

WHAT, AND WHERE IS THE HIN ON A MOTORBOAT?

The HIN is the Hull Identification Number assigned to the boat. Each HIN is unique to that boat, and is the same as the VIN on a motor vehicle.

All boats manufactured after 1972 have a HIN consisting of 12 characters as required by the Federal Boat Safety Act of 1972. The 12 characters are continuous and uninterrupted by slashes, hyphens, or spaces. The first three characters are letters that form a code for the manufacturer (e.g. KAW is the beginning of a Kawasaki HIN. Other manufacturers have other letters, but all HINs begin with three letters). After the first three letters, the rest of the digits will usually be numbers.

The HIN will be at least 1/4 inch high and permanently affixed to the boat. Its removal would cause permanent scarring. It is part of the hull, and it is not on any item that is removable. It is not on the engine (although engines do have similar serial numbers.)

There are two identical HINs on the boat, a primary and a secondary.

➤ **THE PRIMARY HIN SHOULD BE AFFIXED TO:**

- **Transom** - On boats with transoms (flat backs), to the starboard outboard side within two inches of the top of the transom, gunwale, or hull/deck joint, whichever is lowest.
- **Without Transoms** - On boats without transoms or boats on which it would be impractical to use the transom, to the starboard outboard side, aft, within one foot of the stern and within two inches of the top of the hull side, gunwale or hull/deck joint, whichever is lowest.
- **Catamaran** - On catamarans and pontoon boats that have readily replaceable hulls, to the aft crossbeam within one foot of the starboard hull attachment.
- **Other Locations** - If rails or other accessories would obscure a HIN, it should be affixed as near as possible to the starboard outboard side within two inches of the top of the transom, gunwale or hull/deck joint, whichever is lowest.

- **THE SECONDARY HIN SHOULD BE AFFIXED TO** an unexposed location on the interior of the boat or beneath a fitting or item of hardware. If the primary HIN is missing, the owner should call the manufacturer to try to find the secondary HIN. The Coast Guard wants the original HIN used if possible.

