

SAFETY EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS

You **must** have the right equipment on board. If something goes wrong on the water, you will be much better prepared to deal with it if you have the right equipment on board, if it is in good working order and if everyone can find it and use it. Remember that the best protection you can give yourself on the water is to always wear your lifejacket or your PFD.

All safety equipment on board must be:

- in good working order;
- always easy to reach (so that it can be used in an emergency); and
- maintained and replaced in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions or recommendations.

In Canada, the safety equipment required on board depends on the type and length of your boat. You can find the length of your boat:

- by reading the manufacturer's product information; or
- by measuring it yourself (from the front outside surface of the hull shell to the back outside surface of the hull shell – bow to stern).

REMEMBER: These equipment requirements **apply only to pleasure craft** and are the same whether you own, rent or borrow the boat. This includes typical boats like power boats, sail boats and personal watercraft, as well as less common boats like airboats, air cushion vehicles (hovercraft) and wing in ground effect vessels that are used only for recreation. They also apply when using kiteboards.

These requirements **do not apply to inflatable self-propelled water toys**. These toys are not designed for use in open water. If you do choose to operate these toys in open water, enforcement officers will treat them as pleasure craft that are subject to the same strict rules.

Operating a remote-controlled vessel and a propeller-driven surfboard is **against the law in Canada**.

Minimum Safety Equipment Requirements

The following list names the minimum safety equipment required on board a pleasure craft. You may want to bring more equipment based on your type of boat, your activity and the current and forecasted weather and water conditions. Once you know the equipment you must carry on board your boat, read the following sections so you can get specific information about each piece.

REMEMBER: If you want information on workboats or commercial vessels' (non-pleasure craft) mandatory equipment, visit [Transport Canada's website](#).

MINIMUM SAFETY EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS BY BOAT TYPE AND LENGTH

NOTE: *See page 19 for notes.*

BOAT TYPE AND LENGTH	PERSONAL LIFESAVING APPLIANCES	VISUAL SIGNALS	VESSEL SAFETY EQUIPMENT	NAVIGATION EQUIPMENT	FIRE FIGHTING EQUIPMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paddleboats Watercycles Standup Paddleboards Sealed-Hull and Sit-on-Top Kayaks 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) lifejacket or PFD for each person on board* One (1) reboarding device (See Note 1) One (1) buoyant heaving line at least 15 m (49'3") long 	<p>If boat is over 6 m</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) watertight flashlight Six (6) flares of Type A, B, C or D, only two (2) can be Type D. (See Note 2) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) bailer OR One manual bilge pump (See Note 3) OR Bilge-pumping arrangements 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) sound-signalling device or appliance Navigation lights (See Note 4) One (1) magnetic compass (See Note 5) One (1) radar reflector (See Note 6) 	None
<p>*If everyone on board is wearing a lifejacket or a PFD of appropriate size, you are only required to carry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) a sound-signalling device; and 2) a watertight flashlight if the boat is used after sunset or before sunrise or in periods of restricted visibility. 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Canoes Kayaks Rowboats Rowing Shells Other Human-Powered Boats 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) lifejacket or PFD for each person on board One (1) reboarding device (See Note 1) One (1) buoyant heaving line at least 15 m (49'3") long 	<p>If boat is over 6 m</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) watertight flashlight Six (6) flares of Type A, B, C or D, only two (2) can be Type D. (See Note 2) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) bailer OR One manual bilge pump (See Note 3) OR Bilge-pumping arrangements 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) sound-signalling device or appliance Navigation lights (See Note 4) One (1) magnetic compass (See Note 5) One (1) radar reflector (See Note 6) 	None
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sailboards Kiteboards 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) lifejacket or PFD for each person on board* One (1) reboarding device (See Note 1) One (1) buoyant heaving line at least 15 m (49'3") long 	None	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) manual propelling device OR One (1) anchor and at least 15 m (49'3") of cable, rope or chain in any combination One (1) bailer or manual bilge pump (See Note 3) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) sound-signalling device or appliance Navigation lights (See Note 4) One (1) magnetic compass (See Note 5) One (1) radar reflector (See Note 6) 	None
<p>*If everyone on board is wearing a lifejacket or a PFD of appropriate size, you are only required to carry :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) a sound-signalling device; and 2) a watertight flashlight if the boat is used after sunset or before sunrise or in periods of restricted visibility. <p>NOTE: Kiteboarders and sailboarders should not wear a lifejacket or PFD that is fitted with an automatic inflator.</p>					

BOAT TYPE AND LENGTH	PERSONAL LIFESAVING APPLIANCES	VISUAL SIGNALS	VESSEL SAFETY EQUIPMENT	NAVIGATION EQUIPMENT	FIRE FIGHTING EQUIPMENT
• Personal Watercraft (PWC)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) lifejacket or PFD for each person on board* One (1) reboarding device [See Note 1] One (1) buoyant heaving line at least 15 m (49'3") long 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) watertight flashlight OR Three (3) flares of Type A, B, C or D, only one (1) can be Type D [See Note 2] 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) manual propelling device OR One (1) anchor and at least 15 m (49'3") of cable, rope or chain in any combination One (1) bailer or manual bilge pump [See Note 3] 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) sound-signalling device or appliance Navigation lights [See Note 4] One (1) magnetic compass [See Note 5] One (1) radar reflector [See Note 6] 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) 5BC fire extinguisher
<p>*If every person on board a personal watercraft is wearing a lifejacket or a PFD of an appropriate size, you are only required to carry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) a sound-signalling device; 2) a watertight flashlight or three (3) flares of Type A, B, C or D, only one (1) can be Type D; 3) a magnetic compass if the personal watercraft is navigated out of sight of navigation marks; and 4) navigation lights if the personal watercraft is used after sunset or before sunrise or in periods of restricted visibility. 					
<p>NOTE: Lifejacket or PFD must be inherently buoyant.</p>					
• Sail and Power Boats up to 6 m (19'8")	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) lifejacket or PFD for each person on board One (1) reboarding device [See Note 1] One (1) buoyant heaving line at least 15 m (49'3") long 	<p>If boat is equipped with a motor</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) watertight flashlight OR Three (3) flares of Type A, B, C or D, only one (1) can be Type D. [See Note 2] 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) manual propelling device OR One (1) anchor and at least 15 m (49'3") of cable, rope or chain in any combination One (1) bailer or manual bilge pump [See Note 3] 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) sound-signalling device or appliance Navigation lights [See Note 4] One (1) magnetic compass [See Note 5] One (1) radar reflector [See Note 6] 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) 5BC fire extinguisher if equipped with an inboard engine, a fixed fuel tank of any size, or a fuel-burning cooking, heating or refrigerating appliance
• Sail and Power Boats over 6 m and up to 9 m (19'8" - 29'6")	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) lifejacket or PFD for each person on board One (1) reboarding device [See Note 1] One (1) buoyant heaving line at least 15 m (49'3") long OR One (1) lifebuoy attached to a buoyant line at least 15 m (49'3") long 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) watertight flashlight Six (6) flares of Type A, B, C or D, only two (2) can be Type D. [See Note 2] 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) manual propelling device OR One (1) anchor and at least 15 m (49'3") of cable, rope or chain in any combination One (1) bailer or manual bilge pump [See Note 3] 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) sound-signalling device or appliance Navigation lights [See Note 4] One (1) magnetic compass [See Note 5] One (1) radar reflector [See Note 6] 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) 5BC fire extinguisher if equipped with a motor One (1) 5BC fire extinguisher if equipped with a fuel-burning cooking, heating or refrigerating appliance

BOAT TYPE AND LENGTH	PERSONAL LIFESAVING APPLIANCES	VISUAL SIGNALS	VESSEL SAFETY EQUIPMENT	NAVIGATION EQUIPMENT	FIRE FIGHTING EQUIPMENT
• Sail and Power Boats over 9 m and up to 12 m (29'6" – 39'4")	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) lifejacket or PFD for each person on board One (1) reboarding device (See Note 1) One (1) buoyant heaving line at least 15 m (49'3") long One (1) lifebuoy attached to a buoyant line at least 15 m (49'3") long 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) watertight flashlight Twelve (12) flares of Type A, B, C or D, only six (6) can be Type D (See Note 2) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) anchor and at least 30 m (98'5") of cable, rope or chain in any combination One (1) manual bilge pump (See Note 3) OR Bilge-pumping arrangements 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) sound-signalling device or appliance Navigation lights (See Note 4) One (1) magnetic compass (See Note 5) One (1) radar reflector (See Note 6) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) 10BC fire extinguisher if equipped with a motor One (1) 10BC fire extinguisher if equipped with a fuel-burning cooking, heating or refrigerating appliance
• Sail and Power Boats over 12 m and up to 24 m (39'4" – 78'9")	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) lifejacket or PFD for each person on board One (1) reboarding device (See Note 1) One (1) buoyant heaving line at least 15 m (49'3") long One (1) lifebuoy equipped with a self-igniting light or attached to a buoyant line at least 15 m (49'3") long 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) watertight flashlight Twelve (12) flares of Type A, B, C or D, only six (6) can be Type D (See Note 2) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) anchor and at least 50 m (164'1") of cable, rope or chain in any combination Bilge-pumping arrangements 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) sound-signalling appliance. Two required if the boat is 20 m and over that meets the applicable standards set out in the <i>Collision Regulations</i> Navigation lights (See Note 4) One (1) magnetic compass that meets the requirements set out in the <i>Navigation Safety Regulations</i> (See Note 5) One (1) radar reflector (See Note 6) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) 10BC fire extinguisher at all of the following locations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> at each access to any space where a fuel-burning cooking, heating or refrigerating appliance is fitted; at the entrance to any accommodation space; and at the entrance to the machinery space. One (1) axe Two (2) buckets of at least 10 L each
• Sail and Power Boats over 24 m (78'9")	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) lifejacket or PFD for each person on board One (1) reboarding device (See Note 1) One (1) buoyant heaving line at least 30 m (98'5") long Two (2) SOLAS lifebuoys, of which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> one (1) is attached to a buoyant line at least 30 m (98'5") long; and one (1) is equipped with a self-igniting light. Lifting harness with appropriate rigging 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) watertight flashlight Twelve (12) flares of Type A, B, C or D, only six (6) can be Type D (See Note 2) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) anchor and at least 50 m (164'1") of cable, rope or chain in any combination Bilge-pumping arrangements 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Two (2) sound-signalling appliances that meets the applicable standards set out in the <i>Collision Regulations</i> Navigation lights (See Note 4) One (1) magnetic compass that meets the requirements set out in the <i>Navigation Safety Regulations</i> (See Note 5) One (1) radar reflector (See Note 6) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) 10BC fire extinguisher at all of the following locations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> at each access to any space where a fuel-burning cooking, heating or refrigerating appliance is fitted; at the entrance to any accommodation space; and at the entrance to the machinery space. One (1) power-driven fire pump located outside the machinery space, with one fire hose and nozzle that can direct water into any part of the boat Two (2) axes Four (4) buckets of at least 10 L each

Note 1 – Reboarding Device

A reboarding device is only required if the vertical height that a person must climb to reboard the boat from the water (freeboard) is over 0.5 m (1'8").

Note 2 – Flares

Flares were previously referred to as Type A, B, C, and D. These terms may still be found in some product literature. The table below explains the relationship.

FORMER TYPE DESIGNATION	NEW DESCRIPTION
Type A	Rocket parachute flare
Type B	Multi-star flare
Type C	Hand flare
Type D	Smoke signal

Flares are not required for a boat that:

- is operating on a river, canal or lake in which it can never be more than one (1) nautical mile (1.852 km) from shore; or
- has no sleeping quarters and is engaged in an official competition or in final preparation for an official competition.

The number of flares required may be reduced by 50 percent (the number of smoke signals cannot exceed 50% of the number of smoke signals given in the tables above) if the boat has one of the following:

- A means of two-way communication*;
- A 406 MHz personal locator beacon** that is worn by the boat operator; or
- A 406 MHz emergency position-indicating radio beacon***.

* The means of two-way communication may include a Very High Frequency (VHF) marine radio, a satellite telephone or a cellular telephone (if the VHF radio or the cellular telephone is located in a coverage area.)

** A 406 MHz personal locator beacon (PLB) must meet the requirements under the *Radiocommunication Act*. All Canadian coded PLBs should be registered with the Canadian Beacon Registry at <https://www.cbr-rcb.ca/cbr/> or by calling 1-877-406-7671 (toll free). Registering a beacon is free of charge. Canadian coded beacons cannot be registered elsewhere.

*** A 406 MHz emergency position-indicating radio beacon (EPIRB) must meet the requirements of the Ship Station Radio Technical Regulations and must also be registered with the Canadian Beacon Registry. See above.

Ensuring that your 406 MHz PLB, or EPIRB is registered, as well as updating the information regularly, will facilitate the task for search and rescue personnel in the event of a distress situation.

For further information regarding VHF radios or EPIRBs please visit: <https://www.tc.gc.ca/eng/marinesafety/oep-navigation-radiocomms-faqs-1489.htm>

Note 3 – Bailer and Manual Bilge Pump

A bailer or manual bilge pump is not required for a boat that cannot hold enough water to make it capsize or a boat that has watertight compartments that are sealed and not readily accessible.

Note 4 – Navigation Lights

Navigation lights are only required if you operate the boat after sunset, before sunrise or in periods of restricted visibility (fog, falling snow, etc.).

Note 5 – Magnetic Compass



A magnetic compass is not required if the boat is 8 m (26'3") or less and you operate it within sight of navigation marks.

Note 6 – Radar Reflector

Radar reflectors are required for boats under 20 m (65'7") and boats built of mostly non-metallic materials. A radar reflector is not required if:

- the boat is used in limited traffic conditions, daylight and favourable environmental conditions, and where having a radar reflector is not essential to the boat's safety; or
- the small size of the boat or its operation away from radar navigation makes it impossible to install or use a radar reflector.

REMEMBER: Boating laws change from time to time, so make sure you have the most current information. If the **SAFE BOATING GUIDE** differs from the regulations, remember that it is always the current regulatory text that applies. To learn more about regulations, use the direct links in the CONTACT INFORMATION AND REFERENCES section of this guide.

Alternative Requirements for Boats Involved in Competition

Do you use your boat for racing?

If yes, you **may** be allowed to carry alternative safety equipment during:

- formal training;
- an official competition; or
- final preparations for an official competition.

USEFUL DEFINITIONS

Formal training

Practice for an official competition under the supervision of a coach or official certified by a governing body.

Official competition

Competition or regatta organized by a governing body or by a club or an organization that is affiliated with a governing body.

Final preparation for an official competition

Activities scheduled by the event organizer to prepare for the competitions at the competition venue.

Governing body

National water sport governing body that publishes rules and criteria related to the conduct and safety requirements for skill demonstrations, formal training or official competitions and that:

- certifies coaches and coaching programs;
- certifies officials and programs for officials; or
- recommends training and safety guidelines for certified coaches or officials.

Safety craft

Vessel, aircraft or other means of transport with a crew on board for watch and rescue activities during formal training, final preparation or official competitions.

Racing canoes, racing kayaks and rowing shells involved in competition

Racing canoes, racing kayaks and rowing shells do not have to carry the equipment listed in this guide if they (and their crews) are in formal training, in an official competition or in final preparation for an official competition and:

- are attended by a safety craft that, in addition to its own safety equipment, carries a lifejacket or PFD that fits, for each crew member of the racing boat with the biggest crew;

OR

- if they carry:
 - a lifejacket or PFD that fits, for each crew member;
 - a sound-signalling device; and
 - a watertight flashlight if operated after sunset, before sunrise or in periods of restricted visibility.

In addition to the alternatives outlined above, **rowing shells** do not have to carry the equipment listed in this guide if they are competing in an official provincial, national or international regatta or competition, or are engaged in training at the event's venue.

Racing pleasure craft (other than canoes, kayaks and rowing shells) involved in competition

Racing-type boats do not have to carry the equipment listed in this guide if they:

- are engaged in formal training, in an official competition or in final preparation for an official competition;
- are operated under conditions of clear visibility;
- are attended by a safety craft; and
- carry the safety equipment required by the rules of their sport's governing body.

Sailboards or kiteboards involved in competition

Sailboards or kiteboards do not have to carry the equipment listed in this guide if they are engaged in an official competition where an attending safety craft carries lifejackets or PFDs that fit the sail/kite boarders and that can be put on in the water (It is not recommended that lifejackets or PFDs be fitted with an automatic inflator).

Safety Equipment Specifications

Personal Lifesaving Appliances



About 90% of people who drown in recreational boating incidents are not wearing a lifejacket or PFD. Even if you have one on board, conditions like rough winds, waves and cold water can make it very hard, if not impossible, to find it and put it on. Worse yet, if you unexpectedly fall into the water, the boat (with your lifejacket or PFD on board) could be too far away to reach.

If you remember one thing from this guide, it should be to always wear your lifejacket or PFD when on or near the water. It could save your life.

REMEMBER: Lifesaving cushions are not approved safety equipment on any boat.

To find a list of all Canadian-approved lifejackets and PFDs, check out the Approved Products Catalogue Index. Lifejackets and PFDs are not the same! Note the differences and choose the right one.

A lifejacket or a PFD is the best insurance you can have on or near the water. Find one that suits your needs and wear it! Also, remember that you are required to carry a PFD or lifejacket of appropriate size for each person on board.

Lifejackets

Lifejackets come in red, orange or yellow. This makes you much easier to see in the water. Compared to PFDs, they offer a higher level of protection. There are three Canadian-approved lifejacket types to choose from:

	SOLAS (SAFETY OF LIFE AT SEA) LIFEJACKETS	STANDARD TYPE LIFEJACKETS	SMALL VESSEL LIFEJACKETS
PERFORMANCE IN THE WATER	Best performance: This lifejacket will turn you on your back in seconds to keep your face out of the water, even if you are unconscious.	Slower performance: This lifejacket will turn you on your back to keep your face out of the water, even if you are unconscious.	Slowest performance: This lifejacket will turn you on your back to keep your face out of the water, even if you are unconscious, but may do so more slowly.
SIZES AVAILABLE (BY BODY WEIGHT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Available in 2 sizes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 32 kg (70 lbs) • Less than 32 kg (70 lbs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Available in 2 sizes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 40 kg (88 lbs) • Less than 40 kg (88 lbs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Available in 3 sizes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 41 kg (90 lbs) • 18 kg (40 lbs) to 41 kg (90 lbs) • Less than 18 kg (40 lbs)
MODELS AVAILABLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Keyhole 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Keyhole 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Keyhole - Vest

Lifejackets, including inflatables, that meet the new lifejacket standard adopted in 2007 offer more comfort and better performance.

Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs)

You can buy PFDs in a wide range of Canadian-approved types, sizes and colours. They do not offer the same level of protection as lifejackets for staying afloat and rolling you over on your back so you can breathe. However, since they are designed for constant wear, they are more comfortable than lifejackets.

Choose a PFD based on your needs and activity. If you plan to operate at high speeds, look for a PFD with three or more chest belts for security. If you will be boating in cold water (water less than 15°C), choose a PFD with some thermal protection. A large selection is also available for activities such as sailboarding, paddling, fishing and hunting. No matter what type of PFD you choose, you should choose a colour that makes you easy to see in the water. You should also consider attaching a non-metallic pealess whistle to the PFD.

Inflatable PFDs

You can also buy inflatable PFDs. Understand how to use and care for them properly. Note which activities and conditions they are approved for.

REMEMBER: You have to be wearing an inflatable PFD for it to be approved on an open boat. If the boat is not open then you only need to wear it while you are on deck or in the cockpit.

Restrictions for inflatable PFDs:

- You must be at least 16 years old to wear an inflatable PFD.
- No one may wear an inflatable PFD on a personal watercraft.
- No one may use an inflatable PFD for white-water paddling activities.

Although these PFDs inflate quickly, weak swimmers may feel it takes forever. All Canadian-approved inflatable PFDs have an oral inflation tube in case the CO₂ inflation system fails. Be aware that this tube could be hard to use when you are trying to keep your head above water.

Inflatable PFDs come in two styles:

- **vest types** that you can inflate orally, manually by pulling a toggle to activate a CO₂ inflation system or automatically by hydrostatic pressure valve released; and



- **pouch types** that you can inflate orally or manually by pulling a toggle to activate a CO₂ inflation system.



Test Your Lifejacket or PFD

Before you buy a lifejacket or PFD, read the approval label that comes with the device: it will provide valuable information about size, weight and approval. Then, try it on and make sure it fits comfortably:

- fasten all straps, zippers and ties and raise your arms over your head to see if it stays in place;
- ask someone to lift your lifejacket or PFD straight up at the shoulders. If it fits properly, the jacket will stay in place. If the zipper touches your nose or the jacket almost comes off, it is too loose.

An emergency is no time to try out a new device. It is a good idea to wear the lifejacket or PFD in a swimming pool or in shallow water, under supervision, to see how you float. Relax your body and let your head fall back. With a little help, your face should remain above water so you can breathe easily. If this is not the case, you may need a different size or a model that will provide more buoyancy.

Inflatable PFDs come with an owner's manual. Read it carefully. Try the PFD under supervision and before heading out to make sure you know how to use it.

To learn more about choosing a lifejacket or PFD, visit www.wearalifejacket.com.

Keep Kids Afloat



Make sure that you buy your child a Canadian-approved lifejacket or PFD. Also, look for these safety features:

- a large collar for head support;
- waist ties or elastic gathers in front and back;
- a safety strap that goes between the legs to prevent it from slipping over your child's head;
- buckles on the safety straps; and
- reflective tape.

Have your child try it on. It should fit snugly and not ride up over the chin or ears. If there are more than 7.6 cm (3") between your child's shoulders and the device, it is too big and could do more harm than good.

REMEMBER: There are no approved lifejackets or PFDs for infants under 9 kg (20 lbs). Learn more about finding the right lifejacket or PFD for your child [on our website](#).

Children should always wear a lifejacket or PFD and be within your reach. Set a good example and wear yours every time you are on the water.

Check the Labels



To be Canadian-approved, a lifejacket or PFD must have a label that states it has been approved by:

- Transport Canada;
- Canadian Coast Guard;
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada; or
- any combination of the above.

Lifejackets or PFDs approved by the U.S. Coast Guard are not Canadian-approved. However, visitors to Canada may bring their own lifejacket to use on a pleasure craft as long as it fits and it conforms to the laws of their home country.

Care for Your Lifejacket and PFD

Lifejackets or PFDs that are ripped or in poor condition are not considered approved. So take good care of yours! Follow these tips to keep yours in good condition:

- Regularly check its buoyancy in a pool or by wading out to waist-deep water and bending your knees to see how well you float.
- Make sure that straps, buckles and zippers are clean and work well.
- Tug on straps to make sure they are well attached and there is no sign of wear.
- Dry the lifejacket or PFD in open air and avoid direct heat sources, such as direct sunlight.

- Store it in a dry, well-ventilated place where it is easy to reach.
- Do not dry clean your lifejacket or PFD. Wash it with mild soap and running water.
- Never sit or kneel on your lifejacket or PFD or use it as a fender for your boat.

Buoyant Heaving Lines



A buoyant heaving line is approved for use as long as it:

- floats;
- is in good condition;
- is made of one full length of rope, not many shorter ropes tied together;
- is long enough for the boat you will be using; and
- is used only as safety equipment so that it is easy to find and use in an emergency.

Lifebuoys



When buying a lifebuoy, look for a Transport Canada approval stamp or label. Lifebuoys must be at least 610 mm (24") in diameter. **Smaller lifebuoys and horseshoe-type devices are not approved.**

Reboarding Devices



A reboarding device allows someone to get back on the boat from the water. A transom ladder or swim platform ladder meets this requirement.

Visual Signals

Watertight Flashlights



Make sure that the batteries in your watertight flashlight are still good before every trip. If you lose power, a watertight flashlight may be your only way to signal for help.

Distress Flares

When buying distress flares, look for a Transport Canada approval stamp or label. Remember that flares are only good for four years from the date of manufacture, which is stamped on every flare. Ask the retailer how to safely dispose of your outdated flares.

Store your flares within reach and vertically in a cool, dry location (such as a watertight container) to keep them in good working condition. Always follow the manufacturer's recommendations for safe storage.

Tips on Using Flares

You may use flares only in an emergency when you believe there is a chance of it being seen.

Fire aerial flares at an angle into the wind. In strong wind, lower the angle to 45 degrees, at most. Always read the manufacturer's instructions before you use flares.

There are four types of approved flares: A, B, C and D.

Type A - Rocket Parachute Flare



- creates a single red star;
- reaches a height of 300 m (984') and comes down slowly with a parachute;
- is easily seen from the ground or air; and
- burns for at least 40 seconds.

Type B - Multi-Star Flare



- creates two or more red stars;
- reaches a height of 100 m (328'1");
- is easily seen from the ground or air;
- each burns for four or five seconds.

REMEMBER: Some multi-star flares (type B) project only one star at a time. When using the single star type, you must fire two flares within 15 seconds of each other. This means that you will need to double the number of cartridges to meet the requirements.

Type C - Hand Flare



- is a red flame torch that you hold in your hand;
- provides limited visibility from the ground;
- is best used to help air searchers locate you; and
- burns for at least one minute.

When lighting the flare, hold it clear of the boat and downwind. Do not look directly at the flare while it is burning.

Type D - Smoke Signal (Buoyant or Hand-Held)



- creates a dense orange smoke for:
 - three minutes (buoyant);
 - 50 seconds (hand);
- is to be used only in daylight.

Position your smoke signal downwind and follow the directions carefully.

Vessel Safety Equipment

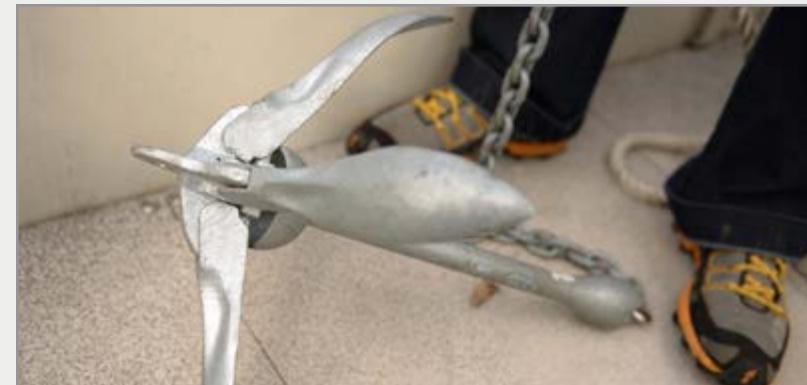
Manual Propelling Devices



A manual propelling device can be:

- a set of oars;
- a paddle; or
- anything you can operate by hand or foot to propel a boat, including the rudder on a small open sail boat or a paddle wheel on a paddleboat.

Anchors



Having the right anchor and cable (refer to SAFETY EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS section) for your boat is important. If you do not, rough winds and water can cause it to drag, leaving your boat to drift. This is especially dangerous if you are asleep or swimming nearby. Make sure your boat is well anchored and keep watch to detect signs of dragging.

Bailers and Manual Bilge Pumps



Bailers must have these characteristics:

- hold at least 750 ml (3 cups);
- have an opening of 9 cm (3.5") diameter or more; and
- be made of plastic or metal.

Did you know that you can make a bailer out of a four-litre rigid plastic bottle (useful for small open boats)? This is an inexpensive way to meet the requirements and have an efficient bailer on board.

Follow these steps:

- rinse the bottle thoroughly;
- secure the lid;
- cut off the bottom; and
- cut along the side with the handle.

If you have a **manual bilge pump**, the pump and hose must be long enough to:

- reach the bilge; and
- discharge water over the side of the boat.



Navigation Equipment

Sound-Signalling Devices



Boats under 12 m (39'4") without a fitted sound-signalling appliance must carry a sound-signalling device.

This can be:

- a pealess whistle;
- a compressed gas horn; or
- an electric horn.

Sound-Signalling Appliances



All boats 12 m (39'4") or more must have a fitted whistle. Boats over 20 m (65'7") must also have a bell. Check Annex III of the *Collision Regulations* for the technical standards these appliances must meet.

Navigation Lights



Navigation lights help prevent collisions by making your vessel and its direction of travel more visible to others. Vessels near you will make decisions based on the information your lights provide. The navigation lights on other vessels can help you tell the direction they are moving or whether they are at anchor or engaged in some other activity.

USEFUL DEFINITIONS

Masthead light

A white light placed over the fore and aft centreline of the vessel showing an unbroken white light over an arc of the horizon of 225 degrees. It must be fixed so the light can be seen from right ahead to 22.5 degrees abaft the beam on both sides of the vessel.

Sidelights

A green light on the starboard side (right) and a red light on the port side (left), each showing an unbroken light over an arc of the horizon of 112.5 degrees. Both lights must be fixed so they can be seen from right ahead to 22.5 degrees abaft the beam on its respective side.

In a vessel of less than 20 m (65'7") in length, the sidelights may be combined in one lantern carried on the fore and aft centreline of the vessel.

Sternlight

A white light placed as nearly as possible at the stern (back) of the boat, showing an unbroken light over an arc of the horizon of 135 degrees and fixed so the light can be seen 67.5 degrees from right aft on each side of the vessel.

All-round light

A light showing an unbroken light over an arc of the horizon of 360 degrees..

If your boat is equipped with navigation lights, they must work and meet the technical standards set out in the *Collision Regulations*. For example, you must:

- show navigation lights if the boat is operated after sunset or before sunrise and during periods of reduced visibility;
- make sure your vessel is equipped with the proper lights for its size and purpose; and
- verify that the lights are correctly mounted.

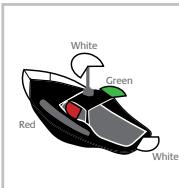
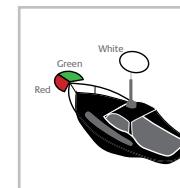
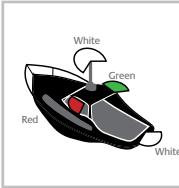
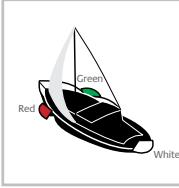
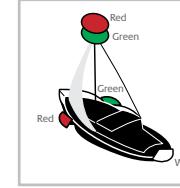
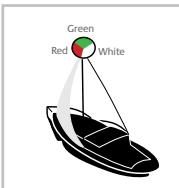
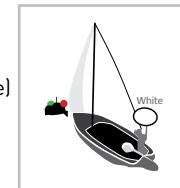
The following table lays out some basic requirements and options for navigation lights and shapes, based on the type and length of your boat. **If you have a sail boat that is also equipped with a motor, you must meet the standards for both sail boats and power boats.**

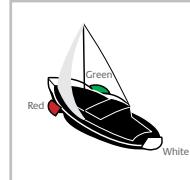
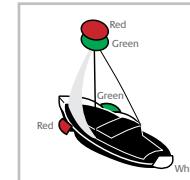
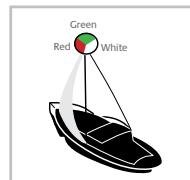
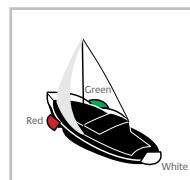
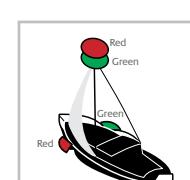
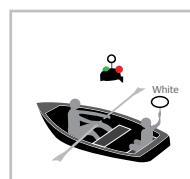
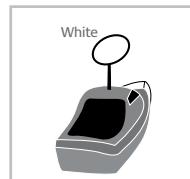
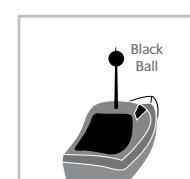
REMEMBER: A sailboat when also being propelled by a motor shall exhibit forward where it can best be seen a conical shape, point downwards.



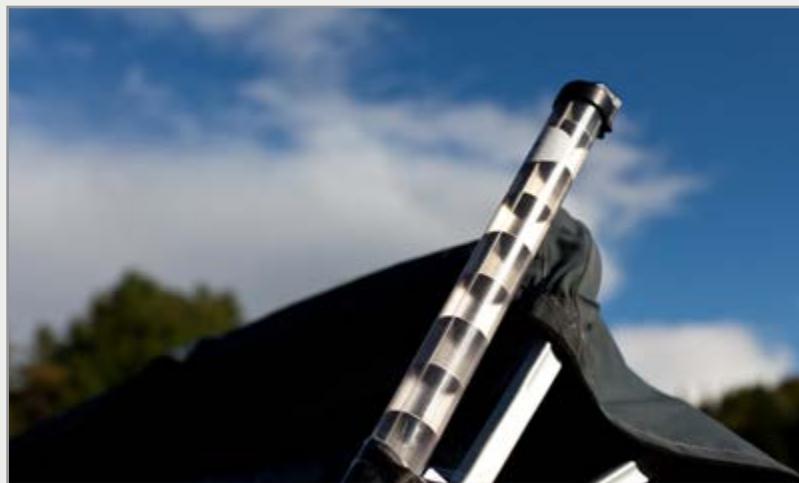
Read the *Collision Regulations* (referred to in each of the following categories) for more details. **If you are fitting your own navigation lights, refer to the positioning requirements in the *Collision Regulations* (ANNEX I: Positioning and Technical Details of Lights and Shapes).**

NAVIGATION LIGHT AND SHAPE REQUIREMENTS BY BOAT TYPE AND LENGTH

BOAT TYPE AND LENGTH	REQUIREMENTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Power Boats under 12 m (39'4") - Rule 23 	<p>Option 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -One (1) masthead light; -Sidelights; and -One (1) sternlight <p>OPTIONAL - A second masthead abaft of and higher than the forward one light</p>  <p>Option 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -One (1) all-round white light; and -Sidelights 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Power Boats from 12 m (39'4") to under 50 m (164'1") - Rule 23 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -One (1) masthead light; -Sidelights; and -One (1) sternlight <p>OPTIONAL - A second masthead light abaft of and higher than the light mounted forward</p> 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sail Boats under 7 m (23') - Rule 25 <p>NOTE : In the Canadian waters of a roadstead (mooring area), harbour, river, lake or inland waterway, a sail boat under 7 m that is also being propelled by a motor is not required to exhibit forward a conical shape (point downwards) where it can best be seen.</p>	<p>Option 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Sidelights; and -One (1) sternlight  <p>Option 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Sidelights; -One (1) sternlight; and -Two (2) all-round lights in a vertical line, the upper being red and the lower green 
	<p>Option 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -One (1) lantern, combining the sidelights and sternlight above  <p>Option 4 <i>(if other options are not practicable)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -An electric torch or lighted lantern showing a white light (a watertight flashlight is acceptable) that you must use far enough in advance to prevent a collision 

BOAT TYPE AND LENGTH	REQUIREMENTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sail Boats from 7m (23') to under 20m (65'7") - Rule 25 <p>NOTE: In the Canadian waters of a roadstead (mooring area), harbour, river, lake or inland waterway, a sail boat under 12 m that is also being propelled by a motor is not required to exhibit forward a conical shape (point downwards) where it can best be seen.</p>	<p>Option 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Sidelights; and -One (1) sternlight  <p>Option 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Sidelights; -One (1) sternlight; and -Two (2) all-round lights in a vertical line, the upper being red and the lower green  <p>Option 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -One (1) lantern, combining the sidelights and sternlight above 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sail Boats 20 m (65'7") and over - Rule 25 	<p>Option 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Sidelights; and -One (1) sternlight  <p>Option 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Sidelights; -One (1) sternlight; and -Two (2) all-round lights in a vertical line, the upper being red and the lower green 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human-Powered Boats - Rule 25 	<p>Option 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -An electric torch or lighted lantern showing a white light (a watertight flashlight is acceptable) ready to use far enough in advance to prevent a collision  <p>Option 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Same lights as listed for sail boats, according to length
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boats at Anchor under 50 m (164'1") - Rule 30 <p>NOTE: Boats under 7 m are not required to show prescribed lights and marks, except in or near a narrow channel, fairway or anchorage, or where other vessels normally navigate.</p>	<p>Option 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -One (1) all-round white light. <p>OPTIONAL - Another all-round white light at or near the stern and at a lower level than the other light</p> <p>NOTE: You may use any available lights to illuminate decks</p>  <p>Option 2 (during the day)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -One (1) ball 

Radar Reflectors



Reflectors help larger vessels to see small boats on their radar screens, and may be the only way that they will be able to spot you.

A radar reflector can enhance your safety on the water, but only if it is big enough and well placed on your boat. When buying a reflector, there is no substitute for size – so buy the biggest one that will fit your boat. There are all kinds of reflectors of varying quality on the market, so make sure you look carefully before buying. Keep in mind that placement height is also very important.

Reflectors should be located

- above all superstructures; and
- at least 4 m (13'1") above the water, if possible.

Fire Fighting Equipment

Portable Fire Extinguishers



Do you know that different types of fires require different types of extinguishers?

The letters on a fire extinguisher tell you what types of fires it is designed to fight. Fires are classified as follows:

- **Class A:** Materials that burn, such as wood, cloth, paper, rubber and plastic
- **Class B:** Liquids that burn, such as gas, oil and grease
- **Class C:** Electrical equipment

You should buy a fire extinguisher with an ABC rating. The number before the letters on the extinguisher tells you how big a fire it will put out compared to other extinguishers. For example, a 10BC device will put out a larger fire than a 5BC device.

Check the Labels

The fire extinguisher you choose must bear a mark that shows it is certified by:

- Underwriters Laboratories of Canada (ULC);
- Underwriters' Laboratories Inc. (UL); or
- United States Coast Guard.

REMEMBER: You may no longer refill halon fire extinguishers.

Ensure Maintenance

Check your extinguishers often for correct operating pressure and make sure that you and your guests know how to use them. Have a qualified person maintain, service and recharge your extinguishers as per the manufacturer's instructions. Take dry chemical devices out of their bracket and give them a few hard shakes in the upside down position about once a month to keep the contents active.

Suggested Items

If you will be on the water for more than a few hours, you may want to have:

Spare clothing in a watertight bag



Weather conditions can change quickly, so be prepared.

Drinking water and snacks

Drinking water and snacks will help you avoid fatigue and dehydration.

Tool kit and spare parts

You may need to make repairs when you are out on the water. Take along a tool kit and spare parts like fuses, bulbs, a spare propeller, nuts and bolts, penetrating oil, duct tape and spark plugs. You should also have and know how to use the tools and materials you need to stop hull leaks until you get to shore. Bring the owner's manual and any other guidebook you might need on your trip.

First aid

When boating, you may end up far from medical help, so take a first aid kit with you. Store it in a dry place and replace used and outdated contents regularly. Pack it to meet your specific needs.

Do you know the symptoms of cold shock, hypothermia, heat exhaustion and allergic reactions? Do you know how to stop bleeding, perform CPR or treat shock? If not, take a first aid course as soon as possible. First aid knowledge can make the difference between permanent injury and full recovery, or even life and death. To learn more about first aid training, contact the nearest training provider.