

Transitioning From Sail To Power

Six Things to Consider for Your Next Boat

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There comes a time in every sailor's life when they must decide if they'll go over to the dark side and purchase a power boat or just get out of boating all together. For some, the latter is not an option; being out on the water is too important. What better time to start looking and get answers than at a boat show?

"Being on the water is so wonderful," says Ruth McMullin, former sailor and racer. "You could live your whole life and never go into every river and creek." When asked what's the biggest difference between sailing and power – coming from the sailing world, Ruth and husband Tom both agreed they are totally different worlds. "Power boaters believe the destination is what it's all about. For us," says Ruth, "that was never what it was. We just like being on the water. Not everybody does."

As someone who has crewed on both power and sail, I can tell you there is definitely a difference. The biggest one is turning the key

and going. There are no sails to uncover or lines to cleat; you don't have to worry if there's enough wind; and you just need the engine to go. Also, unlike motoring on a sailboat, if you run out of gas, you better have a good towing plan like Sea Tow or Boat US to bring you gas.

With that said, there are a few things you need to consider when transitioning from sail to power:

1. Your "why." This is the biggest reason. Is it age related? Due to health? Downsizing? Retirement and moving to a new location that your current boat won't do? Or is your spouse pressuring you to sell/change?
2. Where will you go? Sailors are known for traveling. Do you still plan on boating to destinations or will you use your new boat for running about locally?
3. Type of boat. Will you buy new, used or rent? Aluminum or fiberglass hull?

Ruth at wheel of *Hotspur*, right, and cruising at the helm of a powerboat, below.



Ruth & Tom McMullin

4. Engines on a sailboat are small and quiet. On a power boat, engines are just as important as the boat itself. They come with all size of engines, often more than one and in a variety of colors. Also, though you motor sailed a lot, the gas money you'll spend on a powerboat will be more. If you've never used a diesel engine, make sure you read up on it. There are inboards and outboards, diesel and gas to choose from.

5. Rental through Freedom Boat Club or Carefree Boat Club could be a better idea. Less headaches and you turn the keys in at the end of day.

6. You ought to take classes through US Power Squadron or Boat US to learn to drive, maintenance, etc.

Depending on your answers above, you'll have a better idea on what to look for at a boat show. For example:

■ Trawlers are common. Nordhavn and Kadey Krogen are good blue water boats. The disadvantage is they roll more than sailboats at anchor. Make

sure you look at the different hull types available.

■ Single screw engines vs twin screws. Single is best if maintenance is key. Also consider the noise factor and fuel costs.

■ Open cabin or protected pilot house. The advantage of a pilot house is that on rainy and chilly days you're above the water line.

■ Center consoles, such as Extreme Boats, are another great option if you just want something to run around in.

No matter what the reason, boat show season is the perfect time to see what's out there and try the power boats out for size. Make sure you climb on the boats, sit at the helm, and check out the galley and sleeping quarters.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Robin is a passionate marine enthusiast and sailor who has interviewed countless industry experts; in the US and abroad. As a freelance writer and business strategist, she helps her clients create, replace, and update both technical and non-technical documents. Her articles include travel, suddenly-in-command, technology and boating secrets, to name a few. Robin is a member of International Travel Writers and Publishers Alliance (ITWPA) and Boating Writers International.

Robin's also the author of "Boating Secrets: 127 Top Tips to Help You Buy and Enjoy Your Boat". This interview series of 11 marine industry experts walks you through everything you need to know from buying a boat to selling it, plus making a living as a professional sailor. It is available in both print and kindle at <https://tinyurl.com/rbxomek>.

