




# THINK SAFE

CHOOSE THE RIGHT PERSONAL FLOTATION DEVICE (PFD)

**Is this the right PFD for you  
and your boating activity?**



## **THIS IS A U.S. COAST GUARD APPROVED TYPE III BELT PACK INFLATABLE PFD.**

-  It is worn around the waist with PFD Pack in front and has the least body contact of any style approved to date.  
Has a single point indicator to know if the PFD is ready to use.
-  All inflatable PFDs require maintenance and are NOT recommended for people who can't swim.
-  Inflatable PFD's are NOT for use where water impact is expected as when waterskiing, riding personal watercraft, or white water paddling.

**DO NOT remove this pamphlet. No person may sell or offer a PFD for sale that lacks this pamphlet.**

# A TYPE III BELT PACK INFLATABLE PFD FLOTATION AID is:

NOT for use by NON-SWIMMERS or weak swimmers unless worn inflated.

NOT for use by CHILDREN younger than 16 years for age or by persons weighing less than 80 pounds (36kg).

**WARNING !**  
**NEVER WEAR WITH THE PFD PACK**  
**ON YOUR BACKSIDE!**

**THIS PFD WILL NOT FLOAT WITHOUT INFLATION!**  
It's your job to see that it is properly armed so it will inflate.

**YOU MUST RE-ARM THIS PFD AFTER EACH CO2 USE**  
so it will float you when needed and to meet USCG requirements.

**YOU MUST CHECK THE STATUS OF THE SINGLE POINT**  
**INDICATOR ON THE INFLATOR BEFORE EACH OUTING.**

Do not wear an inflatable PFD under restrictive clothing because accidental or premature inflation could restrict breathing and injure you, or the PFD may not inflate properly.

This PFD is NOT approved for use where water impact is expected as when waterskiing, riding personal watercraft, or white water paddling.

## ADVANTAGES:

Comfortable for continuous use in hot weather.

One of the least bulky of all designs.

Good flotation when inflated.

Single point indicator for complete inflation system status.

Available in one universal adult size.

## DISADVANTAGES:

In most emergencies, the PFD must be placed over the head after inflation in the water to provide adequate floating position for survival.

Will not float you without inflation.

Needs proper re-arming and maintenance to float you.

Some users may need assistance to properly re-arm inflator.

## INTENDED USES:

- General boating activities by adults.
- Inland waters, or where there is a good chance of a fast rescue.
- Continuous wear so it's available in an emergency.

In order for this PFD to function properly, you must inflate it and place it over your head when flotation is needed.

Inflatable PFD's require more frequent checks than those which are inherently buoyant.

See Owner's Manual for status check and remarking instructions.

# PFD CHARACTERISTICS

Although the different Types of inflatable PFDs are intended for use in the same areas as the inherently buoyant Types of PFDs, the characteristics of these kinds of PFDs are different. For Types I, II, and III, the lower the Type number, the better the PFD's performance (e.g. Type I is better than Type II). These kinds of PFDs have the following differences.

## INHERENTLY BUOYANT PFDs

- Adult and child sizes
- Types for swimmers and nonswimmers
- Five Types: 4 wearable and 1 throwable
- Foam filled; will float without action by wearer
- Some made for water sports; see PFD label

## INFLATABLE PFDs

- Adult sizes only
- Not recommended for nonswimmers
- No throwable Types
- Oral and manual inflation as a minimum
- Not for water sports like skiing or for personal water craft use

## HYBRID PFDs

- Both adult and child sizes
- Combines inherently buoyant flotation material with inflatable bladder for extra lift
- Adult sizes and child sizes for swimmers and nonswimmers. Wearable Types only
- Oral inflation as a minimum

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## HOW MANY PFDs DO YOU NEED?

The United States Coast Guard\* says you must have *USCG approved* Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs) on your recreational boat. How many and what type PFDs you'll need depends on the number of people on board, the size and type of your boat, and the kind of boating you do.

YOU MUST HAVE one of the following wearable PFDs for each person on board:

- \* Off-Shore Life Jacket (Type I PFD)
- \* Near-Shore Buoyant Vest (Type II PFD)
- \* Flotation Aid (Type III PFD)
- \* Wearable Special Use Device (Type V PFD)

If your boat is 16 feet or longer (excluding canoes and kayaks), you must also have at least one of the following:

- \* Throwable Device (Type IV PFD)
- \* Throwable Special Use Device (Type V PFD)

*For example, if there are four people on your 16 foot boat, you must have at least five PFDs - four wearable PFDs and one throwable PFD.*

### THE RIGHT PFD FOR YOU

PFDs come in a variety of shapes, colors, and materials. Some are made to be more rugged and last longer while others are made to protect you from cold water. No matter which PFD you choose, be sure to get one that's right for you, your planned activities, and the water conditions you expect to encounter. Remember, spending a little time now can save you a lifetime later. Always look for the United States Coast Guard approval number on any PFD you buy.

\* U.S. Coast Guard Regulation Title 33, Chapter 1, Part 175, Subpart B.

# OFFSHORE LIFE JACKET (TYPE I PFD)

Best for open, rough or remote water, where rescue may be slow coming.

## ADVANTAGES

- \* Floats you the best.
- \* Turns most unconscious wearers face-up in water
- \* Highly visible color
- \* Inflatables:
  - have two chambers
  - indicate when CO2 cylinder is empty (used)
  - inflate automatically when submerged

## DISADVANTAGES (Inherently Buoyant)

- \* Bulky

## DISADVANTAGES (Inflatable)

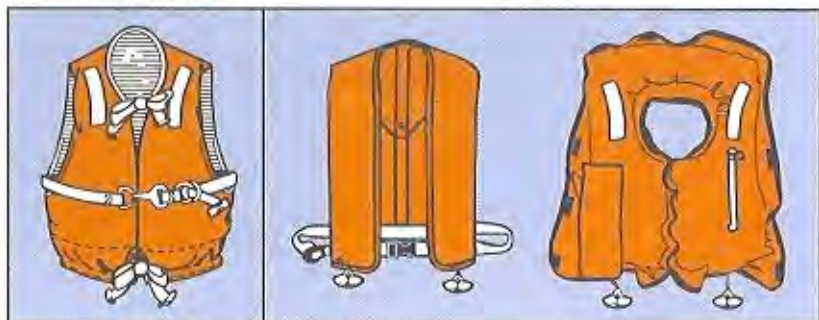
- \* Needs regular inspection (maintenance) and rearming
- \* Not for nonswimmers

## DIFFERENCES FOR INFLATABLES

- \* Turns more wearers face-up faster
- \* Types approved only for adults

Inherently Buoyant

Inflatable



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## NEAR-SHORE BUOYANT VEST (TYPE II PFD)

Good for calm or inland water, or where there is good chance of fast rescue.

### ADVANTAGES

- \* Turns some unconscious wearers face-up in water
- \* Less bulky, more comfortable than Off-Shore Life Jacket (Type I PFD)
- \* Inflatables inflate automatically when submerged

### DISADVANTAGES (Inherently Buoyant)

- \* Not for long hours in rough water
- \* Will not turn some unconscious wearers face-up in water

### DISADVANTAGES (Inflatable)

- \* Needs regular inspection and rearming to be reliable
- \* Not for nonswimmers
- \* Not for activities with frequent water entry

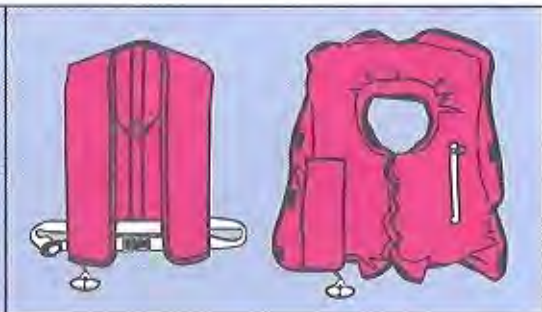
### DIFFERENCES FOR INFLATABLES

- \* Turns wearers face-up like Type I
- \* Has highly visible color when inflated
- \* Suitable for many rough water uses
- \* Types approved only for adults

Inherently Buoyant



Inflatable



## FLOTATION AID (TYPE III PFD)

Good for conscious users in calm, inland water, or where there is good chance of fast rescue.

### ADVANTAGES

- \* Generally the most comfortable type for continuous wear
- \* Designed for general boating or the activity that is marked on the device
- \* Available in many styles, including vests and flotation coats

### DISADVANTAGES (Inherently Buoyant)

- \* Wearer may have to tilt head back to avoid going face down
- \* Not for extended survival in rough water; a wearer's face may often be covered by waves
- \* Nonswimmers need to try it in water prior to going boating

### DISADVANTAGES (Inflatable)

- \* Needs regular inspection and rearming to be reliable
- \* Not for nonswimmers
- \* Not for long hours in rough water

### DIFFERENCES FOR INFLATABLES

- \* Will keep many unconscious wearers face up after inflation

Inherently Buoyant



Inflatable





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## THROWABLE DEVICE (TYPE IV PFD)

### ADVANTAGES

- \* Can be thrown to someone
- \* Good backup to wearable PFDs
- \* Some can be used as seat cushion

### DISADVANTAGES

- \* Not for unconscious persons
- \* Not for nonswimmers or children
- \* Not for many hours in rough water

### KINDS

- \* Cushions, ring, and horseshoe buoys
- \* Only approved with inherent buoyancy

### CUSHION USE

- \* Hold to chest or put one leg and head through opposite straps



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## SPECIAL USE DEVICES (TYPE V PFD)

- \* Only for special uses or conditions
- \* See PFD label for limits of use
- \* Varieties include boardsailing vests, deck suits, pullover vests, work vests, some hybrid PFDs, and others.

### ADVANTAGES

- \* More convenient or useful for specific activities

### DISADVANTAGES

- \* Less safe than other Types if not used according to label conditions

**SOME TYPE V PFDs ARE APPROVED  
ONLY WHEN WORN**

If marked this way, required to be worn to be counted as a regulation PFD.

### ADVANTAGES

- \* Continuous wear prevents being caught without protection. Most accidents happen suddenly.

### DISADVANTAGES (Inherently Buoyant and Some Hybrids)

- \* May be better suited to cool climates or seasons

### DISADVANTAGES (Inflatable)

- \* May require more than one step to give proper flotation when needed

### PERFORMANCE LEVEL

- \* Equal to either Type I, II, or III performance as noted on the label

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## BE SAFE - 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 allow easy movement. Brightly colored PFDs can increase your chances of rescue.

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.**



## STAYING ON TOP

Most adults only need an extra seven to 12 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 it's extremely 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 in staying on top. In general, the more physically fit you are, the more "lift" you need.

Read the label on your PFD to be sure it's made for people your weight and size. Test it as shown in the Owner's Manual. 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 Inherent Buoyancy (Pounds)	Minimum Inflatable Buoyancy (Pounds)	
I	22	34	
II	15.5	34	
III	15.5	22.5	
IV Ring Buoy	16.5	--	
IV Boat Cushion	18	--	
V Hybrid	7.5 (deflated)	22 (fully inflated)	
V Special Use Device	15.5 to 22	22.5 to 34	

## Skipper — Skip the Drink

Alcohol slows you down and keeps you from thinking clearly. Don't drive if you've been drinking.

As many as 80 percent of boating accidents involve alcohol. Drive your boat defensively. Watch out for others who have been drinking. They're accidents waiting to happen.

Alcohol works to lower your body temperature faster when you're in the water. If you've been drinking, you will not survive as long in cold water.



## PFDs - WHICH WEARABLE "TYPE" DO YOU NEED?

WEARABLE PFD TYPE	APPLICATION	ADVANTAGES
<p><b>Type I</b> Inflatable and Inherently Buoyant Types</p>	<p>Offshore Open Water Coastal Cruising General Boating</p>	<p>Best for all waters; floats you the best. Will turn most unconscious wearers to a face-up position; highly visible color.</p>
<p><b>Type II</b> Inherently Buoyant Types  Inflatable Types</p>	<p>Inland waters or calm waters where there is a good chance of a fast rescue.  Also suitable for many rough water uses.</p>	<p>Good comfort; will turn some unconscious wearers to a face-up position.  Will turn many unconscious wearers to face-up position.</p>
<p><b>Type III</b> Inflatable and Inherently Buoyant Types</p>	<p>Calm inland waters where there is a good chance of a fast rescue.</p>	<p>Generally most comfort for continuous wear; stylish; many styles.</p>
<p><b>Type V</b> Inflatable and Inherently Buoyant Types</p>	<p>Special use. See its performance type marked on the label.</p>	<p>See pamphlet, page 10.</p>

## INHERENTLY BUOYANT, INFLATABLE, OR HYBRID - WHICH ONE IS RIGHT FOR YOUR WEARABLE PFD?

BUOYANCY	USE	ADVANTAGES
Inherently Buoyant (foam or kapok)	For swimmers and nonswimmers. Adult and child sizes.	Rugged, low maintenance
Air or CO <sub>2</sub> (inflatable bladder)	For swimmers only. Adult sizes only. Requires regular user checks and maintenance. Not for use in water sports such as water skiing and personal water craft use.	Best comfort when it's hot; high performance in compact space
Hybrid (combines inherently buoyant material with an inflatable bladder)	For swimmers and nonswimmers. Adult and child sizes. Requires regular user checks and maintenance.	Best comfort for nonswimmers; stylish; high performance

*See pages 6-10 for a complete description of all Types*

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## CAUTION

- \* PFDs should **NOT** be fully inflated orally before CO<sub>2</sub> inflation
- \* Check the status of the inflation system of this inflatable PFD before each outing
- \* Check this inflatable PFD for leaks at the beginning of the season and at least once every two months
- \* Rearm the inflation system of this inflatable PFD after each inflation
- \* Frequent users of inflatable PFDs should check them more often, particularly if used around sharp equipment like fishing gear

## INFLATABLE PFD CHECKLIST

When preparing for an outing, ask yourself:

- Have I checked the status of the inflator and made sure that the CO<sub>2</sub> cylinder is not punctured? Check both before each outing.
- Have I checked my inflatable PFD for leaks in the last two months?
- Do I have the right PFD for this activity?
- How does my PFD work in the water? Have I tested it this season?
- Do I have the right size PFD for each person (according to the label) and do they fit snugly?
- Have I checked my other inflatable PFDs in the same manner in which I checked my own?



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