

Your vessel

The length of your vessel affects what type of lifejacket you must wear or carry.

Motorboats up to 4.8m in length:

- Everyone must wear a lifejacket when underway and at anchor.
- The type of lifejacket worn must suit the area and activity.

Motorboats 4.8m to 12m in length (with or without an engine) when in an open area of a vessel:

- Children who are 12 years or younger must wear a lifejacket when underway or at anchor.
- All occupants must wear a lifejacket when operating at times of heightened risk.
- The type of lifejacket worn must suit the area and activity.

The conditions

When operating in conditions of heightened risk, you must wear a lifejacket that is suitable for your area and activity. Heightened risk conditions include:

- boating alone
- boating only accompanied by a child, or children, 12 years or younger
- boating before sunrise and after sunset
- when the boat is disabled
- crossing a coastal bar including the Murray Mouth
- boating during times of restricted visibility (includes fog, dust, smoke or heavy rain)
- boating in an area subject to gale, storm force or hurricane force wind, severe thunderstorm or a severe weather warning issued by the Bureau of Meteorology.

Your age

The age of the boater influences their lifejacket requirements. Children who are 12 years or younger, or who weigh less than 40kg, can wear an inflatable lifejacket as long as it inflates automatically. These lifejackets must:

- be clearly labelled to inflate automatically
- have a pull cord (as a back-up)
- be serviced regularly in line with the manufacturer's instructions
- be the correct size and properly fitted.

Is your lifejacket compliant?

Your lifejacket must meet Australian Standard (AS) 4758 or another acceptable international standard.

Lifejackets that meet AS 4758:

- have increased buoyancy
- incorporate new technology
- consider advances in lifejacket design and manufacture
- have increased reflectivity
- will display a level 50, 50S, 100 or 150+.

A label for a compliant lifejacket will include:

- manufacturer's details
- certification information (look for AS 4758 or another acceptable international standard)
- year of manufacture
- limitations of use
- device level or type of lifejacket
- how to wear, care for and operate your lifejacket
- body mass, size and buoyancy information.

Stay Afloat with us!

Our Stay Afloat clinics will make sure your lifejacket knowledge is airtight.

Visit a free, walk-in friendly clinic to:

- learn how to wear and maintain your lifejacket
- know what safety gear you need
- understand emergency communications
- ask any other boating safety questions.

Some lifejacket replacement parts will also be available free of charge.

Visit [marinesafety.sa.gov.au/stay-afloat](https://marinesafety.sa.gov.au/stay-afloat) for upcoming dates and locations.



Before heading out - ask yourself...

- Is your lifejacket suited to the area you will be and the activity?
- Do you have enough lifejackets for everyone on board?
- Does your lifejacket fit properly?
  - ~ Try it on before buying.
  - ~ Choose based on your weight range.
  - ~ The fit should be snug but not too tight.
- Does your lifejacket meet AS 4758 or another acceptable international standard?
- Is your lifejacket in good condition and maintained according to the manufacturer's instructions?
- If you are boating at night, does your lifejacket have reflective tape to help others see you?
  - ~ Consider fitting water activated lights.
- Have you practised wearing your new lifejacket?
  - ~ We recommend trying it in a controlled environment to get used to moving, swimming and floating in it.
- Do you know how to use the crotch strap?
  - ~ Always use the crotch strap if your lifejacket has one, particularly for children – it stops the wearer from sliding out. Crotch straps can also be purchased and added on separately.



Stay safe on the water

[marinesafety.sa.gov.au/lifejacket](https://marinesafety.sa.gov.au/lifejacket)

Which lifejacket do I need?

STAY SAFE ON THE WATER







# Our lifejacket laws help to keep everyone safe when enjoying our State's waterways.

The level of lifejacket you need, and when you must wear it, depends on:

- where you are operating
- your vessel (type and length)
- the conditions
- your age (adult or child).

Check which lifejacket you need with our online tool



[marinesafety.sa.gov.au/lj-tool](https://marinesafety.sa.gov.au/lj-tool)

## Where you are operating

South Australian waters are divided into three categories (protected, semi-protected and unprotected), which influence the type of lifejacket that must be worn and carried.

### Protected waters

Protected waters include inland waters including the River Murray (does not include Lake Alexandrina and Lake Albert).

- Boat, stand up paddleboard, surf ski, kayak, canoe, surfboard, sailboard or kiteboard  
~ lifejacket level 50/50S or higher.
- Personal watercraft (waterskiing, jet skiing)  
~ lifejacket level 50/50S only.

### Semi-protected waters

Semi-protected waters include coastal waters up to 2 nautical miles (approx. 3.7km) from the coast or the banks of Lake Alexandrina and Lake Albert. This includes tidal waterways such as the Port Adelaide River and Coorong.

- Boat  
~ lifejacket level 50/50S or higher for 13 years or older  
~ lifejacket level 100 or higher for children 12 years or younger  
~ all boats must carry a lifejacket level 100 or higher for all persons on board even if you are wearing a lifejacket level 50/50S.
- Canoe or kayak  
~ lifejacket level 50/50S or higher.
- Personal watercraft (waterskiing, jet skiing)  
~ lifejacket level 50/50S only.
- Sailboard, kiteboard  
~ less than 400m from shore - lifejacket level 50/50S or higher  
~ more than 400m from shore - lifejacket level 100 or higher.

### Unprotected waters

Unprotected waters include coastal waters more than 2 nautical miles (approx. 3.7km) from the shore and from the banks of Lake Alexandrina and Lake Albert.

- Boat  
~ lifejacket level 100 or higher.
- Canoe or kayak  
~ lifejacket level 50/50S or higher, with whistle attached.

## Lifejacket level 50

### A lifejacket level 50:

- has flotation panels front and back only
- has less flotation than a lifejacket level 100
- is less restrictive to wear than a lifejacket level 100 or higher
- will not keep your head above water if you are unconscious.

A lifejacket level 50 is normally used for sailing, kayaking, canoeing, windsurfing and similar activities.



## Lifejacket level 50S

### A lifejacket level 50S:

- has similar buoyancy characteristics to a lifejacket level 50
- comes in a wider range of colours.

A lifejacket level 50S is normally used for high-speed water sports such as jet skiing, waterskiing, sailboarding and similar activities.



## Lifejacket level 100

### A lifejacket level 100 or higher:

- will keep your head above water with the flotation collar
- is not permitted for water skiing, jet skiing or similar activities.

A lifejacket level 100 is suitable for general boating in all waters.



## Lifejacket level 150 or higher

### A lifejacket level 150 or higher:

- has similar buoyancy characteristics to a lifejacket level 100
- provides greater buoyancy when a higher level of performance is needed
- is not permitted for water skiing, jet skiing or similar activities.

A lifejacket level 150 or higher is suitable for general boating in all waters.

