

Pick a Life Jacket!

Which personal flotation device is right for you? Head to a sporting goods store or a marina to try on these different kinds of life savers. Wear your PFD in a boat and while fishing deep, fast water—or anytime you're around the water. Use only U.S. Coast Guard approved life jackets.

Life Jackets

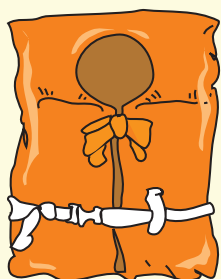
Life jackets (PFDs, life jackets, life preservers, life vests) **are the most important piece of equipment on a boat.**

There are five types of PFDs. Each one has advantages and disadvantages.



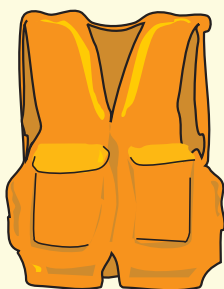
Type I

Off-shore life jacket—over 20 pounds of buoyancy, designed to turn an unconscious person face-up.



Type II

Near-shore buoyant vest—minimum 15.5 pounds of buoyancy, designed to turn an unconscious person face-up.



Type III

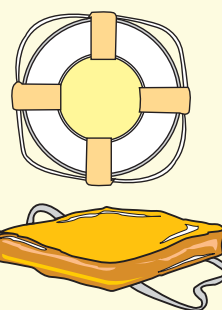
Flotation aid—minimum 15.5 pounds of buoyancy, not designed to turn an unconscious person face-up; more comfortable for water sports.



Who Has to Wear a Life Jacket?

- ✓ All children 12 years of age and younger on all Commonwealth waters must wear a life jacket while underway on any boat 20 feet in length or less and on all canoes and kayaks. "Underway" includes drifting boats.
- ✓ Anyone towed behind a boat, no matter what activity or age, must wear a life jacket.
- ✓ All personal watercraft ("jet ski") operators and passengers.
- ✓ All sailboarders.
- ✓ Everyone boating on U.S. Army Corp of Engineers Pittsburgh District lakes, in boats less than 16 feet in length and on all canoes and kayaks.

For more information on PFDs, go to www.fish.state.pa.us/boatcrs/pfd/brochure.pdf.



Type IV

Throwable device—minimum 16.5 pounds of buoyancy, designed to be grasped, not worn.



Type V

Special-use device—must be used in accordance with any requirements on the approval label.