

Safety Recommendations: An Outline (Wakesurf)

Introduction

This document functions as a central reference for how to safely deliver the Wakesurf discipline. The recommendations are highlighted as the most important safety practices but, serves as an extension to the 'Safety Recommendations: An Outline (boat)'.

Boat / Equipment

- Only inboard-engine boats should be used as a towboat (propeller under hull but not protruding the stern).
- Only wakesurf if the throttle inhibitor (Collet) is in good working order (stops throttle moving from neutral). If the inhibitor is worn it is recommended not to continue wakesurfing until it is repaired.
- Only use a wakesurf specific line and/or handle. An exception is of beginners learning to deep water start.
- The wakesurf line length should put the rider more than 10 feet from the most aft part of the boat (typically the swim platform).

Boat Crew

- There should always be a competent observer on board ('Competent' can be someone who knows or has been briefed on their responsibilities). Qualified and experienced drivers may operate without an observer but only in an enclosed lake with no other water users.
- All passengers should be seated inside the boat while the boat is under power, unless otherwise instructed by the coach or driver.

The Surfer / Rider

- A buoyancy aid/impact vest should always be worn while wakesurfing (buoyancy aid for beginner riders).
- Never coil or wrap the rope around any part of the body.
- Once surfing the rider should let the rope trail on the opposite wake. It is advised that a crew member then pull the rope back into the boat.

Driving

- The Driver should have more than 60 hours of experience driving water skiers/wakeboarders before driving wakesurfers.
- The Driver must always have full forward visibility and be positioned to be able to see the rider in the mirror. The driver should always be seated while driving but having full forward visibility must be given priority.
- The Driver must always turn the engine off when a rider is getting in/out of the water AND any time the driver is out the seat.
- The Driver must always be in control of the steering wheel AND have one hand on the throttle while the boat is under power.
- When 'towing', Drivers must keep the power on regardless of how close the surfer is to the back of the boat.
- The Driver must pick up and collect riders slowly (in idle) AND on the driver's side (starboard).

- It is recommended to drive as straight as possible. However, drivers may drive with a slight turn to increase the steepness of the wave if the local rules allow and when there are no other water users.
- When nearing the end of the lake/designated surf area, and the surfer has not stopped, make a steep turn away from the rider (the un-weighted side) to 'drop' the rider off the wave and away from the back of the boat. The driver must never come off the power when the rider is riding the wave.
- Be mindful how the wake can affect other water users and stop the boat if it looks dangerous (e.g., smaller boats/ PWC's/towed watersports).
- When a surfer falls, the driver should:
 1. Keep the power on until the surfer has come to a complete stop in the water.
 2. Slow down gradually in a straight line.
 3. Make a turn on the opposite side to the rider in idle.
 4. Wait for the wakes (rollers) to pass the front of the boat.
 5. Idle back to the rider keeping them on the driver's side (starboard).