



RESOURCE

New vs Used, Gas vs Electric: What Changes Boat-Buying Math

Condition, warranty, propulsion, and length each move the ownership-cost math in a specific, calculable direction, not just a matter of taste or budget.

Every head-to-head boat comparison is the same shape underneath

New versus used, gas versus electric, single versus twin engine, one length against another, they all reduce to the same underlying comparison: acquisition cost, recurring cost across an ownership horizon, and resale value at the end, run for two specific candidates rather than compared in the abstract. What changes between comparisons is which variable moves the most.

New vs used: condition risk against a known price premium

A new boat's premium buys a warranty and no unknown history; a used boat's discount comes with condition risk that a survey can reduce but not eliminate. [New vs Used Boat Economics](#) compares both on the same ownership horizon, acquisition, recurring cost, and resale all included, instead of comparing sticker prices alone, which is the comparison that most overstates how much new actually costs.

Gas vs electric: a mission-fit question before a cost one

Electric propulsion changes the fuel and maintenance side of the ownership equation meaningfully, but range and charging infrastructure make it a mission-fit question first. [Electric vs Gas Boat Lifecycle Cost](#) runs the lifecycle-cost side once mission fit is established, not as a substitute for checking whether electric range actually covers how you use the boat.

Length and engine configuration: two more candidate-vs-candidate questions

Moving up in length rarely costs proportionally to the extra length itself, storage, insurance, and fuel all tend to scale faster; [Boat Length Cost Curve](#) shows what a specific size increase actually costs against a real alternative rather than a generic cost-per-foot rule. A single-versus-twin engine decision is a similar shape: redundancy and performance against a real cost delta, covered in [Single vs Twin Engine Ownership Cost](#).

What to actually check before running any of these comparisons

- Whether both candidates are being compared on the same ownership horizon, since a short horizon favors the cheaper acquisition and a long one favors the cheaper recurring cost.
- Whether resale is a real, sourced estimate for both candidates, not an assumption that only one side depreciates.
- Whether the "premium" side of a comparison, new, electric, or longer, actually solves a use or condition problem the other side has, not just a preference.
- Whether a survey or due-diligence cost belongs in the used or private side of a comparison before the numbers are treated as final.

