

## Safety Alert - check your Lifejacket

Never assume that you are safe just because you are wearing a lifejacket, even if you have fitted it correctly and are using crotch straps. In a recent test, 80% of lifejackets failed.

How do you know that your lifejacket will save your life? You can only be sure if you check it before you put it on and have them thoroughly examined at least once a year.

### Check it before you put it on - every time

- Is it dry? If not, it may have been activated and the cylinder may be empty
- Are the straps and other fastenings undamaged?
- Is the gas cylinder screwed in properly? Open that side of the lifejacket and check.
- Is the firing mechanism intact (if automatic, present, unused and screwed in correctly)?

If the answer to any of these questions is “no” then quarantine this lifejacket, so that it can be examined later, and find another one, check that too. Adjust it to fit you and use crotch straps.

### Have them thoroughly examined at least once a year

The Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) will do this for you. This is a free service available anywhere in the country.

The RNLI will be happy to visit your club or event. You can arrange this by emailing [community\\_safety@rnli.org.uk](mailto:community_safety@rnli.org.uk) and they will put you in touch with a local Community Safety Officer (CSO).

A CSO will visit your club or event, check all the lifejackets and show you how to do it. It takes about five minutes per lifejacket.

This service is completely free. If your club would like to make a donation, then it would be gratefully received, but RNLI said “We do not want anyone to be put off asking for this help because they think that a donation is required. There is definitely no obligation to make a donation.”

Further information about how to perform these checks can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h5-9wC-c9cw> and in an RNLI leaflet, “[Choose it, Wear it](#)”. There is further information at <https://www.britishrowing.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Safety-Alert-February-2015-Lifejackets.pdf>

**Treat your lifejacket like a parachute - your life may depend on it.**

Stephen Worley  
Honorary Rowing Safety Adviser  
[safety@britishrowing.org](mailto:safety@britishrowing.org)

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