer. Optional Inclusions: While not mandatory, you may consider including details about the boat’s trailer, engine, or any included accessories in the bill of sale. Benefits of a Bill of Sale (No Warranty): Proof of Ownership Transfer: Provides legal documentation for the buyer’s ownership of the boat. Seller Protection: Protects the seller from claims about the condition of the boat after the sale, especially with the “as-is” clause. Dispute Resolution: Can serve as evidence in case of disagreements between the buyer and seller in the future. Ted Cruz is the founder and driving force behind BillOfSaleTemplate.us, a comprehensive resource for free bill of sale templates tailored to meet a variety of needs. With a keen understanding of the importance of accurate and legally sound documentation, Ted has dedicated his expertise to providing accessible and user-friendly templates for all types of transactions, from vehicle sales to personal property exchanges. Recognizing the diverse legal requirements across different states, Ted has meticulously crafted state-specific bill of sale templates to ensure compliance and ease of use for users nationwide. His commitment to simplifying the process of creating reliable and legally binding documents has made BillOfSaleTemplate.us a trusted platform for individuals and businesses alike. A boat bill of sale is a legal document recording the sale of a boat between two parties: a seller and a buyer. Within this document, the seller agrees to transfer boat ownership to the buyer for a certain fee. You need this form when buying or selling a boat because it outlines the terms of the sale, prevents disputes, and serves as proof of ownership for the buyer so they can register their new boat. If the boat has an accompanying trailer, you can record the sale of multiple items (for example, a boat, motor, and trailer) on a single form or an accompanying trailer bill of sale form. Download: PDF or Word. Boat Bill of Sale – By State Boat Bill of Sale – By Type Explore our different forms to get the right template for your boat setup: Use this template if you’re selling a motorless boat or a boat with an internal motor. Examples include canoes, sailboats, houseboats, and jet skis. Use this template for a motorless or inboard-motor boat and its trailer. Use this template to sell a boat with an outboard motor and its trailer. Outboard motors aren’t permanent parts of the boat, so they must be listed separately on the bill of sale form, even if a trailer isn’t included in the transaction. Table of Contents How to Sell a Boat Step 1 – Decide What You’re Selling Firstly, you’ll need to decide what you’re selling. Will you sell just a boat or include a motor and/or trailer? Whatever it is you’re selling, make sure you include everything in the final value of the sales price. You may sell or buy one of the following types of boats or water vessels using a boat bill of sale: Yacht Catamaran Tugboat Skiff Sailboat Canoe Rowboat Kayak Power/motorboat Jet ski Step 2 – Prepare the Boat for Sale You need to take a few steps to prepare your boat for sale. You’ll need to: Get paperwork in order: Ensure you have the title and registration for each component. Most states require this information for sale. Plus, it assures the buyer that you’re the owner and the vessel has no liens. Collect maintenance records: A potential buyer may ask for records of any maintenance work you’ve had for the boat to verify its condition. Clean your vessel: Clean your vessel’s interior and exterior to attract more potential buyers. Address cosmetic issues, fix mechanical problems, and remove everything not part of the sale. Photograph your boat: Take several photos of your boat from different angles in good lighting. Step 3 – Determine Your Boat’s Value To determine your boat’s value, you’ll need to: Decide whether to sell privately or commercially. You may wish to hire a broker to help sell your boat, especially if it’s a higher-cost watercraft. On the other hand, selling your boat on your own lets you manage the process while eliminating fees and commission costs, but it can be more time-consuming. Determine market value. To get an idea of the market value of your boat, you can use a price-checker tool like JD Power or BoatTrader. Or, you can search for local listings of a similar make and model. Factors such as condition, age, and demand can significantly impact market value. A vessel’s average sales price may not accurately represent how much your boat is worth. If you’ve made extensive modifications, they could affect the value. Ensure you consider everything when calculating the sales price. Decide on an asking price and the lowest offer you’ll consider before you list. Step 4 – List Your Boat for Sale Several websites help private boat sellers reach buyers. To reach a wider audience, create multiple listings across sites like Boat Trader, The Hull Truth, BoatCrazy, boats.com, Craigslist, and eBay. For high-end and specialty boats like yachts and sailboats, try YachtWorld. In addition to several clear photos of your boat, provide a detailed description of its condition and features and any accompanying motor, trailer, or accessories. Make sure you include the following information in your post. Make, model, and year Dimensions Condition Repairs or improvements Terms of the sale (cash-only, delivery available, etc.) If you want to offer a warranty on the boat, mention it here. Otherwise, include terms like “as-is” or “sale final” in the listing description. Step 5 – Present Your Boat to Potential Buyers Now that you’ve listed your boat for sale online, you can show it to potential buyers. For ease of access, you’ll want your boat stationed at a dock so buyers can understand what it is like on the water. You could also consider parking your boat on land, in a trailer, or on a stand. Before meeting potential buyers, ensure the following: You’re honest and up-front about the boat. You know the boat inside and out. The boat is in selling condition. You’re prepared to communicate and negotiate with buyers. You know your lowest asking price. Step 6 – Write a Bill of Sale and Gather Relevant Documents Once you’ve found a buyer, you can fill out a bill of sale template to finalize the transaction. Distribute a copy to the buyer so they can review it. Also, gather the following documents: Title: Proof you own the boat. Registration: Current registration in your state. Proof of Paid Loan: Evidence that you’ve paid off the loan attached to the boat. Trailer Documentation: Proof the trailer is in good condition and can haul a boat without it being dangerous. Receipts for Maintenance/Repairs: Proof of you taking care of the boat while you owned it. Warranties: Any guarantees you want to transfer in the sale. Step 7 – Collect Payment Once you agree on a price with the buyer, you can finalize the boat sale. The buyer must pay you before signing the document. Don’t hand over the keys or ownership documents until the buyer’s funds have cleared. It would be best to negotiate which party will be subject to the sales tax; typically, both parties split it. To close the sale: The buyer needs to make payment in full. The seller must sign the title to the buyer and hand over any current registration documents. Step 8 – Sign and Notarize After completing the bill of sale form and receiving payment in full, you and the buyer can sign the document according to your state’s requirements. Some states require the buyer and seller to sign in the presence of a notary public for the form to be valid. If your state doesn’t require boat bills of sale to be notarized, it’s still a good idea to have a notary witness the deal in case a dispute arises. After the sale is complete, make a copy of the signed form for your records. The buyer should keep the original copy for registration purposes. What to Include in a Boat Bill of Sale A valid bill of sale for a boat, jet ski, or other watercraft vessels should include the following components: Parties’ information: The buyer’s and seller’s names and contact information. Watercraft description: Details about the watercraft, including its current condition, hull identification number, make, model, and year. Registration information and title number: Any registration information and title numbers for the boat. Payment method: Clarification on how the buyer will pay (via cash, personal or certified check, credit card, etc.) Purchase price: The agreed-upon purchase price. Sale location and date: When and where the sale occurred. Signatures: Signatures of both parties. Notarization: Some states require notarization to validate the document. Even if your jurisdiction doesn’t require notarization, you may consider having a notary witness both parties’ signatures to increase its legitimacy. You can also specify if the boat comes with a warranty. If it doesn’t, you may include an “as-is” clause, meaning the buyer agrees to purchase the vessel in its current condition. How to Write a Boat Bill of Sale Step 1 – Fill in the Buyer and Seller Information Once the buyer and seller agree on all the transaction details, arrange to meet in person to complete the sale. It’s a good idea to have both parties show ID to verify their personal information is correct and prevent fraud. You must include both parties’ names, addresses, and contact details. An example of where to include buyer and seller information. Step 2 – Fill in the Boat, Motor, and Trailer Details Fill out the boat details, including year, make, model, HIN (hull identification number), dimensions, etc. You can usually find your boat’s hull ID number on the right side of the transom (rear of the boat). Include outboard motor information like serial number, model, and horsepower, which you can often find on the plate attached to the motor. Trailer details, such as the vehicle identification number (VIN) and weight, are usually on a sticker or plaque attached to the frame. An example of where to detail boat information. Step 3 – Fill in the Selling Price and Payment Method The buyer and seller should agree on a purchase price and payment method. The buyer must pay sales tax when registering their new boat, but you might split or cover the sales tax cost by deducting the applicable taxes from the selling price. Payment methods can include the following: Personal check Cashier’s check Money order Cash Credit card PayPal If the boat is a gift, fill out your relationship to the recipient and the boat’s total value and other items included in the transfer. An example of where to outline the payment. Step 4 – Sign and Notarize Once the buyer pays, you can sign the form to finalize the transaction. Some states require boat bills of sale to be notarized. An example of where to include signatures. Boat Bill of Sale Sample Download a boat bill of sale template below in PDF or Word format. Frequently Asked Questions You can use this document as proof of purchase to apply for the legal title with the state agency that handles boat registration. Check your state’s requirements to determine if you need to register the boat. If you’re purchasing a trailer, you may need to register that too. Yes, you can buy a boat with just this document. However, the boat must not have a title. The bill of sale must provide all the necessary details so there’s sufficient proof the transaction took place. If a title is attached to the boat, the seller must transfer the title to you for you to legally be the new owner. Yes, you can sell a boat without this document. However, this approach may not be wise because you wouldn’t have definitive proof of a transaction and the resulting change in ownership. Both parties to the sale may experience legal ramifications later. For example, say you sold your boat to a buyer without a bill of sale, and the buyer got into an accident where they damaged another vessel. The owner of the damaged vessel could take you, the original owner, to court for compensation. As the boat is still in your name and there is no proof of a transaction, it won’t be easy to prove your innocence. A boat bill of sale may need to be notarized to be legally binding, depending on the state where the sale occurs. Many states require this document notarized or witnessed by at least two people.