

Tips on crossing the border to and from Canada

Here's some basic information on crossing the maritime border from the United States into Canada and back again.

Bring your:

- Passports for all passengers (make sure they're not expired)
- NEXUS cards for all passengers (if applicable)
- U.S. Customs CBP ROAM app, loaded and configured on your smartphone or tablet, for easy entry back into the U.S.

Do NOT bring:

- Rules are fluid on eggs, chicken, and citrus fruit; best to buy them after you arrive.
- Cannabis in any form, even CBD. It doesn't matter that it's legal on both sides of the border, and the penalties are extreme.
- Firearms without proper documentation (see <https://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/import/iefw-iefw-eng.html#a6>)
- [Know your limits](#) for alcohol and tobacco (and google "bar stock" if you're unfamiliar with that concept)

Entering Canada with NEXUS

- All passengers aboard must have NEXUS cards
- The Boat Captain is responsible for reporting
- Between 30 minutes and 4 hours before arriving in Canada, call NEXUS marine reporting center at 1-866-99-NEXUS (1-866-996-3987)
- Be prepared to provide the following information:
 - Boat name / registration number
 - Location where you'll first land in Canada
 - Estimated time of arrival
 - Purpose of trip, and estimated length of time in Canada
 - Information about each passenger aboard
 - Description of food, plants, animals, liquor, tobacco, firearms, etc. that you have aboard
- Write down the arrival number provided to you and display it throughout your time in Canada
- Note that you may be instructed to report to a Port of Entry to meet with a Customs agent in person

Entering Canada without NEXUS

- Boat directly to the most convenient Border Services Port of Entry
- Tie up to the Customs dock (do not anchor or tie to any other dock)
- Speak to a Customs officer in person, or use the provided land-line telephone to reach a Customs officer
- Provide the information listed in the section above
- Write down the arrival number provided to you and display it throughout your time in Canada

More detailed information can be found here: <https://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/travel-voyage/pb-pp-eng.html>

Returning to the United States

Do NOT bring:

- Citrus fruit, fresh tomatoes, fresh peppers—even with U.S. country of origin stickers
- Raw poultry or eggs
- Homegrown fruits or vegetables
- Cannabis in any form

Clearing U.S. Customs Remotely

U.S. Customs now allows mariners returning from Canada to declare their arrival into the United States remotely through the use of the free CBP ROAM app, available for download from the [Apple App Store](#) or the [Google Play Store](#). The CBP ROAM app allows you to submit a report of your impending arrival back into the U.S. online without having to travel to a Port of Entry and report in person.

The CBP ROAM app does take some time to configure as you need to enter all information for yourself, all passengers, and your boat ahead of time. This includes passport numbers, pictures of passports, trusted traveler numbers if applicable (e.g. NEXUS), and your boat's make, year, registration information, name, and your User Fee Decal Number information (if you haven't purchased your annual User Fee Decal for 2024 — it's required for all U.S. vessels over 30' in length and costs \$34.83 this year — you can order it online from within the app and provide the payment tracking number as the actual decal will be sent to you in the mail)

It might sound like a lot of work, but it really pays off when you're on your voyage home and you can clear U.S. Customs from your helm in a few minutes vs. boating to a Port of Entry dock (either Friday Harbor or Anacortes) and waiting in line for a Customs agent to clear you. (And you'll need to buy that decal from said Customs agent anyway if you don't already have the 2024 sticker on your boat).

Here's a great tutorial on how to download, configure, and use the CBP ROAM app:
<https://commutercruiser.com/step-by-step-how-to-use-the-cbp-roam-app-to-check-in-to-the-us/>

Submit your online arrival report after you've crossed over the border into the U.S., not before. If you submit your report while still in Canadian waters it will likely be rejected and you'll need to start over with a new report.

Clearing U.S. Customs In Person

If you're more comfortable visiting a Customs dock, you must boat directly to either the Customs dock at Friday Harbor (Roche Harbor is no longer a port of entry) or Cap Sante Marina in Anacortes. You may not touch land along the way (this includes anchoring).

The Friday Harbor Customs dock is on the breakwater as you enter the marina. Tie up, use the phone on the dock to call the Customs office, and wait for an officer to arrive.

To arrive at Cap Sante, call the Anacortes U.S. Customs office at (360) 293-2331 an hour before arriving at the marina for instructions on where to meet an officer.

Present your passport, NEXUS card, or Enhanced Driver's License, answer the agent's questions about how long you were in Canada, where you went, and what you're bringing back, and you should be good to go.

Welcome home!