

HOMEMADE WATER RESCUE

With just a few things found around the house, you can make water rescue equipment that could save a life. All you need is an 8-foot long, one-inch diameter pole, tool handle or dowel rod, an empty bleach bottle and at least 60 feet of half-inch diameter polypropylene rope.

To help someone near you who's in trouble in the water, use a reaching pole. To make one, you need a long pole and 3 feet of nylon rope. First, drill a quarter-inch hole near both ends of the pole. The pole can be metal or wood. Its length should be between 8 and 10 feet. Cut off about 1.5 feet of rope and thread it through one of the holes. Next, tie both ends together, making a loop. Do the same to the other end with another 1.5-foot piece. You're done. These poles can be kept on boats and also used on ice.

Throw bags help rescue people farther away from you. You could buy a throw bag at a store that sells canoe and kayak equipment. Or you could make one. To make a throw bag, you need a clean, empty bleach or detergent bottle, 50 to 70 feet of rope and a couple of metal fender washers.

Start by making a half-inch hole in the bottom of the bottle. Place the washer on the outside bottom of the bottle. Pass the rope through the top of the bottle and through the bottom hole. Next, tie a loop knot with the rope. Finally, feed the rope into the top of the bottle and tie another loop knot.

To use the throw bag, hold the loop near the top and throw the bottle, with the rope, to the person in the water. Remember the first rule of rescue: Don't become a victim. If you can't use a reaching pole or throw bag, go for help.



Throw Bag

