

Make sure you are properly equipped before going on the water.

Some equipment is [mandatory for Pleasure Vessels of 13.7m in length and over](#). Depending on how far from the coast you venture, you may be required by law to have items such as a liferaft, lifebuoys, lifejackets, flares, a marine radio and a boarding ladder.

For [Pleasure Vessels](#) of less than 13.7 metres in length there are no statutory requirements for safety equipment other than those required under SOLAS V.

However, it is essential that you properly equip your boat prior to going on the water and that you ensure that the craft is suitable for its intended use. All equipment should be checked regularly for wear and tear or damage.

You will require different equipment for day boats and boats with eating and sleeping facilities. It is essential that you take the time to learn how each item is used.

The following list is not exhaustive, but together with the information on the website should provide a basis for equipping your boat.

Key: E = Essential M = Mandatory R = Recommended D = at your Discretion C = Read information page for alternative options * = Varies with area of operation ^ = Varies with type of boat	Pleasure vessels up to 13.7m in length	Pleasure vessels 13.7m and over
Radar reflector	M	M
Lifesaving Signals	M	M
Navigation lights, day shapes & sound signalling equipment	M	M
A lifejacket (or buoyancy aid^) for everyone on board	E	M
Safety harness(es)	E^	E
Kill cord & spare	E^	E^
Information & communications:		
- Marine Radio (e.g.VHF)	E	M
- MF / HF radio	D*	M*
- SSB radio and / or Satellite telephone	D*	D*
- LW Radio (to receive BBC Radio 4 shipping forecast)	R	R
Navigation and collision avoidance:		
- Chart(s), Almanac and Pilot Book	E	E
- Hand Bearing Compass	E	E
- Fixed steering compass (lit for boating at night)	R	R
- Drawing instruments for navigation (e.g. plotter & dividers)	R	R
- Binoculars	R	R
- Echo sounder	R	R
- Log (for monitoring distance travelled)	R	R
- GPS / Chart Plotter	R	R
- NAVTEX	R	R
- Automatic Identification System (AIS)	D	D
- Radar	D	D
- Handheld white flares (for collision avoidance) or powerful torch	E	M

Emergencies:		
- 406 MHz EPIRB / PLB	E*	E*
- Distress flares	C	M
- First aid kit	E	E
- Liferaft and grab bag	E*	M* 3M+
- SART / AIS SART	D*	D*
- Fire fighting equipment	E	M
- Equipment to deal with a man overboard (life ring, dan buoy etc.)	E	M
- Emergency tiller (for wheel steered boats)	E^	E^
- Equipment to deal with water ingress (Bailer, Bilge Pump, Bung)	E	E
- Bucket (strong with lanyard) folding buckets are not recommended	E	M
- Emergency VHF aerial for fixed VHF	E^	E^
Other important equipment:		
Barometer	R*	R
Anchor & cable / warp	E	E
Propeller guards and rope cutters	D	D
Storm sails (for sailing yachts)	R*	R*
Tools and spares (engine, electrics, rig, sails etc)	E	E
Bosun's chair or equivalent (for sailing yachts)	R^	R^
Boarding ladder	E	M
Tender	R	R
Spare fuel (in appropriate storage)	E	E
Waterproof torch(es)	E	E
Mooring lines and fenders	E	E
Tow rope	R	R
Knife	E	E
Boat hook	R	R
Sea anchor & / drogue	D*	D*
Pump & puncture repair kit (for inflatable boats)	E	E
Alternative means of propulsion (oars, outboard engine etc.)	E	E
Ship's Log Book	E	E
Accurate clock or watch	E	E

N.B. Vessels which are not being used within the definition of a pleasure vessel must comply with the relevant codes of practice.

The equipment listed as mandatory for pleasure vessels of 13.7m in length and over is that contained in the schedule to the general exemptions to Class XII vessels from the Merchant Shipping (Fire Protection: Small Craft) Regulations 1998 (SI 1998/1011) and the Merchant Shipping (Life-Saving Appliances For Ships Other Than Ships Of Classes III To VI(A)) Regulations 1999 (SI 1999/2721). Class XII vessels can also comply with the Merchant Shipping legislation however this information is not included within the table and doing so can prove impractical and there is the possibility of conflict with the Recreational Craft Directive (RCD).