

4-Stroke Outboard Motor Vs a 2-Stroke Outboards

The decision to purchase an outboard engine is getting more selective as technology improves. As of now the majority of consumers are faced with several options when deciding upon what kind of outboards will best suite them. The number one factor lately is whether to purchase a new or used two stroke or four stroke engine.

When faced with this decision you must prioritize several features that are prevalent in each motor. For example, two-stroke motors are lighter, faster (in most cases) and less expensive. Four-stroke motors are cleaner, smoother, and more economical. Many people who run in lakes and rivers prefer 4 stroke boat motors because they make great trolling motors and meet the 2006 EPA mandated requirements. Others prefer 2 stroke engines when the need for top end performance and acceleration takes precedence. This is not to say that two-stroke engines cannot troll or four stroke motors are not fast. It's just a matter of preferences, features, and benefits that attract customers. Regardless of what you choose to purchase, if you use due diligence and do your research you cannot go wrong, Below is a table of pros and cons for both motors:

2-Stroke Outboards

Pros*	Cons*
Lighter	More Pollution
Accelerate Fast, In some Cases More Top End	Smoke
Purchase Price Less Expensive	Must Mix Gas with Oil (Non Oil Injection Models)
Easier to Repair	Rougher Idle than 4 strokes
Have Been Around For Almost 80 Years	Noiser than Four Stroke Outboards
Very Strong Used Market	Harder to Start (in some cases)
Parts Availability	Carburetors gum up if not used often
High Resale Value, High Demand	Spark Plug Fouling
Simple Design Meaning Less Things To Go Wrong	-

4-Stroke Outboards

Pros*	Cons*
Quiet and Smooth	Heavy
Good Fuel Economy	Often Expensive to Repair
Great Trolling Motors	Not As Many Trained Mechanics Yet (Growing Rapidly)
No Oil/Gas Mixture	Often Expensive to Purchase
Smooth Idle	Technology Still Being Improved
Less Pollution	Very Limited Used Market (Although Growing Rapidly)
Accepted at Any Body of Water	More Parts to Malfunction (Technology Improving)*
Future Production will Be all 4-Stroke or Similar	Most Not as Powerful as 2-Stroke Rated At Same HP*
Very Reliable	Harder to transport or position in storage w/o a stand

Summary:

What should I buy, a 4-Stroke or a 2-Stroke?

Well that really depends on your boating situation. Here is list that may help you decide which motor is appropriate for you.

Choosing a Four-Stroke Outboard Engine

- When you are required to operate in a "4-Stroke Only" body of water
- To use as a lake trolling motor when smooth and quiet operation is a priority
- Larger budget to spend on a motor
- When weight of engine is not an issue
- When you feel as though noise and smoke are serious factors in your purchasing decision
- To use as a kicker or emergency back up motor on your boat.
- If you don't want the hassle of mixing gas and oil.
- If you are dissatisfied with two stroke performance

Choosing a Two-Stroke Outboard Engine

- When you are not required to operate in a "4-Stroke Only" body of water
- To use as an emergency back up or kicker motor
- Limited budget to spend on a motor
- When weight of engine is an issue and you want the most power for the weight.
- Familiarity with engine repairs
- Limit budge on repair costs
- Hard usage and abuse and you want something that can be modified, repaired, and adjusted easily
- Speed, acceleration, top-end, and performance are issues.
- Interested in finding a good deal on a used motor. There are more used 2-stroke outboards available.
- If you want motor that all marine mechanics are certified to work on.

You really cannot go wrong with either choice. Both motors have their advantages and limitations. Right now you are safe to purchase a 2-stroke motor in most places and not have to worry about being excluded from boating. There are some lakes that require 4-stroke motors but the majority have not adapted these mandates yet. We suggest that you review some of the information on this page as a source of knowledge when it comes time to purchase an outboard motor.