



What's Selling (and What's Sitting) in the Boat Market

If you've been watching the boat market lately, you've probably noticed a clear divide between what's moving quickly and what's taking longer to sell. While trends can shift with the seasons, the current market is showing some consistent patterns across much of the country.

What's Selling:

Smaller, trailable boats—particularly center consoles, bowriders, and pontoons—continue to be in high demand. Buyers love their versatility, lower maintenance costs, and the ability to easily tow them to new destinations. These boats appeal to a broad range of boaters, from first-time buyers to seasoned owners looking for something easy to manage.

Well-kept boats in the 20–30 foot range are selling steadily, especially those with newer outboards, clean hulls, and updated technology. Late-model inventory (generally five years old or newer) tends to move fast, as today's buyers are looking for turn-key options that allow them to get out on the water immediately. Modern electronics, joystick controls, premium sound systems, and stylish upholstery all help listings stand out.

Seasonal timing also plays a role—dealers and brokers report that late fall can be a smart time for buyers to act. Sellers looking to move inventory before winter often price competitively, and serious buyers can take advantage of favorable financing options and flexible closing timelines.

What's Sitting:

Older boats in need of cosmetic or mechanical work are having a tougher time attracting attention. With higher parts and labor costs, fewer buyers are willing to take on major projects. Listings that show deferred maintenance, aging engines, or missing service records tend to linger.

Boats that are overvalued for their condition or year are also sitting longer. Pricing has normalized after the pandemic-era surge, and buyers today are more price-sensitive and well-informed. They're comparing listings, reviewing market data, and making value-driven decisions. A clean, well-priced boat with transparent records will almost always sell before an overpriced one.

Market Outlook:

The broader picture is one of stability, not slowdown. Demand remains healthy—particularly in coastal and lakefront regions—and the market continues to reward quality listings. Financing remains accessible, and marine lending activity has stayed consistent throughout the year, suggesting steady buyer confidence.

Whether you're selling or buying, preparation and presentation matter more than ever. Sellers should ensure their boats are clean, well-documented, and accurately priced. Buyers, meanwhile, should be ready to act quickly when the right boat comes along. For more detailed guidance on getting ready to list or purchase, be sure to read [our buyer/seller checklist article](#) later in this newsletter -- it's full of practical tips to help you make the most of your next transaction.

