In 2015, the United States Coast Guard counted 4,158 accidents that involved 626 deaths and approximately 2,613 injuries and approximately $42 million dollars of damage to property as a result of recreational boating accidents.

The top five primary contributing factors of accidents:

1. **Operator Inattention**
   Failure on the part of the operator to pay attention to the vessel, its occupants, or the environment in which the vessel is operating.

2. **Operator Inexperience**
   Lack of practical experience or knowledge in operating a vessel or, more particularly, the vessel involved in the accident.

3. **Improper Lookout**
   No proper watch; the failure of the operator to perceive danger because no one was serving as lookout, or the person so serving failed in that regard. Every vessel shall at all times maintain a proper lookout by sight and hearing as well as by all available means appropriate in the prevailing circumstances and conditions so as to make a full appraisal of the situation and of the risk of collision.

4. **Machinery Failure**
   Defect and/or failure in the machinery or material, design or construction, or components installed by the manufacturer involved in the mechanical propulsion of the boat (e.g., engine, transmission, fuel system, electric system, and steering system).

5. **Excessive Speed**
   Speed above that which a reasonable and prudent person would have operated under the conditions that existed. It is not necessarily a speed in excess of a posted limit.

Source: 2015 Recreational Boating Statistics U.S. Coast Guard