

## Personal Flotation Devices for Adults

**80% of boaters who drowned were not wearing a PFD or lifejacket at the time of the incident.**

Did you know that most people who drown never intended to be in the water? Many of them were simply enjoying boating activities or playing near the water. Since they didn't intend to enter the water, they weren't wearing a lifejacket or personal flotation device (PFD).

Approved lifejackets or PFDs are a critical part of water safety. There must be an appropriate flotation device for every person on board the vessel. Most on-water enforcement agencies have a zero tolerance policy towards disobeying this regulation.

Stay safe and wear your lifejacket at all times!

**For a lifejacket to be Canadian-approved, it must have a label that states it has been approved by:**

- Transport Canada; or
- Canadian Coast Guard; or,
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

***Lifejackets 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.

To find a list of all Canadian-approved lifejackets and PFDs, check out the *Approved Products Catalogue Index* at [www.tc.gc.ca](http://www.tc.gc.ca).

### Caring for Your Lifejacket / Personal Flotation Device (PFD)

1. Treat your lifejacket/PFD like an investment and take good care of it!
2. Lifejackets that are ripped or in poor condition are not considered approved.
3. Check its buoyancy regularly in a pool or by wading out to waist-deep water and bending your knees to see how well you float.
4. Make sure that straps, buckles and zippers are clean and work well.
5. Tug on straps to make sure they are well attached and there is no sign of wear.
6. Dry it in open air and avoid direct heat sources.
7. Store it in a dry, well-ventilated place where it is easy to reach.
8. Do not dry clean. Use mild soap and running water to clean.
9. Never sit or kneel on your lifejacket or use it as a fender for your boat.



### Cold Shock

When you fall into cold water Cold Shock will occur – an initial deep and sudden gasp followed by hyperventilation that can be as much as 600-1000% greater than normal breathing. You must keep your airway clear or run the risk of drowning. Cold Shock will pass in about 1 minute. *Wearing a lifejacket during this phase is critically important to keep you afloat and breathing.* Over approximately the next 10 minutes you will lose the effective use of your fingers, arms and legs for any meaningful movement.

Even in ice water it could take approximately 1 hour before becoming unconscious due to Hypothermia.