

Safety Equipment Lifejackets Maritime



Buying a lifejacket

It's recommended you go to a shop to buy a lifejacket to ensure you get one that fits you properly.

Select and try on lifejackets in your size, making sure they fit snugly without restricting movement or riding up.

A crotch strap will prevent the lifejacket from bunching up around your neck and prevent you from falling out of the bottom of the lifejacket.

Look for a simple design that is easy and quick to put on. If it is brightly coloured and has reflective tape it will also be easier to see at night.

Remember to record the date of purchase on the service label if you are purchasing an inflatable lifejacket.

Lifejackets for children

Due to the weight distribution in children younger than one year old, lifejackets are not effective. It's recommended only older children are taken boating.

For older children, there are three main things to look for:

- the weight range on the lifejacket's label agrees with the child's weight;
- the lifejacket is a snug fit (loose lifejackets work poorly); and
- it is comfortable for the child to wear.

Inflatable lifejackets

Inflatable lifejackets are becoming increasingly popular. These CO₂ inflated garments are lighter and less cumbersome than conventional foam lifejackets and are quite versatile with different styles including full jackets and windproof vests.

Inflatable lifejackets need to be marked with the Australian Standard: AS 4758 – Level 100 (or higher) or ISO 12402. This will be clearly marked on the lifejacket.

You should be aware of the added maintenance requirements that come with inflatable lifejackets and the need to carry out self checks regularly (see opposite). Crew and passengers should be briefed on their operation.

Maintaining lifejackets

Skippers should check the condition of their lifejackets annually or as recommended by the manufacturer.



Check your inflatable lifejackets

Inflatable lifejackets are certainly very convenient but remember to be diligent with your checks and undertake regular servicing. Checking a lifejacket can be done at any time to ensure the jacket is functioning properly.

STEP 1

Check for visible signs of wear and damage including fraying, rips and water damage. Ensure all fastenings, straps and buckles are in good working order.



STEP 2

Following the manufacturer's instructions, reveal the inflation system and inflation tube. Inflate the bladder using the tube and leave overnight in a room with a constant temperature. If the bladder loses pressure, take the jacket to an accredited service agent for further tests. Do not attempt to repair the jacket yourself.



STEP 3

Use the cap attached to the inflation tube to deflate the bladder. Invert the cap and press down on the valve at the top of the inflation tube. Do not insert other objects into top of the tube as they may damage the valve. Roll or press the jacket to deflate fully.



STEP 4

Remove CO₂ cylinder and inspect. The cylinder should be intact with no rust or corrosion. Weigh cylinder on kitchen scales, ensure weight corresponds with the minimum gross weight engraved on cylinder +/- 2g. If the cylinder is rusted, corroded, has been pierced or is not the correct weight it should be replaced before it is used. For auto inflation jackets also ensure the auto components are armed and in-date. Refit the cylinder to inflation system, tightening it by hand until firm. Do not over tighten.



STEP 5

Record the date of the check on the service label on the lifejacket.



STEP 6

Repack the bladder into the jacket as per manufacturer's instructions. Ensure manual inflation toggle is accessible and unlikely to be caught when being worn.



Store your lifejacket in an easy to access location, ready to wear when you're next on the water.

Lifejacket carriage and wearing requirements


REGISTRABLE VESSEL: Vessels including sailing vessels that are or can be propelled by mechanical power.

NON-REGISTRABLE VESSEL: Sailboards, kiteboards, windsurfers, paddle craft, tenders and sailing dinghies.

PROTECTED WATERS
Includes rivers, lakes, estuaries, harbours and waters within 400 metres from the shore in unprotected water but excludes the Cambridge Gulf and Lake Argyle.

UNPROTECTED WATERS
Beyond 400 metres from the shore.

Registrable Vessels	Non-registrable Vessels	Registrable Vessels	Non-registrable Vessels
✓ Minimum Level 100 MUST BE CARRIED	RECOMMENDED	✓ Minimum Level 100 MUST BE WORN	✓ Minimum Level 50S MUST BE WORN
✓ Minimum Level 100 MUST BE CARRIED	RECOMMENDED	✓ Minimum Level 100 MUST BE CARRIED	✓ Minimum Level 50S MUST BE CARRIED
✓ Minimum Level 100 MUST BE CARRIED	RECOMMENDED	✓ Minimum Level 100 MUST BE WORN	✓ Minimum Level 50S MUST BE WORN
✓ Minimum Level 50S MUST BE WORN	—	✓ Minimum Level 50S MUST BE WORN	—

 <p>Lifejacket Carriage A lifejacket, as indicated in the table opposite, must be carried for every person on board.</p>	Vessels smaller than 4.8m	Vessels 4.8m and larger
	Children older than one and younger than 12	Personal Water Craft










The Department encourages you to wear your lifejacket at all times while boating and especially in the following circumstances:

- at the first sign of bad weather;
- between sunset and sunrise or during restricted visibility;
- when operating in unfamiliar waters;
- when operating with a following sea;
- when boating alone (this is especially recommended); and
- if you are a poor swimmer.

Practise putting them on in the dark and in the water – it is harder than you think!



Types of lifejackets

Lifejacket	Level	Standard	Comments
 	  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AS 4758 – Level 275 – Level 150 – Level 100 or	<p>Level 100 and higher lifejackets Provide a high level of buoyancy and are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approved for registrable vessels. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Fitted with head and neck support. – Designed to keep you in a face up floating position. – Manufactured using high-visibility colours. – Suitable for offshore and general boating in all waters.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AS 4758 – Level 50 or	<p>Level 50 lifejackets Have a lower level of buoyancy than the Level 100 and higher lifejackets and are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approved for non-registrable vessels, PWCs and sailboards. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Not fitted with head and neck support. – Not designed to keep you in a face up floating position. – Manufactured using high-visibility colours. – Normally used for sailing, wind surfing and on personal water craft.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AS 4758 – Level 50S or	<p>Level 50S lifejackets Have similar buoyancy to the Level 50 lifejackets and are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approved for non-registrable vessels, PWCs and sailboards. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Not fitted with head and neck support. – Not designed to keep you in a face up floating position. – Not manufactured using high-visibility colours. – Favoured by waterskiers, wakeboarders where comfort and style are important. – Available built in to a garment (eg water skiing wet suit).
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ISO 12402 	

Contact details

Department of Transport and Major Infrastructure
Email: Ed.Boat@transport.wa.gov.au
Website: transport.wa.gov.au/marine
Customer Contact Centre: 13 11 56

Police
Emergency: 000
Water Police: 9442 8600

Boating Weather Forecasts
Boating weather: 1300 815 916
Website: bom.gov.au



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For further information go to
transport.wa.gov.au/lifejackets
or scan the QR code

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