

TOP 10 APPS

BOATING AND FISHING

YOUR SMART DEVICE CAN HELP YOU PLAN YOUR BOATING AND FISHING ADVENTURES DOWN TO THE FINEST DETAIL. MICK FLETORIDIS GIVES THE LOWDOWN ON HIS FAVOURITE APPS.



BOATING TECHNOLOGY

In the modern age, boaters and anglers have technology at their fingertips that can accurately predict weather and sea conditions and display detailed satellite imagery of Australia's waterways and landmass. With the advent of the smartphone, this sort of information is now available to anyone, virtually anywhere and often for free or at minimal cost. As long as signal coverage is available your mobile phone can deliver vital real time info whenever you want it.

This technology makes the planning of boating and fishing trips as easy as can be. Spending a few minutes connecting to your favourite apps from the comfort of a lounge chair before your trip can save you on-water time looking for new areas to fish, better places to launch, set up camp and more. Boating and fishing apps can give you the ability to: map new areas to explore, find bays to shelter in from forecast winds, check tides, research local techniques, source water levels, view moon phases, discover where/when to fish – the list is endless. To get you started, here's a run-down on some popular apps that boaters and anglers should find particularly useful.

For more information on the apps, search the App Store online for Apple iOS devices and Google Play for Android devices.



WILLYWEATHER

I've been using the free Willyweather app more and more these days before hitting the water. It has a well featured user-friendly format that includes all aspects of weather forecasting including BOM radar and satellite graphs, rain, tide, swell and UV forecasts, moon phases, and sunrise and sunset times. I find its wind graphs particularly useful and, at most times, very accurate. Depending on your location you can type in the nearest town or suburb and it will give wind direction and speed read-outs sourced from the closest weather station. This app proved its worth and accuracy on recent trout fishing trips to the Snowy Mountains where wind direction changes can greatly affect your options and fishing success. The Willyweather app is well worth installing and the price definitely won't break the bank! Available for iOS and Android.

When fishing it doesn't hurt to have a couple of weather apps on hand for comparing forecasts and wind direction predictions.

TOP RIGHT: Apps that allow you to pair your sounder GPS to your phone or those of your friends can be very useful.



BOM WEATHER

A boatie can never have too many weather apps for comparing forecasts. The Australian Government's Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) weather app is, as you might expect, the most accurate and detailed weather information app you'll find – probably the reason most other weather apps source it for their forecasting and graphs. The BOM app features boating specific weather forecasts for locations right around Australia, delivers live updates and weather alerts as well as real time rain radar graphs that can be particularly useful for predicting incoming storm activity in the area you happen to be situated. Available for iOS and Android. For more information go to www.bom.gov.au/app



GOOGLE EARTH

Google Earth has been a real game changer for anglers and boaters. This powerful satellite imagery based program has the potential to open up the world to new fishing and boating possibilities. It's an amazing tool for researching unexplored territory and remote waterways. If you've ever been on the road and crossed a fishy looking river, a few minutes spent on Google Earth can quickly unlock its secrets – before you know it, you can be casting a line in an inviting honey hole far from the madding crowd. While its imagery, especially when zoomed in, can lag annoyingly Google Earth is still a must-have app for any portable device. If not already installed on your device Google Earth is a free app available for both iOS and Android.



NAVIONICS BOATING

Anyone who runs a sounder GPS unit complete with Navionics cartography will easily take to using this app via smartphone or tablet. It features all the great detail that boaters have come to expect from Navionics digital charts and mapping programs. With the Navionics Boating app you can research depth contours and new offshore locations before you leave home. Just as on your boat's MFD, waypoints and routes can be easily logged in to your portable smart device. Handily, all chart information can be easily viewed on a small screen. This powerful app can drain battery power though so adjusting your phone to automatically black out the screen while not viewing charts will help in this regard. Available for iOS and Android for free; detailed Navionics charts cost extra to install. More information at www.navionics.com/en/mobile-pc-app



GOFREE LINK

This app from Navico is particularly useful for anyone who has a Lowrance, Simrad sounder

GPS unit or B&G instrumentation fitted on their boat. As I currently run a Simrad sounder this app gives me the ability to wirelessly pair my iPhone to my console mounted sounder and view read-out displays from anywhere around the boat. Anyone else on board can do the same if they have the app on their device. Very handy for when someone fishing up at the bow has no direct line of sight to the console. A quick glance at their phone and there's no need to ask what the bottom contours are like or how deep the water is or if any fish are about! Works with Lowrance HDS Gen2/Gen3 units, Simrad NSO, NSS, G07 series, B&G Zeus 2, Vulcan 7, Zeus Touch. Available free for iOS devices only.



FISHTRACK

If you're a keen offshore angler Fishtrack is one app you'll definitely find useful. As sea temperature and current status generally dictate where offshore gamefish are found, Fishtrack can help you pinpoint likely locations via the app's offshore sea temperature and colour charts. Touch the

screen at a likely looking area and the app displays GPS coordinates and water temperature read-outs in real time. If you find a particularly hot patch of water chances are gamefish like marlin won't be too far away. Plug in the location's coordinates into your GPS, plot a course and you're away. The app also offers sea surface height, up-to-date marine weather forecasts and more. Free trial app available for iOS devices.



FISHING KNOTS (LITE)

If you're a bit rusty on fishing knots this handy app can help you brush up on your tying skills.

It features a host of popular tried and tested basic knots as well as newer more specialised connections. Select the sort of knot you want e.g. line to hook, joining two lines, loop knot etc. via illustrations or name and follow the simple tying steps. Each knot has information on strength in percentage and suitable line types. The developers say the app is constantly being updated and a more detailed Pro version is available for \$7.99. Available free for iOS.

"THIS APP PROVED ITS WORTH ON RECENT TROUT FISHING TRIPS"



GOPRO CAPTURE

With many boaters and anglers these days using the world's most popular action cam to record on-board action, this app can be a very handy tool. Capture gives GoPro users the ability to control all functions of their cameras remotely. The app also allows viewing of photos and videos on smart devices as well as sharing on the go to social media. If you have a GoPro mounted to your boat's bow or stern the app allows you to control start and stop video recording, shoot photos or quickly adjust all settings. With a GoPro Plus subscription, you can also upload your photos and videos to the cloud for safe keeping and easy access anytime. Free to download for iOS and Android.



MOON PHASE

This one might seem a bit out of left field, but for boaters, especially anglers who regularly use the moon and tides to plan their trips, Moon Phase is a highly informative and fun app to use. It displays every phase of the moon in detail with amazing clarity, daily, (imagery

supplied by NASA) for wherever you happen to be, not just the nearest city. It will give you a countdown to the next phase of the moon to the minute as well as a current simulation of the moon as it appears to you. See moon rise and set times for planning your boating trip around lunar activities. Excellent app developed in Australia by Kiwi, Peter Smith. Free to download for iOS devices.



AUSTRALIAN BOAT RAMP FINDER

With many boaters travelling right around the country these days, chances are boat ramps aren't always easy to locate. This app should take the headache out of finding your next launch site. Australian Boat Ramp Finder claims to currently have listings for 1528 boat ramp locations around Oz. It features a search function that locates ramps near to your position or by specific locations. The app provides directions to the nearest ramp and requires cellular mobile data connection. Available for iOS only for \$1.49.

TOP LEFT: Google Earth can help you explore new locations and view potential camp sites before you leave home.

TOP RIGHT: Your smart phone can quickly help you locate boat ramps in unfamiliar areas.

ABOVE: Game fishers can quickly take advantage of apps such as Fishtrack which provide detailed information on offshore water temperatures and currents.