

Going Boating?

Where do you stand with the law?

A brief summary of those regulations specific to users of **Pleasure Craft in Ireland** including sailing boats, personal water craft (jet ski), powerboats and angling boats.

Wearing of Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs)

➔ There must be suitable PFDs for everyone on board any boat.

A suitable PFD must be **worn** in the following situations:

- ➔ By anyone on board an open boat that is under 7 meters in length.
- ➔ By anyone on deck on a boat that is under 7 meters length.
- ➔ By anyone under the age of 16 on board an open boat or on deck of any other type of boat.
- ➔ By anyone being towed in another boat or on any other device (skis, donuts etc.)
- ➔ By anyone on a personal watercraft (jet ski)

Except when

- ➔ Tied up alongside or made fast to an anchor, marina, pier or mooring.
- ➔ Immediately prior to, during and after swimming from a boat that is not moving through the water.
- ➔ Putting on, wearing or taking off diving equipment on a boat that is not moving through the water.

Age restrictions.

- ➔ You have to be 12 years or older before you can drive any boat with an engine over 5Hp (3.7 Kw).
- ➔ You have to be 16 years or older before you can drive a personal watercraft (jet ski) or a powerboat / motorboat that is capable of 17 knots or more.

Alcohol and Drugs.

- ➔ While operating a pleasure craft, or being towed by or on board a vessel or object being towed by a pleasure craft, it is against the law to consume or be under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

While on board a pleasure craft it is prohibited to consume alcohol or drugs in circumstances which,

- ➔ Could affect the safety of others on board or others using Irish waters
- ➔ Create a disturbance on board or be a nuisance to others using Irish waters

A more comprehensive list of legislation applying to pleasure boating in Ireland is available in the "Code of Practice for the Safe Operation of Recreational Craft" available from www.transport.ie

Another free safety publication produced by The Marine Safety Working Group.

For more information on regulations, safety or training go to

www.safetyonthewater.ie

**SAFETY
ON THE
WATER**

Understanding Personal Flotation Devices

Personal Flotation Device or PFD is a generic term used to describe both lifejackets and buoyancy aids. The main difference between lifejackets and buoyancy aids is that a lifejacket is designed to turn an unconscious person face up on entering water.

There are 4 European standards for personal flotation devices which must all carry the CE mark and the pictorial symbol shown on the table below. Information on the standards and what you might use each type of PFD for are listed below.

The Buoyancy is the amount of flotation provided by a PFD and is measured in Newtons. 10 Newton equals 1 kilogramme of flotation.



This 50 Newton Personal Flotation Device is commonly called a **Buoyancy Aid**. It is intended for use by those who are competent swimmers and who are near to the bank or shore, or who have help and means of rescue close at hand. These PFDs have minimum bulk, but they are of limited use in disturbed water, and cannot be expected to keep the user safe for a long period of time. They do not have sufficient buoyancy to protect people who are unable to help themselves. They require active participation by the user. Recommended for dinghy sailors, windsurfers, waterskiers & personal water craft where the user might reasonably expect to end up in the water.



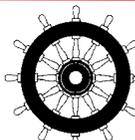
The **100 Newton Lifejacket** is intended for those who may have to wait for rescue but are likely to do so in sheltered and calm water. Whilst these lifejackets are less bulky than those with more buoyancy, they are only intended for use in relatively sheltered waters. They may not have sufficient buoyancy to protect people who are unable to help themselves and may not roll an unconscious person onto their back particularly if they are wearing heavy clothing.



The **150 Newton Lifejacket** is intended for general offshore and rough weather use where a high standard of performance is required. It should turn an unconscious person into a safe position and requires no subsequent action by the wearer to keep their face out of the water. Its performance may be affected if the user is wearing heavy and/or waterproof clothing. Recommended for general use on coastal and inshore waters when sailing, fishing etc. where the user would not expect to end up in the water.



The **275 Newton Lifejacket** is intended primarily for offshore and extreme conditions and for those wearing heavy protective clothing that may adversely affect the self-righting capacity of the lifejacket. This lifejacket is designed to ensure that the wearer is floating in the correct position with their mouth and nose clear of the surface of the water. Recommended for offshore cruising, fishing and commercial users.



IMO / SOLAS approved Lifejackets are mainly carried on certain types of commercial vessels like passenger boats. They are usually intended only for use when abandoning ship as they tend to be bulky and difficult to use when working.