
Boater's Pocket Reference Reviews

BUY the Book—Great Reads For Better Boating

BIG IDEAS-SMALL PACKAGE

The *Boater's Pocket Reference: Your Comprehensive Resource for Boats and Boating* could just as appropriately be titled the Boater's Bible or Boating Beyond A to Z. That's because its author, Thomas McEwen took his years of experience as an avid boater and member of the Boulder Valley Power and Sail Squadron in Colorado to research and answer the questions he had asked himself. In preparation of this book, McEwen spent years reading books and attending seminars and classes about boating.

The result is a three by five-inch reference packed with 800 pages of boating information for any situation, anywhere. The book, which pertains to both U.S. and Canadian boating begins with a chapter on boat design and construction, then sails into a chapter on boating rules and regulations. Navigation rules, seamanship, and piloting and navigation are also covered in the text. A detailed chapter on ropes, lines and knots is followed by a section on weather. The next two chapters are more technical and discuss mechanical and electrical issues in depth. Communications and boat trailering are given a thorough examination as well.

—Reprinted from the July 2006 issue of *Houseboat Magazine*

—Reprinted from the August 2006 issue of *Pontoon and Deckboat Magazine*

Small pocket reference guide helps new and experienced boaters

As an avid boater and member of the Boulder (Colo.) Valley Sail and Power Squadron, Thomas McEwen always wanted a small reference book on boating that was both comprehensive and small enough to carry along on boating trips. When he couldn't find what he was looking for, he wrote the book himself.

Boater's Pocket Reference is 800 pages of valuable boating information. It is not designed to be read from cover to cover, but rather to be referenced by boaters for specific facts and information ranging from very basic to advanced. The pint-sized guide, which measures 3-inches by 5 inches by 1 inch thick, is a virtual bible on boating.

—Reprinted from the June 2006 issue of *Boat & Motor Dealer* magazine.

Don't Leave the Shore Without It

This is a great pocket reference guide to boating. It is amazing how much information can fit into one small book. It is 3"x5"x1" and has 800 pages. So you really can fit it into your pocket. The reference guide is organized so that you can easily find information. The topics include: Boat design and construction; rules and regulations; navigation rules; boat operating and seamanship; piloting and navigation; ropes, lines and knots; weather; mechanical; electrical; communication; boat trailering; general reference tables; conversion tables; boating organizations and bibliography; and a glossary. Really what more could you need?

There is an easy to find color coded quick reference guide to navigation. I think that this will be the most valuable section for a boater. There is a section in this part on national and international boating flags. This would be really helpful to have around if you are going into a different area and not familiar with all of the signs. As a novice boater, I like the idea of having this book handy so that I can refer to it as questions arise. I don't have to keep asking someone. I think that an expert boater would appreciate as well, because they might just find the one piece of information in here that they need, but don't know.

This book would make a great gift for the boating fan that has everything.

—Reviewed by Paige Lovitt for *Reader Views* (6/06)

Reviews (Continued)

Boater's Pocket Reference: Your Comprehensive Resource for Boats and Boating

There are two kinds of book writers, story tellers and compilers. Edward Maloney who edits *Chapman Piloting...* is a compiler and probably the best known resource for boaters. McEwen sites many others, his favorite being *The Nature of Boats: Insights and Esoterica for the Nautically Obsessed* by Dave Gerr. So what does McEwen have to offer that the big boys don't or can't. The answer is size. If you want five pounds in a three pound bag, the "New Testament" of boating (800 pages, 3x5x1 inch, and weighing only 7 ounces) that fits in your hip pocket, McEwen's got a book for you.

Do you need a pocket-kind of anything on the boat? That's the question I asked myself. The issue of space is always relevant to boaters. The other consideration is the need for reference books of this sort on your boat. We carried all the educational material of the U.S. Power Squadrons when we did our Great Loop Cruise and we used some of it: but in the process of cruising, the road ahead and the interpretation of the immediate environment took first place. I don't think in that year of cruising that *Chapman Piloting* got cracked more than once. As we prepare for the upcoming day we deal with tides, currents, shoal areas, locks, bridges, marinas and sights to see. Add to that the magazines and manuals for every system on the boat and what we have is information overload.

But there are times when you need to check out something. I looked up words and concepts like scope, tides, locks, marlinspike, charts and navigation aids. In most of these areas McEwen's book was useful, often giving more information than I wanted. I didn't have the slightest curiosity for propeller pitch ratios, pitch lines, blade angles or equations for calculating pitch versus pitch angle, but it was all there on page 483: $P = \tan(A) \times R$ (radius distance from the centerline to the pitch line).

You might consider this little book an Engineering Handbook. It's nicely illustrated and teeming with formulas and equations that will satisfy the egghead on your boat, but the average reader may glaze over with trivia overload. It's well organized (engineers are always well organized) beginning with boat design and construction, then deals with rules and regulations, seamanship concepts, marlinspike, weather and more.

Mini McEwen has a table of contents, glossary, reference tables and a listing of boating organizations (AGLCA is not in it) and a bibliography. We didn't even make his list of Interesting Internet Sites, but somehow the Guide to Sailing and Cruising, which he describes as "personal cruising stories for interesting reading," is included. Sigh. Well, nobody's perfect.

The middle section of the book is a quick reference to navigational aids, in color, which is useful and I enjoyed the section on weather, including good black and white photos of cloud types. In addition to basic boating information McEwen includes Airline phone numbers, Car Rental numbers, Boating Equipment Sales and Manufacturing and more.

As I get older I want my media to be bigger and louder. Some readers may have trouble with the tiny print, an inherent quality of pocket-sized books, but I didn't have any trouble with this book so long as I was near bright light. This is a lot of information in one space for not too many shekels. If you don't have *Chapman Piloting...* on board and you want a reference book, this may be for you. Who knows, it may save the day and your lives and keep you safely afloat.

—Review by Ron Stob, Editor, *The Great Loop Link*, the Newsletter of America's Great Loop Cruiser's Association (AGLCA) May/June 2006 Edition

Reviews (Continued)

BoatBooks: Boaters Pocket Reference

This small but knowledge-packed guide has 800 pages of information about boats and boating. Wondering what kind or size of anchor is best for your boat? Looking for flag rules or a national flag? This and a whole lot more at your fingertips with this very industrious pocket book for the boater. Easy to use, info packed!!

—Reprinted from the August 2006 issue of *Latitudes and Attitudes* magazine

Bigger isn't Better

If you want a comprehensive reference library on your boat but don't want the extra weight and bulk that come with it, the *Boater's Pocket Reference* may be the answer. This roughly 3-by-5-by-1-inch book is a thorough guide to all things nautical. The product of a lifetime of research and boating-course notes, it includes guides to navigation and piloting, step-by-step knot-tying instructions, conversion tables, weather charts, trailer-maintenance tips, and a glossary of boating terms. It covers a range of topics, from boatbuilding and design to systems maintenance, and includes a plethora of facts and figures necessary for routine sailing tasks. The depth and breadth of information available in this one small book seem boundless. Rebecca Waters

—Reprinted From the September 2006 issue of *Sail Magazine*.

Pocket Protector

When you're running your boat, you don't want to be digging around for reference books every time you have a question. That's exactly why I really dig this book. At 3"x5" it's small enough to fit in your pocket, and its 800 pages are jam-packed with information on everything from hull design to navigation rules, how to interpret various weather patterns, troubleshooting electrical systems, and more. Of course, its small packaging does translate to small type, so you may want to keep a magnifying glass handy as well. By Elizabeth Ginns Britten.

Reprinted From the September issue of *Power & Motoryacht Magazine*

Good Books

Boater's Pocket Reference

Only 5 3/8 inches by 3 1/4 inches, this 768-page softcover book, ruggedly bound to withstand cruising-boat rigors, is packed with techno-data on every facet of boating, from design and construction to piloting and navigation to electrical circuitry and power plants. What sold us, though, were the 24 pages containing 117 conversion tables, catalogued and cross-referenced alphabetically.

Reprinted From the September issue of *Cruising World Magazine*.

Book Reviews

Boater's Pocket Reference

by: Thomas McEwen

This book is fantastic AND it fits in your pocket. It is only 3 x 5 x 1, but it is chock full of goodies. Small it is, but still very readable even without a magnifier. It has all the nuts and bolts of sailing, literally. It talks about boat design and construction and heavy weather sailing. Along with information to do weather forecasting. I think it is a MUST have. Take it on the boat for reference. Carry it with for reading pleasure when you have a few minutes wait. Or wherever you do your reading. I do.

Reprinted From the December 2006 issue of *Lake Sailing Magazine* (No permission to use yet)

Endorsements and Testimonials for Boater's Pocket Reference

Great book! Thanks again for signing two of them for me last night.

Peter

P.S. Your timing could not have been better...as I only just started trying to collect all of these little sailing secrets and details over the past 5 years in my Palm so that I can look them up on short notice. Now I have your book which won't fail when the battery dies!

—Peter Galvin, Boulder, Colorado

The subtitle says it all, "Your Comprehensive Resource for Boats and Boating." The 15 chapters range from Boat Design and Construction to Boating Glossary. There's way more information than can be covered in a short review, but Tom's book is certainly aboard Romso for our next trip.

—Ron Schwiesow, Boulder, Colorado

You have done a great job capturing all the essential elements of these topics in a very well-organized and easy-to-understand fashion. I definitely plan to keep a copy of your book with my gear when I go chartering.

—Don Buddington, Boulder, Colorado

Since I'm a casual boater, and often forget such things as who has the right-of-way and what a particular buoy symbol means, I found this book answers all of my questions and is laid out so that I can find out what I want quickly. It is amazing how much information is packed in this pocket sized book. When the fish aren't biting, this book is a great read for learning more about such things as knot tying, navigation, weather, etc. The book caters to all levels of boating expertise, and for the price, there is no reason not to have it onboard. I also found the book's excellent web site full of additional information and free downloads (<http://www.anchorcovepublishing.com/>)

—Fred Kelsey, Evergreen, Colorado

After 50 years of boating adventures, I have just reviewed Tom McEwen's "Boater's Pocket Reference". It has consolidated an amazing amount of information in a useable sized reference that you can easily carry with you. Everything about boating that you will ever need quickly is right here. I've spent hours just checking out the interesting facts and information. This book is a "must have" for every boater.

—Sincerely - Jack Anderson, Henderson, Nevada

You were nice enough to send me a copy of your publication. I just wanted to tell you I think this Pocket Reference is dynamite. Really nice. I'm out of boating. I will keep this. I appreciate it. I wish you nothing but happiness and success. I can't believe you can put a book this good together for only \$13.95. You must have found one heck of a good printer.

—Dennis Whittaker, Cleveland, Ohio, Author of Great Lakes Waypoints Books.

Wow! I am relatively new to the boating world only 3 years under my almost 40 age and your book looks awesome. I did not have time to read all the way through but will be spending some time in a plane over the next couple of weeks and I know I will be reading this front to back. This has everything I wanted to know and I definitely will be passing your info to all my boating friends. I will let you know how it goes when I am done!!

Thanks

—Mike Kannenberg, Fredonia, Wisconsin.

What a little gem of a book! A must have for every boat on the water! Tom has thought of everything and this little boat book has it all! Thank you Tom, this book will save a life, whether you are in a crisis or your wallet has been lost at sea -- Tom has all the information you need for every situation imagined. Both, my semi-pro fisherman husband, Mike and I love it!

—Stacey Kannenberg, Fredonia, Wisconsin.

We were amazed at the amount of information in such a small volume. It is well organized and easy to find what you're looking for. Even though Boater's Pocket Reference is an American publication, the author has included relevant information for Canadian boaters.

—Steve and Kris Millan, Kingston, Ontario, Canada

I just wanted to let you know I love the book. I have a hard time putting it down even when major priorities beckon. It is small enough to carry everywhere I go, and I bring it out when I have to stand in line, or wait at a stop light, etc... I hope it sells well. This would be a better world to boat on if more people understood the basic physics and rules of the water. Take Care, Gary

—Gary Call, Blackfoot, Idaho

Tom, I've been a professional mariner for over 20 years now and with this book, which I received last night, you have managed to cut the weight of the reference manuals I sail with daily way down. This is the best reference manual I've laid my hands on in years. Good job and thanks Skip

—Skip Shankle, Burke, Virginia
