

Your Guide to Life Jackets



Off-Shore Life Jackets

These life jackets provide the most buoyancy. They are effective for all waters, especially open, rough, or remote waters where rescue may be delayed. They are designed to turn an unconscious wearer to a face-up position in the water.

Near-Shore Buoyancy Vests

These life jackets are intended for calm, inland waters or where there is a good chance of quick rescue. This type will turn some unconscious wearers to a face-up position in the water, but the turning is not as pronounced as with an off-shore life jacket.

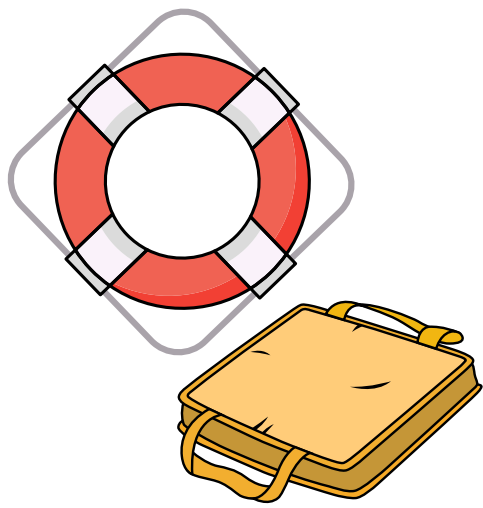
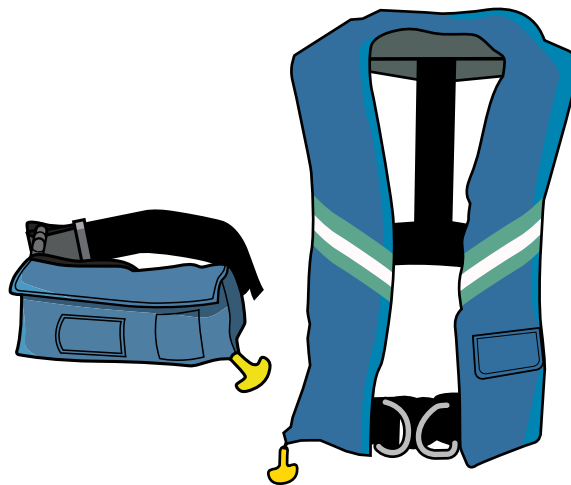


Flotation Aids

These life jackets are good for users in calm, inland waters, or anywhere there is a good chance of quick rescue. The wearer may have to tilt their head back to remain in a face-up position in the water. This type has the same minimum buoyancy as near-shore buoyancy vests, but generally will not turn an unconscious wearer to a face-up position in the water. Float coats and vests (fishing, paddling, etc) designed with features suitable for various sports activities are examples of this type.

Inflatable Life Jackets

Provide the performance of a near-shore buoyancy vest or flotation aid (as marked on its label). After inflated they may or may not turn an unconscious wearer to a face-up position in the water. The belt-style inflatable life jacket must be worn in front of the user so it can be inflated properly in front of them.



Throwable Devices

These flotation devices are intended for use anywhere. They are designed to be thrown to someone in the water and grasped and held by the user until rescued. They are not designed or intended to be worn and a user should not place this type on their back. A throwable device should not replace a wearable life jacket, but should be used as an extra flotation aid with a wearable life jacket.

Special-Use Devices

These life jackets provide the performance of an off-shore life jacket, near-shore vest, or flotation aid (as marked on its label). Varieties include deck suits, work vests, sailboarding vests, sailing vests with a safety harness, and child-style that has two arm bands, chest panel and buckles in the back. The child-style mentioned is a special-use device because it must be worn with the buckle located on the back of the wearer. Some styles of this type of life jacket provide significant protection against cold water immersion and hypothermia.

