

Are you a member of a boating organization

To schedule a *Locking Through* program at your organization's location, call the Lockmaster at (206) 789-2622, extention 202.

Kayaks, Canoes and other non_motorized vessels

Kayaks, Canoes and other non-motorized vessels are not allowed in the large locks. Stay clear of the large lock waiting piers and traffic channels. Our ability to see you is enhanced if you stay on the South side of the channel. You will be notified by our public address system or by hand signals when it is safe to enter the small lock chamber. Please follow the safety tips below to facilitate your safe passage through the locks.

- Yield to larger vessels as they will be entering the chamber first for your safety.
- Do not approach the spillway gates as strong currents and eddys may exist at any time.
- While waiting for the locks on the downstream side you should wait on the South side of the channel between the small lock waiting pier and the public steps along the shoreline at Commodore Park.
- While waiting for the locks on the upstream side you should wait on the South side of the channel East of the southern finger pier between the pier and Lockhaven Marina.
- Please be aware there are many potential hazards in the area and you need to stay alert to boating

and water conditions around you.

- If possible visit the locks to learn what conditions you will encounter when transiting the locks.
- Attend one of our Locking Through classes.

Navigating the Ship Canal

Welcome to the Locks!

Construction of the Lake Washington Ship Canal and Hiram M. Chittenden Locks was completed in 1917 by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Connecting the waters of Lake Washington, Lake Union, and Salmon Bay to the tidal waters of Puget Sound, the canal and locks allow recreational and commercial vessels to travel to the docks and warehouses of Seattle's busy fresh water harbor.

As the popularity of these freshwater ports has increased, the volume of traffic using the canal and locks has also increased. To accommodate this increase safely and efficiently, the greatest of care, judgment, and boating courtesy must be exercised by every boat handler.

This part of the web site outlines the safe and proper way to use the Canal and Locks. It is intended for the first time user as well as return users to help assure that your experience in the Lake Washington Ship Canal and at the Hiram M. Chittenden Locks is safe and memorable.

Helpful Information

- [Before Locking Through](#)
- [Small Lock - Be prepared to tie up on either side of the lock chamber](#)
- [Large Lock - Be prepared to tie up on either side of the lock chamber](#)
- [Bridge & Traffic Signals](#)
- [How to Conquer the Ballard Locks and Maintain Your Sanity](#)

First time through the Locks Free Classes Offered!

Attend a free *Locking Through* program provided in the visitor center theater:

- Second Wednesday January through March at 7 p.m.
- Second and fourth Wednesdays April through September at 7 p.m.

Join us to learn how to successfully transit our locks. Conquer your fears and make locking through an enjoyable experience.

Links of Interest

[Video 1 - Locking Through - 3 minutes 21 seconds](#)

[Video 2 - Waiting to Lock Through - 3 minutes 19 seconds](#)

[Video 3 - Large Lock - 4 minutes 37 seconds](#)

[Video 4 - Small Lock - 1 minutes 48 seconds](#)

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