

Tow-Tow-Tow-



By Edward S. Spanke and Frank N. Stephany

YOU WILL SEE more boats and trailers than ever before at resorts and fishing areas this summer, and a closer look likely will disclose that the cars have out-of-state license plates and big-city windshield stickers.

Yes, you've guessed it. Folks are bringing their boats hundreds of miles to the waters they want to fish, explore and enjoy. And they're not all country people or suburbanites who might be expected to have a boat-trailer rig and plenty of room to store it during the off season. Many of these boat owners live right in the hearts of the large cities.

The boat trailer did it. Now, no matter where you live, or how far it might be from the water, you can own an outboard boat. All you need is garage or yard space in which to store the outfit. As far as size is concerned, you can go from a small utility boat all the way up to a cabin cruiser that will sleep four to six people.

Everything is set for this family to enjoy a pleasant day of boating



When buying a boat trailer, size and weight capacity are the first things to consider. There is no hard-and-fast rule. The trailer should handle your present boat and even be able to carry a somewhat larger one that you may purchase in the future. Several factors determine the weight-carrying capacity required—weight of the outboard motor if it remains on the transom while towing, and weight of extra fuel, luggage and camping gear that may be stowed in the boat. So estimate the total weight of everything to be carried in the boat and select a trailer accordingly. If the weight comes within 100 lb. of the rated capacity, better get a trailer of the next largest size. If you intend to carry the motor on the boat, the trailer should be designed to support the boat transom.

As the hitch is the most important trailer accessory, don't attempt to improvise at this point. Use a standard ball-and-socket car hitch, preferably one with a latch that keeps the coupling from working loose. Safety chains are required in some states, but they are well worth their small cost regardless of where you live.

A taillight is necessary for night-time driving, and can be anything from a flashlight clamped to the boat transom to a combination stop light and taillight. The latter operates on the car battery and plugs into an extension cord kept in the trunk.

Before driving off with the boat and trailer, be sure that the boat is tied down securely, that the hitch is locked tightly and that the safety chains are in place. It's also wise to stick some reflective tape on the boat transom or the rear of the trailer in case the taillight should burn out.

Hauling the trailer over

YOUR BOAT



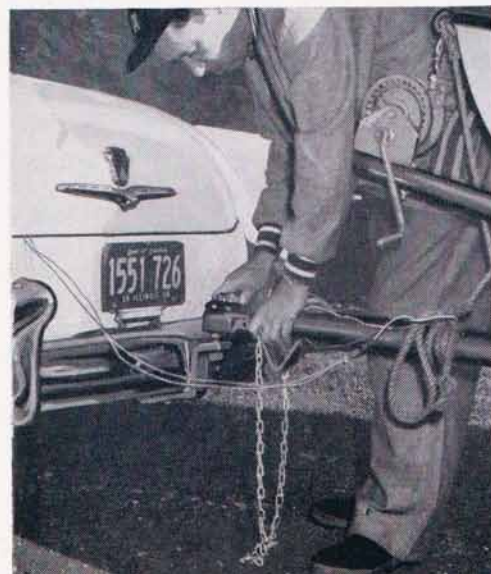
For night trailering, a combination stop light and taillight either on boat or trailer is ideal. Light is plugged into extension cord kept in trunk of the car



Treat your trailer tires just as you would those of the car. Check air pressure before traveling, especially if you haven't used trailer for a while

Being sure that hitch is clamped tightly is tops in importance. Most couplers have a safety latch to keep the socket from working loose while under way

Safety chains are as inexpensive a form of insurance as you can get. Should the trailer hitch fail, chains keep boat and trailer from taking off cross-country





To start trailer into its turn, cut steering wheel hard left. All procedures shown are reversed for backing into the turn from opposite direction

With trailer well into turn, watch your "target"—driveway in this case. Proceed slowly and steadily, making slight corrections with steering wheel



As trailer enters turn, bring steering wheel from left to right, but not too hard—just enough to even out turn. Now, you begin to get "feel" of turn

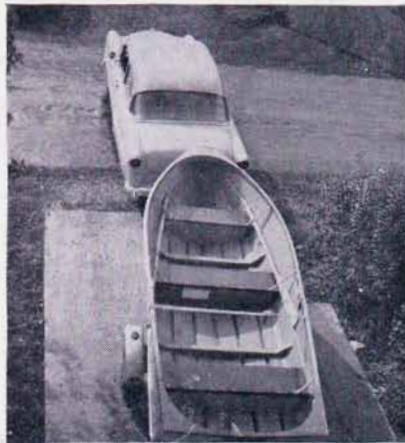
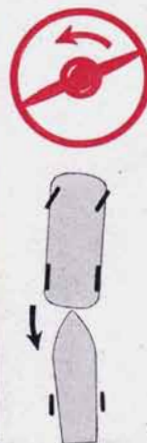
Turn begins to straighten out here. This is done by bringing steering wheel a little harder to right. To sharpen turn, bring the wheel to left



As boat starts to line up with driveway, bring steering wheel to the left to come out of turn



If boat bow points either right or left, cut steering wheel in the opposite direction to straighten it



the road is no problem as long as you remember that it's there when driving in traffic or passing. In fact, it's a good idea to have something in the boat that will rattle and serve as a reminder. The only troublesome maneuver in trailering is backing up, and this is explained by the photos and diagrams on the opposite page. You will find that all trailers built by reputable manufacturers are designed to be towed at high speeds—but it's wise to stay somewhat under the posted speed limits. With a trailer in tow, it is going to take more distance to brake the car.

Trailer maintenance is simplicity itself. Your trailer wheels most likely will have high-speed bearings, so be sure they are lubricated with wheel-bearing grease and nothing else. Keep the tires at recommended air pressure and occasionally oil the moving parts, such as rollers and winch. If rust appears, remove it and repaint. ★ ★ ★



Launching boat is easy. Back trailer so end of boom is at water, release winch lock and push boat into water



To bring boat out of water, fasten winch rope to bow, line up boat with the trailer boom and reel in the boat



Transom support is shown on trailer at left. Rollers under transom prevent its being weakened by motor weight

Modern trailers are truly one-man, or one-woman, operated. Hefty boat, below, is handled easily by one person

