



Pontoon Water Glide

By Dan
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The 110-pound PWG arrives on packing crates and the kit comes complete with the Performance Sheeting and all-stainless steel hardware required for the installation. The pod measures 10 feet, 1 inch long, 35 inches wide and is 26 inches high.

A great do-it-yourself project

The tools required for the installation include a power drill, saw, drivers, clamps, bottle jack, level, straight edges and safety gear for use when drilling and cutting, including a dust mask and safety glasses. Note the WD-40, a squirt of which eases the through-metal drilling and screwing process.



His wife loves the Ohio couple's Bennington, a 22-foot pontoon boat that Doug Stewart has customized for the dual uses of fishing (Doug) and cruising (Cindy) and the couple also enjoy their local lake. The 2003 Bennington 2275 is powered by a Honda 75hp outboard of the same vintage, and the pairing has proven adequate for the combination of pursuits. However, as their kids grew older and the boating interests of family and friends have leaned more toward the

active water sports, the couple began investigating options for getting a little better performance from the beloved family rig.

That's when Doug found the advertisement for the Pontoon Water Glide (PWG) within the pages of PDB magazine. The PWG acts as a hydrofoil to lift pontoon boats and offer better planing and handling, is constructed of composite material and filled with marine-grade polyurethane foam to give the boat an additional 684 pounds of flotation.

At speed, the PWG actually reduces the amount of pontoon surface area in contact with the water to reduce drag while offering a center pivot point to allow for higher speeds, tighter turning and improved performance overall.

Editor Brady Kay reviewed the PWG a decade ago this month (March 2004 issue), shortly after they were introduced. After referencing that article and subsequent ones where some owners realized speeds of a 10 mile-per-hour increase, studying



Aluminum Performance Sheeting panels are installed under the deck to deflect and direct water flow around the PWG pod.



Doug Stewart bolts on the rails that suspend the pod from the deck's crossbeams. The rails are removable, allowing the PWG to be re-installed on another pontoon boat.

the reviews on the website and conferring with the PWG representative, Doug decided to add one to his Bennington—and to allow me to document (and assist with) the DIY installation.

It's a two-man job, and requires basic skills with basic power tools and some heavy lifting. That said, we installed the PWG in a long afternoon with no issues. Here are the major steps in the process.



The sides of the pod are cut for a custom fit using a simple formula based on the deck height and waterline.

(Below) The PWG pod is secured via the rails to the deck cross beams. This is when an extra hand—or a jack or two—come in handy.



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With the backyard installation job complete, it's time for Doug Stewart to give his customized craft a sea trial.



Stewart initiates a power turn during the PWG-equipped sea trial of his Bennington last autumn. In addition to a 3 mph increase in speed he netted, tighter turning is what impressed the owner the most about the enhanced handling offered by the PWG.



The first difference Stewart points out is the boat's higher profile, thanks to the added flotation offered by the PWG. Note the chutes of wash exiting either side of the outboard as he throttles up. The flotation offered by the PWG dropped his boat's waterline by almost two inches, giving the boat a higher profile and attitude with relation to the water.

A head-on shot shows the attitude of the PWG in the water as Doug Stewart approaches his dock, which lifts the boat with additional flotation as well as adding chines to assist in turns. With the increased flotation, he plans to lower the outboard this season to see how much more top-end speed he gains. Some owners have realized more than a 10 mile-per-hour increase in their top-end speed.

"I'll finally be able to turn tight enough to force the water-tubers back and forth across the wake," say Doug Stewart.

The PWG Kit, completed with Performance Sheeting, is \$1950, plus shipping, from www.pontoonwaterglide.com.

