

**PFD SIZING CHART FOR CHILDREN**

**BEFORE** you go to the store HAVE:

- Child’s chest measurement underneath the arms
- Child’s Weight
- Apparel Sizing

**AT the store:**

Try the jacket on – it should fit snugly, make sure that it does not slip over chin and ears. If there is more than 3 inches between the child’s shoulders and the PFD is TOO big.

### PFD SIZING CHART FOR CHILDREN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Infant Less than 30 lbs</th>
<th>Child Small 30 – 50 lbs</th>
<th>Child Medium 30 – 50 lbs</th>
<th>Youth 50 – 90 lbs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td>Newborn to 2 years old</td>
<td>2 to 5 years old</td>
<td>4 to 8 years old</td>
<td>6 to 12 years old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chest</strong></td>
<td>16 – 20” circumference</td>
<td>20-23” to 23-25”</td>
<td>21-25” to 26-29”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Features</strong></td>
<td>Rounded body</td>
<td>Short torso</td>
<td>Larger torso than toddler</td>
<td>Beginning waistline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>of Child or Infant</strong></td>
<td>Large head</td>
<td>Protruding tummy</td>
<td>No waistline</td>
<td>Slim/chunky</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Short limbs</td>
<td>Stocky shape</td>
<td>Slimmer than toddler</td>
<td>Short to average height</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Infant devices** are for newborns to two year olds weighing less than 30 lbs.

**Child small or toddlers’ devices** are for ages two through five, although child medium is more appropriate for children between the ages of four and eight. These devices span the range from 30-50 lbs.

**A youth device** is defined as 50-90 lbs and usually fits a child between six and twelve years old.

**SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR CHILDREN...**
✓ Appropriate weight and size
✓ Large collar for head support
✓ An adjustable buckle strap between the legs to prevent the PFD from going over the child’s head
✓ A grab strap aids retrieval of children that have fallen in the water
✓ Adjustable waist straps to ensure a snug fit
✓ Durable nylon and sewing
✓ Canadian approval label (D.O.T. and/or CCG)
✓ Sturdy rust-proof zipper
✓ Bright colour and reflective tape for added visibility
✓ Plastic whistle

Additional Tips

➢ Consider the child’s swimming ability. A type II Child vest may be more suitable for children who are non-swimmers due to greater buoyancy.
➢ Consider age and experience with lifejackets. Children should learn how to relax and gain control of their bodies with supplemental buoyancy. Adult supervision and support is critical.
➢ Choose the right jacket for the activity.
➢ Children should always wear a PFD when they are in, on and around water, no matter how shallow the water.
➢ When purchasing a PFD for your child, make sure it fits. To check for a good fit, lift the child by the shoulders of the PFD. If the PFD fits right, the child’s chin and ears will not slip through.
➢ Look for features that improve the fit and performance like a safety strap between the legs, waist ties and a large collar with a grab strap. Straps on the PFD should be used at all times – they keep the PFD in place.
➢ Resist the temptation to buy a PFD too large so the child can “grow into it”. A loose fitting PFD is dangerous. A PFD that is too large can’t function properly or might slip off in the water.
➢ Parents should help children test their PFDs in shallow water. It is important they get used to wearing one in the water.
➢ Set an example; wear your own PFD

Choosing an Adult PFD
WHAT TO LOOK FOR WHEN BUYING A PFD

- The D.O.T and/or CCG label will indicate weight and size restrictions and is a guarantee that it is approved for use in Canada
- Choose bright colours that can be seen at night, reflective tape provides added visibility
- A belt prevents the vest from riding up over the shoulders, especially when falling off a boat at higher speeds
- A whistle draws attention in case of an emergency
- Choose a style that is appropriate for your water or boating activity
- Check for a proper, snug, comfortable fit and how well the PFD performs in water

QUICK QUESTIONS...

- Is it well-made, strong fabric, sturdy zippers?
- Is it comfortable to wear when walking and sitting down?
- Can you easily swim and move with it when in the water?
- Is it easy to put on and take off?
- Does it keep your head above water?
- Is it self righting, does it roll you face-up when you relax in the water face down?
- Will it support the person it was made for? Try it out! In chest-deep water lift your legs off the bottom and put your head back. Make sure your chin is above the water and you can breathe easily. Do this immediately after purchasing so you know it is an appropriate product for you.

CCG = Canadian Coast Guard  D.O.T = Department Of Transport

CARING FOR YOUR PFD OR LIFEJACKET

The best way to ensure your PFD or lifejacket will work effectively is to ensure proper regular care.

CARE...

- Rinse with fresh water after every use
- Hang to dry away from direct heat
- Once dry, store in a cool, ventilated area
- Use mild soaps; do not use strong detergents or dry clean
- Test before using
- Do not leave in the sun for long periods

CHECK OFTEN FOR...

- Rips, tears and holes
- Damage to seams, buckles, straps and zippers
- Signs of water logging, mildew, shrinkage or hardening of the buoyant material
- Performance of flotation and fit

REMEMBER...

The approval status of your PFD depends on its condition!

LIFEJACKET & PFD COMPARISON CHART
### Personal Flotation Device (PFD)

#### Benefits
- Self-righting capability for an unconscious person
- Designed for constant and comfortable wear
- Provides minimal protection against cold water depending on the type (vest versus floater coat)
- Boaters need to dress appropriately for their environment
- Multiple approved styles and colours
- Capable of self-righting most wearers once inflated and worn
- Freedom of movement and comfort

#### Drawbacks
- Less comfort
- Less buoyant and limited self-righting capability compared to lifejackets
- Requires annual maintenance and spare cylinders should be on hand
- Option of manual inflation

#### Sizing
- Two sizes:
  - Weight 90 lbs +
  - Weight less than 90 lbs
- Based on chest measurements for adults, body weight for children
- Must be over 16 years of age and weigh more than 80 lbs

#### Style
- Keyhole (SOLAS, Standard or Small Vessel)
- Vest, bomber, floater suits, keyhole, over-the-head
- Collar and pouch (Manual or automatic)

#### Colour
- Orange, yellow or red
- Range of colour options
- All colours

#### Fit
- Ensure you can cross your arms under the tied lifejacket for proper flotation
- Snug yet comfortable fit, pull the device at the collar to ensure it does not ride up and interfere with movement or breathing

#### Approval
- Department of Transport (DOT) or Canadian Coast Guard approved
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**Regulations in Canada dictate pleasure crafts carry an approved and properly fitting PFD or lifejacket for each person on board, except for any infant weighing less than 9 kg or any person whose chest size exceeds 140 cm.**

**Keeping a lifejacket or PFD handy versus wearing one is like attempting to buckle a car seat belt just before the car crashes.**

*The content of Appendices A, B and C are courtesy of The Canadian Red Cross Society.*


*Canadian Red Cross, PFD and ME Book of Lessons, 2004*