



Lifeguards, be aware!

Water sports like swimming, wading, boating, and water skiing are fun and exciting. But they can be dangerous for people of all ages. Each year, nearly 4,000 people drown in the United States, including almost 1,000 children age 14 or younger. Among children aged 1-9, drowning is the second leading cause of death from injuries.

The U.S. Coast Guard estimates that 9 of 10 drowning victims were not wearing approved personal flotation devices — commonly called life jackets.

Know the local weather conditions and forecast before swimming or boating.



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Water Safety



Just another day on the beach...



What can I do?

You can significantly reduce the odds of drowning by following these rules:

- Use U.S. Coast Guard-approved personal flotation devices (life jackets) when boating, regardless of distance, size of boat or swimming ability of boaters.
- Make sure an adult is constantly watching children swimming, playing or bathing in water. Restrict water activities to designated areas, usually marked by buoys. Do not read, play cards, talk on the phone or otherwise distract yourself while supervising children around water.
- Never swim alone or in unsupervised places. Teach your children: always swim with a buddy.
- Keep small children away from buckets containing liquid; five-gallon industrial containers are a particular danger. Empty buckets completely when household chores are done. An infant or toddler can drown in one inch of water.
- Never drink alcohol before or during swimming, boating or water skiing. Never drink alcohol while supervising children around water.
- Teach teenagers about the danger of drinking alcohol and swimming, boating or water skiing.

- To prevent choking, never chew gum or eat while swimming, diving or playing in water.
- Learn to swim! Enroll yourself and your children in swimming classes, and develop the skills and awareness necessary to swim safely.
- Always have an adult observe and supervise water activities *no matter what the age or skill level of the swimmers.*
- Learn CPR (cardio-pulmonary resuscitation) and First Aid.



- Do NOT use air-filled swimming aids (water wings) in place of life preservers on children. These are toys with plastic tubes that can be easily punctured or unplugged.
- Check the water depth before entering. The American Red Cross recommends nine feet as a minimum depth for diving or jumping. Remember that open water usually has limited visibility, and conditions can change from hour to hour. Currents are often unpredictable, moving rapidly and quickly changing direction. A strong water current can carry even expert swimmers far from shore.

If you have a swimming pool at your home:

- Surround the pool with a four-sided pool-fence with self-closing and self-latching gates. The fence should be at least four feet tall and completely separate the pool from the house and play area of the yard.
- Prevent children from having direct access to the swimming pool.
- Install a telephone near the pool. Know how to contact local emergency medical services.
- Remove toys from pool immediately after use. Floats, balls, and other toys may tempt children to lean into pool; they could accidentally fall in.
- Closely supervise children using the pool and insist that others do so.

Personal Responsibility

We all have a responsibility to ensure the safety of ourselves and those around us. Setting a good example and acting in a responsible manner will help us enjoy our recreational activities without danger.

