

# Guide to Living at Sea

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*The following are several key rules to follow to ensure that you are comfortable, have every need met and don't get sick! Hopefully you'll find this both informative and humorous. Although we haven't been on all ships, life at sea is the same no matter what vessel you're on.*

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1. Talk with all the crew members - especially the ET, Boatswain, and Engineers, not just the captain and mates. When the time comes, the crew can help you get what you need or help you get something done, or bail you out of an extensive bar tab. Plus they're usually pretty cool people with interesting life stories.
2. Bring a laundry bag to carry your laundry down a couple flights of stairs. A pillowcase may work well for this.
3. Bring earplugs if you are sensitive to noise while sleeping.
4. Bring plenty of books in the event of bad weather or extended stays in ports. Even though there may not be a port stop scheduled, emergencies may arise and equipment may fail. Expect the unexpected!
5. Bring some of your favorite music and personal CD/tape player (and extra batteries!) for those long nights.
6. Bring or purchase locally any additional groceries you'll want while at sea. The ship's lemonade, iced tea or bug juice might get tiresome after a week. Consider bringing any other snacks you MUST have, but don't expect to have the use of a refrigerator.
7. Bring a little ditty jobber to carry your toiletries to and from the showers.
8. Bring at least one long sleeved shirt to wear to bed because the berthing compartments can be arctic cold.
9. When outside, ships usually require that all people wear close-toed shoes. Open-toed shoes might be permitted inside, but for anywhere outside, shoes should have a good sole and be close-toed.
10. DON'T slam doors or let them slam. Both crew, and often science party members, work off and on during all hours of the day and sleep during all other hours of the day. Also, since you are in and on a metal box, the noise reverberates throughout the vessel. Plus this is the crew's home, so treat it like you'd treat your own home or apartment.
11. Don't expect to email large attachments. The ship will often set a specific limit to message sizes. The reason for the size limit is because it costs muchos denieros to upload all the email messages via satellite phone, and with dozens of people on board, the email bill can get mighty big mighty quick. Email will likely be uploaded two to three times per day.
12. Don't expect to surf the Web. There's no such thing at sea.
13. Use the word "Chief" a lot. I don't know why, people just do.
14. Always compliment and thank the stewards for the fine meal you just ate. Don't be afraid to go back for seconds either. They like that.
15. Show appreciation and thanks to everyone on board because again, they're pretty neat people to get to know and you may come to rely on your mates should the need arise.

16. If meetings start at 0-dark:30, be there at 0-dark:30. The only people who should be late are the Chief Scientist and sub guys.
17. Don't expect to stay clean. You may get grease and dirt on just about everything you wear.
18. Don't be afraid to go up on the bridge and chat with the folks up there UNLESS: they are entering heavy traffic waters, launching or recovering the submersible, are coming into port or dock, or are dealing with a drill or other emergency. Generally, they will let you know if they don't want you on the bridge, but it's always good to check when you enter to be sure. When on the bridge, stay clear of the radars and avoid obstructing the watchperson's view of obstacles or other vessels in the area.
19. Bring some cash with you on board... ships often run a store where you may be able to buy ship gear such as shirts, shorts, hats, or sweatshirts in the \$20 range. They do make great gifts and souvenirs.
20. Be sure that all of your personal belongings or equipment are ready to jump ship when the shuttle gets there or when the ship hits the dock. Don't be the one holding everybody up.
21. When pulling into port and you notice you are about 2 feet away from touching land, sit back, relax and WAIT, because it will be another 30 minutes to an hour before they put the gangway down for you to set foot on that precious land.
22. Buy a crew member a beer. If at a bar with the crew, buying a beer can be a lifesaver if you ever need anything down the road. Goes along the same line as talking to them. They will hook you up.
23. During sub ops, don't go on the fantail unless you are asked to or are supposed to, and always wear a hard hat if walking around the working decks during any operations.
24. Don't EVER don another crew member's hard hat or life jacket - even if in a rush. These items are personal to crew members and should be treated like they are all '67 Mustangs. There is usually a stash of hard hats and life jackets for scientists somewhere.
25. Don't be afraid to ask anyone for anything. Most crew members are more than helpful and will go out of their way to be so.
26. Bring Meclizine, a fine sleep-inducing mind-numbing med (may require a prescription). For variety, you may also want to pack your own ginger pills, Dramamine, acupuncture band, Transderm Scop patch or other remedies if you are prone to seasickness. The ship often carries extra medication for troubled scientists, but it's always possible that they may run out.
27. If you are at all worried about getting ill while being thrown from your bed in rough seas, keep a nice stash of garbage bags nearby. Either ask the stewards for one or bring your own. (Hey, you got to give me credit for being honest here!)
28. Learn the Morse code for "need crackers and fresh water now" in the event you are bedridden after a weeklong bout of seasickness.
29. Enjoy your tour at sea!