



Sports
Safety

Safe Waterskiing And Wakeboarding Guide

Think Safe. Play Safe. Stay Safe.

A Sports Safe Singapore

The Singapore Sports Council (SSC) recognises that safety must be a fundamental component of a sporting culture and a prerequisite for every healthy lifestyle. Therefore, SSC has set a corporate goal of zero injuries, in the belief that all accidents are preventable. Emphasising the need for personal accountability, SSC also urges people to be responsible for the safety of others. SSC's first Sports Safety Division was formed in 2006 directly under the purview of the CEO's office. It is tasked to promote safety throughout Singapore's sporting community and inculcate a safety-first mentality in the minds of every stakeholder. For more information, please visit www.sportssafety.ssc.gov.sg

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Another initiative by the Sports Safety Division, Singapore Sports Council

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INTRODUCTION

Waterskiing and wakeboarding is a wonderful hobby. As with any sport, however, it can be dangerous if safety is ignored. From novice to the most experienced waterskier/wakeboarder, it is vital that you exercise water safety.

The next few sections are some basic safety tips that are relevant whether you are new to waterskiing and wakeboarding or an experienced participant.

ENVIRONMENT

- Waterski & Wakeboard only at designated venues
- Check the weather forecast and tides before you begin your activity (<http://app2.nea.gov.sg/3hnowcast.aspx>)
- Go back for the shore if there is a thunderstorm approaching.
- Cease activities if there is a lightning storm or heavy rain
- Be aware of your waterskiing/wakeboarding area. Avoid obstacles and dangerous areas with rocks, strong currents and sea-lanes.
- If you come into contact with the sea creatures commonly found in the ocean such as jellyfish, you may experience a skin reaction. If that happens, seek medical treatment at the nearest hospital or clinic.

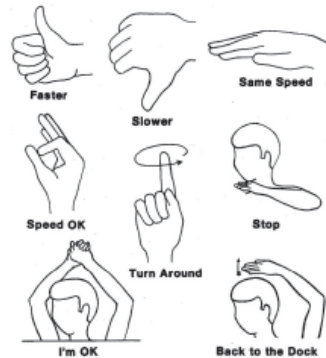


EQUIPMENT

- Always wear a personal floatation device (PFD). It is important that the PFD meets the following specifications:
 - i. It must float the waterskier/wakeboarder.
 - ii. It must be constructed so as to provide adequate protection from impact damage to the ribs and internal organs.
- Ensure that the equipment used is in good condition prior to getting into the water;
- It is recommended that waterskiers use gloves to protect their hands and improve their grip on the handle;
- Always wear a helmet if hitting a jump ramp or any floating obstacle (flat bar, A-Frame, Kicker, etc)

WATERSKI AND WAKEBOARD SAFETY CODES

- Indicate to the boat driver to accelerate, with the signal **"Hit it!"** only when the waterski/wakeboard line is tight with no slack;
- Never waterski/wakeboard near docks, pilings, other boats, other wakeboarders and swimmers;
- Never put any part of your body through the handle or wrap the tow rope around your body while you are waterskiing/wakeboarding;
- Never waterski/wakeboard in shallow water (or where you are not aware of the depth), or in an area where obstructions are above or could be underneath the water's surface;
- Be familiar with the use of standard hand signals;
- If you fall in an area where there is other boat traffic, alert other boaters of your position by lifting more than half your waterski/wakeboard out of the water;



- Never waterski/wakeboard directly in front or in the path of another boat or waterskier/wakeboarder;
- When two people are waterskiing/wakeboarding simultaneously behind the same boat, always use ropes of equal lengths;
- Avoid fast landings into shore;
- Waterski/Wakeboard only in daylight hours

CABLE SKI AND WAKEBOARD PARK SAFETY CODES



1. Always hold the handle in your hands. Never put it around your neck or other parts of your body. If you fall, never try to grab a dragging handle/rope.
2. Look out for fallen waterskiers/wakeboarders. Leave as much space as possible between you and the fallen rider as you pass. To avoid collision, let go of the rope and let yourself fall.
3. Let go of handle if you fall
4. If you fall, look around immediately to see if another waterskier/wakeboarder or rope is approaching. Swim to shore at once. Take your equipment with you unless it's an emergency. Also swim back if the cable system stops.
5. Do not try to fend off a dragging handle. Just duck underwater for a moment to allow the handle to pass over you.
6. Always remember to avoid risk to yourself and others.
7. If in doubt, drop the rope and let yourself fall.
8. Helmets must be worn at all times.
9. Don't approach or hit any obstacle if the landing area is not clear of other riders.
10. If an obstacle is in your way and you are unable avoid it or if you get too close to the shore, let go of the rope and let yourself fall.





BOAT DRIVER'S RESPONSIBILITY

Waterskiing and wakeboarding is a great way to have fun. That said, it's not an activity to be undertaken without preparation. It requires some special skills by the boat driver and the waterskier/wakeboarder, an understanding of hand signals, and demands a lot of attention to safety by both parties. All drivers must possess a valid MPA Powered Pleasure Driving Craft License (PPCDL) to operate a pleasure craft in Singapore Port Waters.

As the driver of the boat, it's your responsibility to ensure the safety of your waterskier/wakeboarder, so before hitting the water, take a couple of minutes to set down some rules with the waterskier/wakeboarder and the other passengers in the boat. Review waterskiing/wakeboarding hand signals, plan where you'll go once the waterskier/wakeboarder is behind the boat, and discuss what is expected of everyone on board.

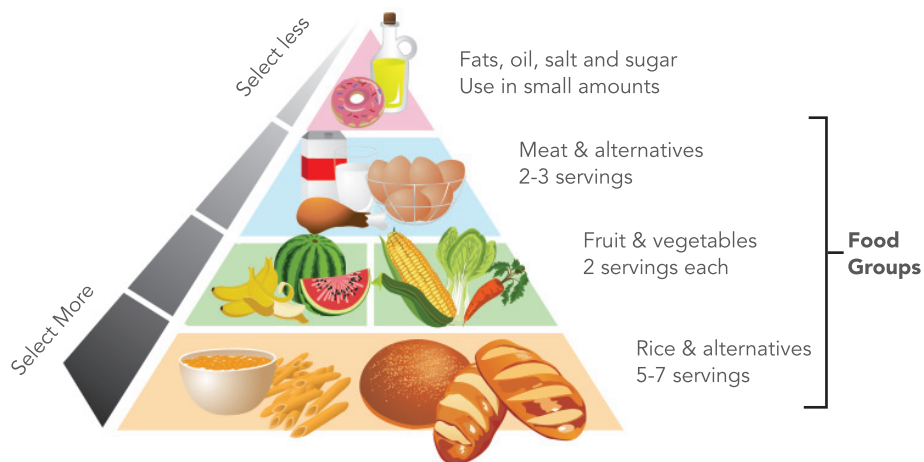
ROLE OF AN OBSERVER IN THE BOAT

- Watch for boat traffic and obstacles in the water
- Attach towline to the boat's tower/pylon
- Throwing waterski/wakeboard handle and line to waterskier/wakeboarder
- Retrieving waterski/wakeboard handle and line from the water after each session
- Balance the weight in the boat so wakes are even
- Assist the waterskier/wakeboarder, especially beginners with their equipment
- Report waterskier's/wakeboarders's hand signals and status
- Provide instruction
- Help and rescue an injured waterskier/wakeboarder



GENERAL SAFETY

- All participants must be able to swim
- Consult a physician if you have a pre-existing medical condition before taking up waterskiing/wakeboarding
- Do not waterski/wakeboard if you are unwell, carrying an injury or under medication
- Do not waterski/wakeboard if under influence of alcohol
- Never waterski/wakeboard to the point of excessive fatigue
- Waterski/wakeboard within your limits



OTHER TIPS

Water

- Did you know that more than three quarters of your body is made up of water?
- If we do not drink enough water, dehydration sets in, making us prone to headaches and illness.
- Drinks lots of water before, during and after waterskiing/wakeboarding

Rest

- Our body needs rest to function well, keep alert and make good judgement and decisions.
- A sleepy person may not perform as well as someone who has had enough rest. Try to get ample sleep before waterskiing/wakeboarding.

Nutrients

- When you eat, the sugar and carbohydrates from your food intake provides your body with energy.
- Try to have a balanced diet as much as possible.
- If you are going for long waterski/wakeboard sessions, bring along some snacks to provide you with energy

ARE YOU READY TO WATERSKI AND WAKEBOARD?

The Physical Activity Readiness Questionnaire (PAR-Q)

is designed to help you assess your level of readiness for physical activity. It is simple and it only takes a fraction of your time to complete.

Regular physical activity is fun and healthy. Increasingly more people are starting to become more active every day. Being more active is very safe for most people. However, some people should check with their doctors before they start becoming more physically active.

If you are planning to become more physically active than you are now, start by answering the seven questions in the box below. If you are between the ages of 15 and 69, the PAR-Q will tell you if you should check with your doctor before you start. If you are above 69 years of age, and you are not used to being very active, check with your doctor.

Common sense is your best guide when you answer these questions.

Please read the questions carefully and answer each one honestly: **check YES or NO.**

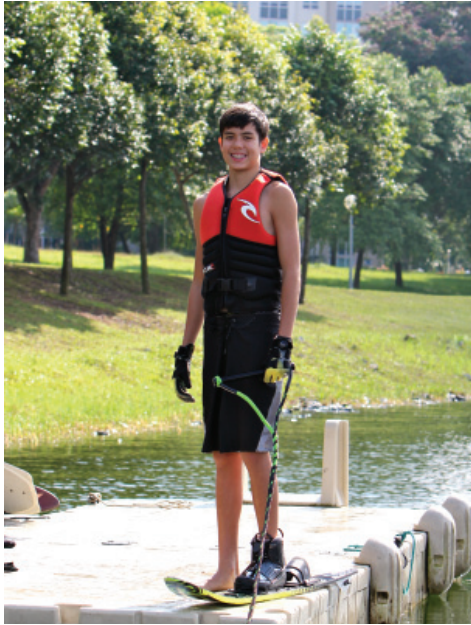
YES NO

- Has your doctor ever said that you have a heart condition and that you should only do physical activity recommended by a doctor?
- Do you feel pain in your chest when you do physical activity?
- Do you have a bone or joint problem (for example, back, knee or hip) that could be made worse by a change in your physical activity?
- Do you lose your balance because of dizziness or do you ever lose consciousness?
- Do you know of any other reason why you should not do physical activity?
- Is your doctor currently prescribing drugs (for example, water pills) for your blood pressure or heart conditions?
- In the past month, have you had chest pain when you were not doing physical activity?

If you answered YES to one or more questions:

Consult your doctor by phone or in person BEFORE you start becoming much more physically active or BEFORE you have a fitness appraisal. Tell your doctor about the PAR-Q and which questions you answered YES.

- You may be able to do any activity you want - as long as you start slowly and build up gradually. Or you may need to restrict your activities to those which are safe for you. Consult your doctor about the kinds of activities you wish to participate in and follow his/her advice.
- Find out which community programmes are safe and helpful for you.



Personal Safety

- Know your own body. Are you ready to waterski/wakeboard
- Waterski/wakeboard within your limits
- Have adequate rest and water before you waterski/wakeboard
- Warm up before waterskiing/ wakeboarding and cool down after the activity
- Wear a personal flotation device at all times

If you answered NO honestly to all PAR-Q questions, you can be reasonably sure to

- Start becoming much more physically active. Starting slowly and building up gradually is the safest and easiest way to go.
- Take part in a fitness appraisal. This is excellent for determining your basic fitness so as to plan the best way to live actively. Evaluating your blood pressure is also strongly recommended. For readings above 144/94, consult your doctor before you become more physically active.

Delay becoming much more active:

- If you are not feeling well because of a temporary illness such as cold or a fever, wait until you feel better, or
- If you are or may be pregnant - consult your doctor before you start becoming more active.

Please note:

If you answered Yes to any of the above questions, tell your fitness or health professional. Ask whether you should change your physical activity plan.

Download PAR-Q in Chinese, English, Malay or Tamil from <http://sportsafety.ssc.gov.sg> For more information, please call 6500 5431.

Source: Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology



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