

Travel Notes #3: Boat Life & Health Safety Guide

Leader Note: Cover these points once settled on the boat (ideally during the first devotional gathering).

Resource Reminder: Print and read the "Welcome To The Boat Quiz" from the AO Website under RESOURCES .



1. Embracing Flexibility & "Glory"

- **Scripture:** *"In their hearts humans plan their course, but the Lord establishes their steps."* — **Proverbs 16:9**
- **The Motto:** *"Blessed are the flexible, for they shall not be broken!"*
- **A Biblical View of Suffering:**
"For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all."
— **2 Corinthians 4:17**
 - The root word for **"Glory"** translates to **"Weight."**
 - Every bump, scratch, drop of sweat, sleepless night, stomach issue, doubt, insecurity, or moment of loneliness can add weight and depth to your faith in Jesus.
 - Don't miss out on what God is doing through light and momentary troubles—embrace them as an opportunity to glorify Him.
 - When you bump your head, say *"Glory!"*; when you're hot and sweating, say *"Glory!"*
 - **Ask yourself:** *When was the last time you had the opportunity to suffer even a little bit for Jesus? He is worth it all!*
- **Team Attitude:** Think the best of everyone, choose grace, and refuse to be easily offended.



2. Health & Hygiene Safety

Hand Washing & Food Safety

- Wash hands regularly using soap. **Sanitize hands before touching serving utensils** at the food buffet.
- **Food Guidelines:** Do not eat food unless it was cooked on the boat or comes from a sealed package.
 - *If offered food in a village:* Thank them politely and say you will take it back to the boat.
 - *Exception:* Fresh fruit that can be peeled (ensure your hands are clean first).

Hydration & Heat Safety

- **Drink water constantly**, even when you don't feel thirsty.
- **Signs of Dehydration:** Extreme thirst, headache, lethargy, dark yellow urine, and lack of sweating (*lack of sweat is an emergency that can lead to heart issues*).

- **Electrolytes:** Supplement regular water with electrolyte packets daily.
- **Safe Water Sources:** Drink **ONLY** from boat water dispensers or sealed water bottles. Never drink sink or shower water.

Sun Protection & Bug Bites

- **Sunscreen:** Apply daily on and off the boat (the equatorial sun reflects heavily off the water).
- **Bug Spray:** Apply insect repellent **on top of sunscreen**.
- **Chigger Prevention (Crucial):** Chiggers are a bigger concern than mosquitoes!
 - Apply heavy DEET repellent around the cuffs of your socks and the hems of your shorts.
 - Avoid sitting in, walking through, or standing in tall grass.
 - **Lysol Leg Dip:** Before and when returning to the boat from a village, dip your legs into the Lysol bucket at the outdoor showers and let them air dry (or use Lysol wipes).
 - *Treatment:* Use hydrocortisone cream and Benadryl tablets to soothe bites and avoid scratching.

Village Safety

- **Electrical Safety:** Avoid touching exposed electrical wires or plugs in villages (there are no safety codes or OSHA guidelines here).

3. Relationships & Respect Onboard

- **Missionaries:** We are here to serve and encourage them! Take time to learn about their families, backgrounds, and ministry work.
- **Translators:** Treat them as equal team partners, not servants. They have full permission to guide and teach us local village customs.
- **Boat Crew:**
 1. Some crew members are contracted sailors and may not be believers.
 2. Most speak only Portuguese. Warm smiles and a heartfelt "*Obrigado*" (thank you) go a long way.
 3. Practice your basic Portuguese words with them!
 4. **Authority:** The Captain is in ultimate command of the vessel. Never remove tables or chairs from the boat without his explicit permission.
- **Conflict Resolution (Matthew 18):**
 1. Speak directly to the individual alone—do not gossip or talk to others.
 2. If unresolved, invite a neutral third party to help mediate.
 3. If still unresolved, involve team leadership.
- **Quiet Hours:** After Lights Out or before breakfast, gather strictly at the **front of the boat** if you want to visit without disturbing sleeping teammates.

4. Daily Life on the Boat

Laundry & Towels

- Place dirty clothes in the laundry collection area between the sinks.
- **Towel Limit:** Use **1 towel per day maximum** (reuse towels when possible—otherwise the crew handles 50+ towels daily).
- Retrieve clean clothes promptly from the laundry area each day.

Bathroom & Shower Etiquette

- Always turn on the exhaust fan.
- **Doors:** Keep doors locked at all times (including showers). Knock before entering and open doors slowly ("*What's seen cannot be unseen!*").
- **Toilet Usage:** Flush **toilet paper only**—no feminine products or wipes.
- **Outdoor Showers:** Always wear a swimsuit when using the outdoor shower station.

Hammocks & Sleeping

- **Acclimation:** Expect the first night to feel unfamiliar; your body will adjust. (*If someone truly cannot sleep, mattresses can be arranged*).
- **How to Sleep in a Hammock:**
 - Sleep at a **diagonal angle** (head slightly over one side, feet over the opposite side) to lie flat.
 - Position your angle in the same direction as your neighbors, staggering heads and feet.
 - Keep all personal gear neat and organized directly beneath or beside your hammock.
- **Safety:** Prevent tipping by straddling or opening the hammock wide before sitting. Always swing your feet over the side first when getting out.
- **Blankets & Sound:** Blankets are provided for cool river nights. Kitchen prep starts at **4:00 AM**—earplugs are highly recommended!
- **Safety Check:** Ask the team: "*Does anyone have a history of sleepwalking?*"

Mealtime Etiquette

- **Sanitize** hands before picking up serving utensils.
- **Cultural Tip:** In Brazilian culture, **wasting food is deeply offensive**. Many local villagers face food insecurity, and the boat cooks work hard.
 1. Start with small portions to ensure you like the food.
 2. Once everyone has gone through the line, feel free to return for seconds.
- **Plate Scraping System (4 Trash Cans):**
 1. Regular Trash
 2. Organic Food Waste
 3. Plates & Silverware
 4. Cups
- **Helping Out:** Volunteers for evening kitchen cleanup are greatly appreciated! Always assist with setting up, wiping down, and stacking tables after meals.

5. Shoes, Safety & Boat Rules

The Two-Shoe System

- **Village Shoes:** Closed-toe shoes **MUST** be worn in the villages.
- **Boat Shoes:** Wear flip-flops or sandals on the boat.
- **NO Village Shoes on the Boat:** Change shoes immediately when you return to prevent tracking harmful bacteria onto living decks.

Boat Safety Equipment & Rules

- **Life Vests:** Stored on the ceilings.
- **Life Rafts:** Located on the top deck. *(Note: Rafts have handles to hold onto in the water; do not attempt to climb inside them. If a raft is deployed, head straight to shore.)*
- **Slick Floors:** Deck floors become extremely slippery when wet.
- **Sprays:** Apply spray sunscreen and bug spray **only on the outdoor shower deck** (spraying on main walkways creates dangerous, slippery spots).
- **Chairs & Rails:** Do not lean back on plastic chairs (use wooden benches if unsure). **NEVER sit on the boat railings.**
- **Water Safety:**
 - Do not use the rear showers alone while the boat is in motion.
 - **NO SWIMMING** without explicit permission from the Captain.
 - **NEVER** step into a speedboat without wearing a life jacket.
 - When the boat horn/whistle sounds, it means it is time to return to the boat immediately.
- **Behavior & Privacy:**
 - No Public Displays of Affection (PDA).
 - Only **one person at a time** is permitted in restrooms or shower stalls.

Strictly Off-Limits Areas

- Kitchen
- Engine Room Roof
- Front Command Area
- Area directly in front of the Spotlight
- Main Upper Roof
- Pharmacy / Medical Storage

Relax & Reflect

Take a deep breath, lean into the experience, and watch how God works in and through your team this week!