

LIFE JACKETS AND CHECKS

Introduction: A lifejacket is an essential piece of safety equipment and you should have one for every person on board. Make sure each crew member is allocated a lifejacket and it is fitted correctly and that they know not to wear clothing over them. You should never put a child in an adult's lifejacket; make sure they have one that fits their size. **When to wear one?** It is recommended that you should wear one at all times unless you consider it safe not to do so. There are times though when you **MUST** wear one i.e. fog, at night, strong winds (when you reef put on a lifejacket), children, non-swimmers and in a dinghy. It is important that your life jackets are **checked regularly**. You should also do an annual check where you inflate your lifejacket (use a dinghy foot pump to avoid moisture inside the bladder) and leave inflated for 24 hours to check for leaks and then they should be serviced by an agent according to the manufacturers' information. **Out-of-season** lifejackets should be opened up, partially inflated (to remove the folds) and stored on non-metal coat hangers in a dry well-aired room.

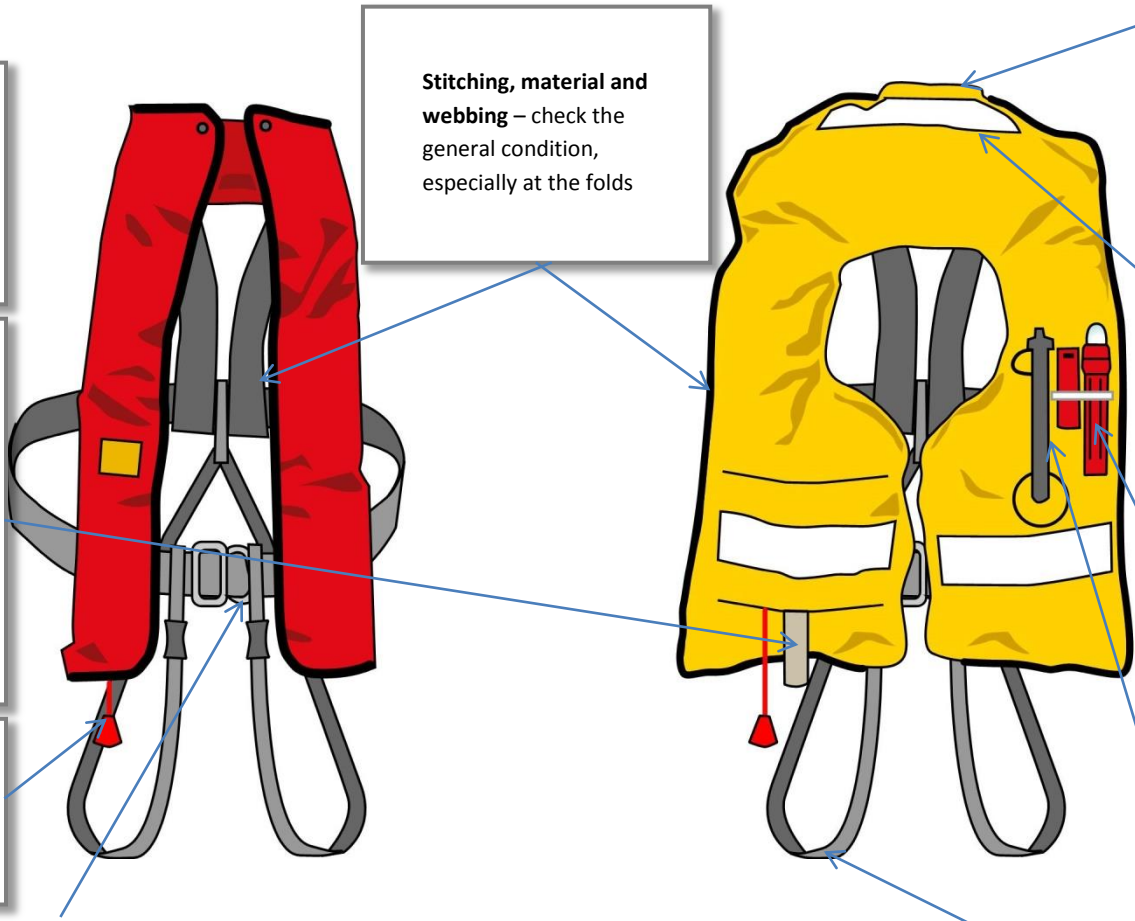
Automatic Firing Mechanism – if fitted i.e. your lifejacket is automatic. Check has not been activated

CO2 Gas Inflation Cylinder – check
(1) Correct size for your lifejacket
(2) Not rusty or damaged
(3) Screwed in tightly otherwise the lifejacket may fail to inflate properly.
(4) No hole in the end of the bottle
(5) You have spares on board

Manual Inflation Toggle – make sure it is in good condition

Harness/D-Ring – this is situated on the waist strap and you attach your safety line to this and the other end to the “strong points” or jackstays on the boat to prevent a you from falling overboard.

Stitching, material and webbing – check the general condition, especially at the folds



Spray Hoods – These keep the waves and spray off your face which is important if you are unconscious and my prevent you from drowning

Reflective tape – make sure it is in good condition

Lights – Are they working? Are they indate?

Manual inflation tube and whistle– Are they present

Crotch Straps – make sure the webbing is in good condition - make sure they are adjusted correctly when fitted – they prevent the lifejacket form “riding up” when inflated and in