



"Email me or call me with your questions! I'll be happy to help you out"

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Dave Weakley is the owner of American Boat Restoration and has been helping boaters keep their boats in fine trim and good repair for over 30 years from Catskill to Lake George & Western New England.

"For Sale" on the internet – Don't Be Taken For A Ride.

Just in the last month I have spoken to four people who either bought boats or almost bought a boat that was "For Sale" on the Internet. Two people bought boats with rotted transoms and stringers and one buyer bought a vessel with no hull ID #, no engine # and no trailer ID; he was told "the paper work was on its way" a while ago. He is still waiting

for paper work. A good friend almost put a deposit on a pontoon boat that my son-in-law Tim found on the popular Craigslist web site. It seemed like a great deal. The perfect pontoon boat! It was the kind of boat that he had been looking to buy for a long time.

Here's the ad --

2007 Sun Tracker Party Barge Regency 22 with tandem axle trailer and 06 Mercury 4-stroke 115hp outboard. Pics taken after quick interior wash, so some of the carpet wasn't completely dry, those ARE NOT stains, just wet spots. This boat is next to new and has a reserve for less than half of new retail! Don't miss out on years of family fun on this top notch, well maintained gem.

Options on this boat are:

***Suntracker custom fit canvas mooring cover..... great shape, no rips or tears or missing snaps.**

***2007 tandem axle trailstar trailer with brakes..... good shape, tires are strong, only used for two trips to Table Rock Lake from St. Louis. Front of trailer was bumped by a neighbor so brakes are disconnected because of a damaged actuator. Easy to replace, just haven't gotten around to it since it doesn't really need it. Other than that it is fine and will tow anywhere you need to go.**

***Upgraded to 2006 4 stroke 115hp Mercury for the ease of use and reliability. Low hours since most of the time spent on a pontoon is driving to a cove and anchoring there for the day! Great motor runs as strong now as the first day on the lake. Aluminum propeller is also in good shape. The only negatives to this boat are normal wear and tear items that I have included pictures of here. 1. Some minor decal "chips" on port side of boat, SEE PIC. 2. Minor ding port side aft by gas filler**

Our friend emailed the seller and he replied; *"The photos are recent and the boat hasn't been used since. Original owner, 198 hours, 4-stroke 115hp outboard Mercury engine, tandem axle trailer included, 12 people capacity with luxury features, full instruments (incl. compass, depth finder), and very well maintained, no mechanical problems and no electrical issues, clear title free of any liens or loans and more.*

I'm out of town with business in Wyoming because I own some summer cabins here and need to do some renovating before the new season opens. To sell the boat, I'll need to travel home, so please let me know if you are seriously interested."

Our friend emailed the seller again asking its location

"The boat is sitting inside our garage back in New Bedford, MA. I don't have a scheduled return to Washington by June 22nd and I have no one left back there to show the boat since my entire family lives here. I would like to use Amazon Payments to handle the transaction, check their terms over here: <http://secure.online-paymentsamazon.com/howitworks.htm> (check also their transaction guide to familiarize yourself with the process)

I've chosen this type of service because I flew back home to meet a buyer a week ago, he told me he had cash but it turned out he was a middleman and wanted to significantly hassle the price. This type of service would assure me the money is available and that we agreed on a price before doing the travel arrangements."

I can travel back as soon as next weekend to arrange for local pickup as soon as we start the transaction through Amazon Payments.

Sounded like a good deal and it looked nice in the photos. Seller made it sound all legit and honest even showing images of scratches and dents.

After having a conversation with my friend about where the boat was located I told Tim. He had called the seller and was told the boat was in Grand Rapids, Michigan!! Red Flag! Something is fishy. I called my friend and said DO NOT put a deposit on this boat; sounds like a scam. They listened to my advice.

I did some more research on the same boat and found it for sale on Craigslist in South Florida. I emailed the seller. His response was exactly the same he sent to my friend. I emailed back and asked where the boat was located and he responded

"Miami". This guy is a real scumbag. Makes me wonder how he can sleep at night.

Two other people as mentioned previously purchased boats through Craigslist and the boats looked great via photos and sellers said the boats were in "good" condition. Unfortunately both boats had transom and stringer deterioration so bad that the repairs would cost thousands of dollars.

Here's another situation;

"I purchased a used boat from a craigslist posting. It turned out to be a lemon. Is there any way to get my money back?"

A portion of the sellers ad read: "Date: 2010-06-24, Type: Bow rider Engine type: Single inboard/outboard Use: Fresh water Length (feet): 19.0 Engine make: Mercury Primary fuel type: Gas Beam (feet): -- Engine model: 233HP Fuel capacity (gallons): 21-30 Hull material: Fiberglass Trailer: Included The boat features a 233 HP Mercruiser outdrive. The good stuff: 233 HP engine (Ford 351) 2005, New carburetor in 2005, New tilt cylinders in 2005, Trim tabs, Like new bimini, Full canvas, Outdrive replaced in 2007, Hummingbird Excellent teak trim, Surge Brakes, New trailer tires 2008 Call 973 343-XXXX for a great deal!" Today I put it on the water, never left the dock because the engine starting taking on water and shut it off. The engine block is cracked. Is there anyway to get my money back?

There is no lemon law for boats in most states. You must look to the uniform commercial code, (UCC), Magnuson-Moss Warranty Act, and local UDAP statutes to determine if you have a good case. Based on the advertisement, there seems to be no representations about the engine. If you didn't get a written warranty, you must generally rely on written or verbal statements made by the seller to create a warranty. The seller will surely argue this is an "as-is" sale. In fact, your purchase documents may reflect just that. (A lawyer would need to review all of your documents to provide you with an answer here). However you should know that "as-is" it means you buy the boat with all its defects. Basically, if the vehicle is not warranted, you may not have a claim. I suggest you provide all the documents and information to an experienced consumer protection attorney. You can find one at www.naca.net.

Yes, there maybe some good deals out on the internet. Best to buy something nearby so you can personally inspect it. Just keep in mind if it's "too good to be true" be cautious; you maybe getting ripped off. Always get a marine survey and have a mechanic go over the motors, a few dollars during the buying process can save you thousands afterward.

Best advise; buy a boat through proper channels Start your search at a local marina.

You can see it, hear it run, ride in it, drive it before you buy it!

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The Cruisers boat featured in May 2012 Issue is nearing completion. See cover photo. Images shown are of the repair in progress on the big hole caused by a 10" cleat being torn out of the starboard side transom.

