

PFD INFORMATION ON WEARING AND CARING:

BUOYANCY: Most adults only need an extra seven to twelve pounds of buoyancy to keep their heads above water. A PFD can give that "extra lift," and it's made to keep you floating until help comes. But a PFD is a personal flotation device and it's important to get the right one for you.

Your weight isn't the only factor in finding out how much "extra lift" you need in water. Body fat, lung size, clothing, and whether the water is rough or calm, all play a part.

Read the label on your PFD to be sure it's made for people your weight and size. Test it as shown in the next section. Then in an emergency, don't panic. Relax, put your head back and let your PFD help you come out on top.

HIGHER BUOYANCY MEANS HIGHER LIFT

Type PFDs	Minimum Adult Buoyancy in Pounds
I - Inflatable	33.0
I - Buoyant Foam or Kapok	22.0
II - Inflatable	33.0
II - Buoyant Foam or Kapok	15.5
III - Inflatable	22.0
III - Buoyant Foam	15.5
IV - Ring Buoys	16.5
IV - Boat Cushions	18.0
V - Hybrid Inflatables	22.0 (Fully inflated) 7.5 (Deflated)
V - Special Use Device - Inflatable	22.0 to 34.0
V - Special Use Device - Buoyant Foam	15.5 to 22.0

TRY YOUR PFD:

- Try on your PFD to see if it fits comfortably snug. Then test it in shallow water to see how it handles.
- To check the buoyancy of your PFD in the water, relax your body and let your head tilt back. Make sure your PFD keeps your chin above water and you can breathe easily.
- Be aware: your PFD may not act the same in swift or rough water as in calm water. The clothes you wear and the items in your pockets may also change the way your PFD works.
- If your mouth is not well above the water, get a new PFD or one with more buoyancy.
- A PFD is designed not to ride-up on the body when in the water. But, when a wearer's stomach is larger than the chest, ride-up may occur. Before use, test this PFD in the water to establish that excessive ride-up does not impair PFD performance.

WEAR YOUR PFD:

- Most drownings occur way out at sea, right? Wrong! Fact is, 9 out of 10 drownings occur in inland waters, most within a few feet of safety. Most of the victims owned PFDs, but they died without them. A wearable PFD can save your life, if you wear it.
- If you haven't been wearing your PFD because of the way it makes you look or feel, there's good news. Today's PFDs fit better, look better and are easy to move around in.
- One more thing. Before you shove off, make sure all on board are wearing PFDs. To work best, PFDs must be worn with all straps, zippers, and ties fastened. Tuck in any loose strap ends to avoid getting hung-up.
- When you don't wear your PFD, the odds are against you. You're taking a chance on your life.


CARING FOR YOUR PFD:

Follow these points to be sure your PFD stays in good condition:

1. Don't alter your PFD. If yours doesn't fit, get one that does. Play it safe. An altered PFD may not save your life.
2. Don't put heavy objects on your PFD or use it for a kneeling pad or boat fender. PFDs lose buoyancy when crushed.
3. Let your PFD drip dry thoroughly before putting it away. Always stow it in a well-ventilated place.
4. Don't leave your PFD on board for long periods when the boat is not in use.
5. Never dry your PFD on a radiator, heater, or any other direct heat source.
6. Put your name on your PFD if you're the only wearer.
7. Practice throwing your Type IV PFD. Cushions throw best underhand.

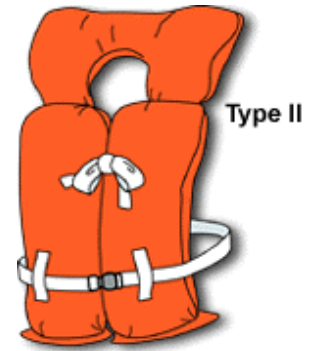
CHECKING YOUR PFD:

- Your PFD is required to be in serviceable condition in order to be used on your boat as one of the required PFDs.
- Check your PFD often for rips, tears, and holes, and to see that seams, fabric straps, and hardware are okay. There should be no signs of waterlogging, mildew odor, or shrinkage of the buoyant materials.
- If your PFD uses bags of kapok (a naturally buoyant material), gently squeeze the bag to check for air leaks. If it leaks, it should be thrown away. When kapok gets wet, it can get stiff or waterlogged and can lose some of its buoyancy.
- Don't forget to test each PFD at the start of each season. Remember, the law says your PFDs must be in good shape before you use your boat. Ones that are not in good shape should be cut up and thrown away.

PFD Descriptions	Illustrations
<p>TYPE I: Offshore Life Jackets</p> <p>These vests are geared for rough or remote waters where rescue may take awhile. They provide the most buoyancy, are excellent for flotation, and will turn most unconscious persons face up in the water.</p>	 <p style="text-align: right;">Type I</p>

TYPE II: Near-Shore Vests

These vests are good for calm waters when quick assistance or rescue is likely. Type II vests will turn some unconscious wearers face up in the water, but the turning is not as pronounced as with a Type I.



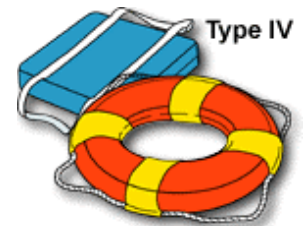
TYPE III: Flotation Aids

These vests or full-sleeved jackets are good for calm waters when quick assistance or rescue is likely. They are not recommended for rough waters since they will not turn most unconscious persons face up. Type III PFDs are used for water sports such as water-skiing. Some Type III PFDs are designed to inflate when you enter the water.



TYPE IV: Throwable Devices/Not Wearable

These cushions and ring buoys are designed to be thrown to someone in trouble. Since a Type IV PFD is not designed to be worn, it is neither for rough waters nor for persons who are unable to hold onto it.



TYPE V: Special-Use Devices

These vests, deck suits, hybrid PFDs, and others are designed for specific activities such as windsurfing, kayaking, or water-skiing. Some Type V PFDs are designed to inflate when you enter the water. **To be acceptable, Type V PFDs must be worn and used in accordance with their label.**

