

## **What is the definition of slow-no wake?**

**“Operating a boat at the slowest speed necessary to maintain steerage and that reduces or eliminates waves that appear as whitewater behind the boat.”**

**Violation of the slow-no wake rule is a Class B violation and can result in fines.**

In Oregon, there are “statewide proximity rules” for slow-no wake operation that apply on all waterways (OAR 250-010-0025): Operators of boats must observe slow-no wake within 200’ of a boat ramp, marina or moorage with a capacity for six or more boats; a floating home moorage with six or more structures; or people working at water level. The operator may be liable for damage caused by wake. This rule does not apply to commercial vessels or river navigation when more speed is needed to ensure safe passage.

Often the boat operator can cause a large wake unintentionally. The operator may drop to the transition speed instead of down to displacement speed and actually increase wake size. It’s easy to avoid this pitfall by making a habit of checking your wake as it hits the shore. Slow down far enough in advance of sensitive areas to give yourself time to drop to displacement speed. This will minimize your wake’s impact. Wake boat operators should pick up surfers/wakeboarders by powering down and coming off-plane before entering a turn vs. a power turn. The time it takes to complete each type of turn is almost the same, but the power turn creates roller wakes that can stack with other waves and potentially impact other boaters. A slow turn helps disperse wakes evenly.

### **Limiting Your Wake**

- Be aware of your wake and the water depth. Shallow water yields larger wakes.
- Use the motor trim or trim tabs to help keep your boat level and limit your time in transition speed.
- Boat in deeper waters. Avoid getting close to other boats and the shore.
- Position passengers throughout the boat. A heavy stern will increase wake size.
- Wakeboard boats: avoid areas with a lot of docks or heavily populated areas.
- Be sure to know the local area regulations which may be more restrictive than the statewide proximity rules in some areas.

### **What to do if you get “waked”**

Chances are you will face a large wake created by someone else at some point. Here are some tips to safely navigating through a wake:

- Warn your passengers. Passengers below deck are especially at risk of hitting their heads or falling, so be sure they can hear you.
- Slow down before the wake arrives to lessen the impact, but don’t cut the engine. You need headway to be able to maneuver through the wake.
- Have older passengers and others who are susceptible to injuries -stay aft.

- Instead of crossing a wake at a perpendicular angle, cross at a slight angle (a quarter of the wake). This will keep the bow from being thrown high in the air.
- While overtaking another boat, cross its wakes quickly instead of riding it. Signal the operator; keep both hands on the wheel and stay away from the other boat's stern.
- Try not to take a wake on your beam. Instead, turn into the wake and come back on course when the wake has passed.
- If you are at anchor, allow for slack in the line so wakes don't cause the bow to lift and unseat the anchor.

**Wakeboarding and wake surfing are super-fun activities! Be mindful of those around you and play away.**

**[Take the Water Sports Industry Association's Pledge to Wake Responsibly](#)**

