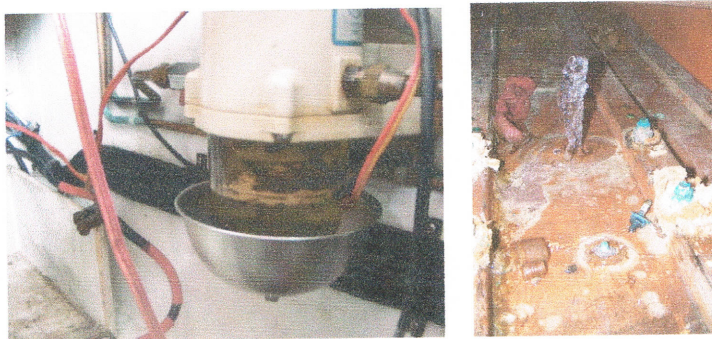


TIPS FROM THE SURVEYORS!

Things **You** Can Find/Fix On Your Boat Before You Sell It
(and before the surveyor finds them anyway).



The fuel system need routine maintenance so it is apparent the vessel gets maintained to reasonable standards and the bilge should be cleaned regularly to minimise electro-chemical action. Photos courtesy Harry Jorgensen

If you are getting ready to sell your boat—whether through a broker/dealer or on your own—one thing's for sure. You want that surveyor's report to be a **short as possible** so your boat appears in its best possible light! One way to do that is to fix a number of items on your boat before the surveyor gets there, and most of these are simple, easy repairs that may require nothing more from you than a little sweat equity.

The tips below fall into two categories: **cosmetics** and **safety**, so let's take a look at each one separately.

1) **Cosmetics:** Get your boat into "Showboat" condition

You would think this would go without saying, but too many boats I step aboard are filthy—with a little elbow grease and commonly available cleaners—could be brought up to "Bristol" condition and thus be much more appealing to prospective buyers

a) Hull condition: Make sure your hull is cleaned and no mould left anywhere. The finish is paramount to getting and holding the buyer's interest. Make sure the gel coat is shiny and free of chalking. A properly compounded and waxed hull will set a buyer's mind that the boat is well maintained.. A fresh bottom paint job gives the boat a clean and well-maintained appearance.

b) Bilges and machinery space: Scrub the bilge while the boat's on land and let the water run out the plug and into an approved container for proper disposal with waste oil. Dish washing detergent is very effective in clearing oil from the bilge under the engine. The engine itself should be cleaned, and touch-up paint over any rust will go a long way in indicating a good maintenance record.

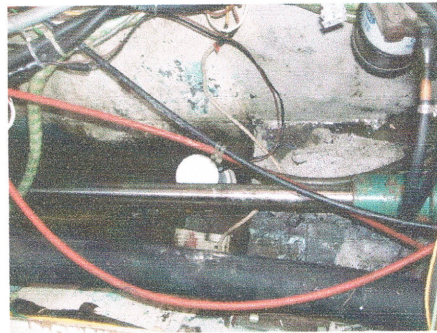
c) Interior: Shampoo and vacuum the rugs, wipe down the overhead liner, clean the head, make sure you have de-odorizer in the holding tank (after you've pumped it clean and flushed with water), and remove seat covers when possible and have them dry cleaned. And finally, remove all unnecessary items that do not need to be aboard when showing the boat. Boats that look uncluttered and roomy are definite pluses in the mind of the buyer.

2) Safety and mechanical

- a) **Batteries:** Should be boxed, covered, and secured from movement. Check terminals for corrosion and tight connections. Make sure the terminals are covered to prevent accidental shorting.
- b) **Fire extinguishers:** Mounted in separate, readily visible locations and inspected annually. Fixed fire-suppression systems in the machinery space should also be inspected annually. Flares must be current.
- c) **Life jackets:** Should be clean and readily accessible.
- d) **Night navigation:** Ensure all external lights (masthead, side lights, sternlight, anchor light) are in operating condition, and the horn is functioning properly.
- e) **Through-hull fittings:** All sea cocks should open and close with little effort. Never force a seacock to open or close if the boat is in the water. Look for corrosion, leaking, and cracks.



A



B



C

A. The steering system needs routine maintenance. B. Wiring and cables should be supported. C. Valves should be operable. Photos courtesy Harry Jorgensen

- f) **Fuel lines:** Inspect for cracking, bulging, leaks, and defective clamps and fittings.

g) Exhaust system: Raw water leaks will usually be evident with staining or corrosion around/below the failed union. Have these repaired by professionals.

h) Pumps: Ensure all bilge pumps are working properly including automatic float switches.

i) Steering systems and trim tabs: Check for tightness, dragging, and play. Hydraulic systems should be checked for leaks at the pump, reservoirs, and actuator. Also check trim tab reservoir for leaks.

j) Hose clamps: Ensure that all hoses located below the waterline are secured at each end with two hose clamps if there's room to do so.. Clamps must be all stainless steel (screw too). Renew rusty clips.

k) Electrical: Check your electrical WOF is current. Look for loose, damaged, or corroded wires and connections, and if you find them, have them professionally repaired and all loose wires cable tied and supported.

L) Stuffing boxes: If your props run thru stuffing boxes (as opposed to today's more modern drip-less shaft seals) ensure the drip rate is minimal at the shaft logs and rudder posts.

n) Filters: Ensure that all sea strainers are clean and free of debris, and you may want to replace fuel and oil filters to ensure they are clean as well.

Hopefully if you observe this list and fix what you can, your surveyor's report will be as short and positive as possible, leading to a fast sale!