



# TAKE ME FISHING™

## Handling a Boat

### Steering

On a small boat with an outboard motor, the motor's handle is used to steer the boat. Since the engine is mounted on the rear of the boat, it pushes the stern around, making the bow go in the opposite direction. To turn to starboard (right), move the handle to the left. To turn to port (left), move the handle to the right. On larger boats with an outboard or inboard motor, a steering wheel is used to steer, much like driving a car.



Source: U.S. Coast Guard

### Speed

The speed of a boat depends upon both the size of the motor and the boat. The speed of the motor is controlled by a throttle. This throttle has the same purpose as the gas pedal on a car.

### Gearshift

The smallest outboard motors have no gearshift. The boat moves as soon as the engine is started. Larger motors have a gearshift lever. There are three positions - forward, neutral, and reverse. Place the lever into neutral to start the engine. Then, when it's running, you put the lever in forward or reverse gear to move forward or backward.

Placing the shift lever in neutral will not stop the boat. Since a boat does not have brakes you must learn to judge your speed and maneuver carefully using the forward and reverse controls to avoid hitting docks and other boats or objects.

### Float Plan

Always let someone know where you are going, the water course you plan to take and when you plan to return. In an emergency this can save your life!